

Inspection of Hobart High School

Kittens Lane, Loddon, Norwich, Norfolk NR14 6JU

Inspection dates: 21 to 22 March 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Good
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What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils describe feeling safe and happy. They say that Hobart is an inclusive community where being different is part of their everyday life. The school diversity group is important to both pupils and adults. Pupils enjoy attending a small school because they 'know everyone in the building'. Pupils comment that they have a voice through student leadership and that they have seen improvements across the school as a result.

School leaders have increasingly high expectations. Pupils' behaviour reflects their pride in the school. Pupils follow the mobile phone policy without exception. The majority of pupils wear their uniform well. Most lessons are calm, and the transition between lessons is orderly. Pupils participate in a wide variety of activities during social times.

Pupils and staff recognise that bullying happens in the school. However, pupils say that this is not common and that teachers act quickly to address it. Pupils comment that leaders have re-designated year group toilets to reduce bullying. This has worked effectively, and pupils appreciate the difference it has made.

Pupils shared with inspectors that they feel that teachers want them to succeed. Pupils comment that teachers praise them when they have worked hard. This motivates them to achieve more.

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

In most subjects, leaders have implemented a curriculum that is well sequenced and enables pupils to achieve well. In a small number of subjects, the aims of the curriculum for key stage 3 are unclear. This prevents pupils from achieving more highly in these subjects. Recruitment difficulties have made this situation more challenging. Leaders' approach to assessment enables most pupils to achieve well. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is appropriate and does not prevent them from learning.

Leaders are clear that they have the same ambitions for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well, and there is no narrowing of the curriculum for any pupil. Leaders recognise the need for greater rigour in the coordination of intervention activities.

Most pupils can read fluently, and intervention is in place to support weaker readers. Leaders understand that they need to ensure there is a sharper focus on reading and that they need to review how this is managed.

The government's ambition is that the English Baccalaureate will be at the heart of every school's curriculum and that 90% of pupils will follow this by 2025. Leaders

are taking steps to increase the number of pupils studying a modern foreign language in 2023-24 to move towards this.

Pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, and its leadership, are excellent. Appropriate training is in place for teachers delivering the programme. Leaders use the phrase 'challenge it to change it'. This is exactly what happens in the school. The diversity and inclusion group (DICE) promotes values that enable pupils to understand the importance of kindness, understanding and difference. All pupils can explain the purpose of DICE and its impact. The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation.

Pupils' behaviour around the school is appropriate and respectful. Pupils follow instructions and act courteously towards staff and visitors. However, levels of repeat suspensions are high. In response, leaders have implemented a new system to reduce these repeat suspensions. While the impact of the system is yet to be fully realised, there is evidence that fewer children are being suspended.

Leaders have evaluated the school's strengths and weaknesses accurately. The staff survey indicates that there is no evidence of bullying/harassment. Leaders consider workload when making strategic decisions. The majority of parents feel that their child is happy and safe at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils feel safe in school. There is a comprehensive programme of PSHE that raises pupil awareness of risks, both online and offline. Leaders have appropriate systems in place for identifying pupils who may be vulnerable. The welfare of these pupils is a priority. Designated professionals act quickly to support pupils and their families. Accurate records of their actions are kept. The school ensures that external agencies are engaged to provide support where appropriate. Leaders' actions are monitored regularly by governors through recorded link meetings. Appropriate training is provided to ensure that safer recruitment processes are robust.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The overarching aims and sequence of learning in some subjects is unclear, particularly in key stage 3. As a result, not all pupils develop sufficient subject knowledge or skills. Leaders need to review the current approach to curriculum planning in these subjects to ensure pupils have every opportunity to succeed.

- Suspensions are used appropriately, but rates of repeat suspensions are high among vulnerable pupils. Absence through suspension hampers pupils' learning. Leaders need to ensure their current approach to behaviour management is implemented more rigorously to reduce the number of repeat suspensions.
- Values are shared by school leaders, but lines of accountability for pupils' progress are sometimes unclear. This means that vulnerable pupils and those with SEND are at risk of underachievement because actions are not well coordinated or monitored. Leaders need to review the management of these areas to ensure effective coordination of intervention strategies.

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.

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

Unique reference number	139311
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10255056
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	642
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Steph Day
Headteacher	Ross Li-Rocchi
Website	www.hobart.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	18 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Clarion Trust.
- Ongoing recruitment challenges have led to an increase in the use of supply staff.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 met with the headteacher and other staff. There were telephone meetings with alternative provision leaders. Inspectors also met with four members of the governing body, chair of governors, chair of trustees and chief executive officer.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, design and technology, music, mathematics, history and science. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum planning, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors spoke with staff and pupils. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to review their knowledge, records and actions. The inspectors also looked at safeguarding records and actions and reviewed information about the safer recruitment of staff.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils to talk about their learning and school experience.
- The inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation provided by the school. This included the school improvement plan, curriculum documentation and school policies.
- There were 176 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Parent View, and 117 free-text comments from parents. Inspectors also took account of 33 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

Jonathan Rockey, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Steven Hogan	Ofsted Inspector
Garry Trott	Ofsted Inspector
Russell Ayling	Ofsted Inspector

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