

# Inspection of Thorpe St Andrew School and Sixth Form

Laundry Lane, Thorpe St Andrew, Norwich, Norfolk NR7 0XS

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Inspection dates: 5 and 6 July 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Good**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Sixth-form provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5  
of the Education Act 2005

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils enjoy and value the friendly atmosphere around the school. They know that learning is important and want to do well in their studies. Pupils usually work hard to achieve high levels of success. Some pupils do not behave well. A few teachers do not deal with these behaviours as well as they could. This disrupts the learning of others in their classes. A few pupils are late to lessons or choose to skip them altogether.

Pupils are safe and feel safe at the school. If pupils feel worried about any aspects of their lives, they know that the school's behaviour support team, along with other staff, are willing and able to help. Pupils spoken with, and many who responded to Ofsted's survey, feel that bullying happens occasionally, and staff quickly make sure that it stops and does not reoccur.

Pupils have opportunities to take responsibility within their school community, such as by serving in the school's 'senate'. These opportunities, however, are not well understood by many pupils so they do not get involved in them.

Students in the sixth form learn well, work hard and benefit from their teachers' expertise.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Over the past two years, leaders have put in place an ambitious, well-organised curriculum. Pupils, and students in the sixth form, have plenty of opportunities to study a wide range of subjects. Leaders have taken steps to enable more pupils to study the subjects within the English Baccalaureate (EBacc).

Teachers know their subjects and how to teach them well, including the accurate use of technical vocabulary in each subject. Pupils, and students in the sixth form, use these words fluently. Teachers provide pupils opportunities to review what they have been taught. This helps pupils remember the knowledge in the long term.

In some subjects, leaders are still establishing the best way to assess what pupils know and can do. In most subjects, teachers correct pupils when they make mistakes or do not understand new learning. Some teachers in a few subjects do not always do this as precisely or effectively. As a result, some pupils' understanding lacks precision or sufficient depth.

Teachers teach pupils the importance of reading. Teachers encourage pupils to read widely and often. Pupils enjoy reading. Leaders have improved the way staff support pupils who find reading hard and have fallen behind. These pupils improve their reading and catch up.

Leaders quickly identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders provide precise guidance for teachers to help these

pupils learn effectively. Teachers give pupils with SEND the support they need to overcome the challenges they face and learn the curriculum well.

While many pupils learn and behave well in lessons, some do not. Some teachers do not deal with low-level disruption quickly enough. This leads to other pupils' learning being interrupted. In a few instances, pupils are required to leave the classroom and continue their learning in other classes. This can disrupt learning in those classes too.

Leaders' provision for pupils' personal development is developing but is not yet influencing the culture of the school as well as leaders would like. For example, leaders' promotion of diversity inspired pupils to celebrate Pride Month with activities such as parades and impressive public displays. However, pupils say, and school records show, that incidents of pupils' use of inappropriate language about other people's differences still occur.

Leaders' programme for independent advice and guidance does not inform pupils well enough about career opportunities in all subjects. This is most noticeable in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The school meets the requirements of the Baker clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Students achieve well in the school's high-quality sixth-form provision. Staff and students live up to leaders' high expectations. Students complete their programmes of study and are well prepared for their next steps in employment, education or training. Students appreciate the team ethos in the sixth form and readily take positions of responsibility within the school community.

Two years ago, leaders and trustees introduced a large programme of change to address declining standards at the school. Some staff feel unsettled by the pace of change. Some parents and carers do not feel that they get the information they need about the school. For example, some parents do not understand how behaviour is managed at the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff, governors and trustees have been well trained to carry out their safeguarding duties. Staff know the signs of potential harm and act swiftly and appropriately when concerns arise. Leaders keep meticulous records and work effectively with external agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils get the support they need.

Leaders ensure that background checks are undertaken to determine if staff are suitable to work with children.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A significant minority of pupils do not take on board what they have learned about different lifestyles, cultures and religions, to exhibit appropriate behaviours and use appropriate language. Leaders need to ensure that the school's provision for personal development contributes positively towards the school culture and pupils' behaviour.
- Staff do not manage pupils' behaviour consistently well. As a result, some pupils experience disruptions in lessons due to unacceptable behaviour. Leaders need to clarify their expectations of pupils' behaviour. Leaders should then make sure that these expectations are commonly understood and consistently applied by staff.
- Staff and parents raise concerns about leaders' communication and support. Staff and parents are not being well supported to understand the changes being made at the school. Leaders need to clarify with stakeholders the vision they have for the school. They also must outline the steps that will be taken to achieve this vision, including the measures to support staff's reasonable workload.
- Teachers do not always identify when pupils do not remember or understand what they have been taught. Where this happens, some pupils do not learn the intended curriculum in sufficient depth or with sufficient precision. Teachers need to check more precisely what pupils know so that they can help pupils understand and remember what has been taught.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	143278
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10231303
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1889
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	404
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Linda Steynor
<b>Principal</b>	Penny Bignell
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://thorpestandrewschool.org.uk/">http://thorpestandrewschool.org.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- From September 2016 until June 2022, the school was an academy within the Yare Education Trust.
- In July 2022, the school joined the Broad Horizons Education Trust.
- The principal joined the school in April 2020.
- The school uses two unregistered alternative providers.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the principal, members of the senior leadership team, the special educational needs coordinator, the chief executive officer for the trust, the education director for the trust, trustees, subject leaders, teachers, members of support staff and pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: art, English, computing, history, mathematics and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work in some other subjects.
- Inspectors scrutinised safeguarding policies, the school's record of background checks of adults at the school and a sample of child protection files. Inspectors also spoke with governors, leaders and staff about safeguarding practices at the school.

## Inspection team

Al Mistrano, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Paul Lawrence	Ofsted Inspector
Victoria Colgate	Ofsted Inspector
Charlie Fordham	Her Majesty's Inspector
Sharon Waldron	Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
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