

Inspection of a good school: East Bergholt High School

Heath Road, East Bergholt, Colchester CO7 6RJ

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 June 2023

Outcome

East Bergholt High School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

There are high expectations for pupils' achievement and behaviour. These are largely realised. Pupils benefit from newly adopted approaches to how the curriculum is taught and they learn well. Pupils understand individual difference, showing respect for other people's characteristics and beliefs.

Pupils are enthusiastic about the opportunities they have to get involved in different things, such as clay club, chess club, drama and sports. Leaders provide transport to make sure pupils who live some distance from the school can attend.

Behaviour has improved markedly since all pupils returned to school following the pandemic. Most of the time, the environment is conducive to pupils learning well. There are still occasions when this is not the case. This impacts negatively on some pupils' enjoyment of school.

There is not much bullying and, when it is reported, it is mostly dealt with well. Pupils are able to share concerns they might have about their safety. This helps to keep them safe. However, leaders have not been clear enough about how bullying is dealt with and about how and when to pass on different types of worry. This has resulted in some pupils not understanding well how and whether to report concerns to staff.

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

Senior leaders have established a common approach to curriculum planning. As a result, across the school, curriculum leaders have set out what they want teachers to teach and when. This typically ensures that pupils learn key information in a timely fashion. Curriculum leaders have planned carefully to ensure that what pupils learn becomes increasingly complex over time, building on what they have learned before.

Staff use effective teaching approaches, such as drawing out information from pupils with considered questions. They check that pupils have understood what they are taught and

go over what pupils have learned at helpful points to ensure it becomes embedded in pupils' memories. Teachers use the information leaders have provided about pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well to support those pupils.

The effect of this strong curriculum design and teaching is that pupils, including those with SEND, learn well over time.

In the past, the number of pupils undertaking the range of qualifications which make up the English Baccalaureate has been low. This is primarily due to a low take-up of languages. Leaders have made notable changes to how languages are taught at key stage 3 in an attempt to improve the quality of provision and popularity of the subject. These changes have not yet had time to impact on the uptake of languages at GCSE.

Leaders recognise that some pupils coming to the school are at the early stages of learning to read. For some time, the school has had a phonics programme in place to help pupils who cannot decode words well. More recently, leaders have identified that some pupils struggle with comprehension. Their work on this is beginning to show some initial success.

When all pupils returned to school following the pandemic, leaders were surprised by some of the negative behaviours some pupils demonstrated. Consequently, they have made improving behaviour a significant priority. They have been largely successful. There is now a far more consistent approach by teachers to managing pupils' behaviour. Staff are well supported by leaders in this. There are still some pupils who misbehave some of the time, disrupting the learning of others.

Leaders promote respect for others particularly well. Pride flags fly, for example, beside the field to celebrate pride month, and pupils talk about how it is fine to be yourself. They recognise and reflect positively on how the school promotes treating people well.

Staff are highly appreciative of leaders' work, including of how leaders support them and consider their workload. A high proportion of staff responded to Ofsted's survey of their views, and all were proud to be a member of staff at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders carry out appropriate checks on adults who work with children in the school. They make sure that staff are trained to keep pupils safe. Staff know their role in keeping pupils safe and how they should go about this.

Leaders record and deal with safeguarding concerns well. They have a clear understanding of safeguarding practices and work with external agencies, following up on concerns in a timely fashion.

Leaders help pupils to understand how to keep safe, for example through their considered relationships and sex education programme.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils misbehave and some teachers do not deal with this as well as they should. This means that pupils' learning is sometimes disrupted. Leaders need to ensure that all teachers use leaders' approach to managing behaviour at all times.
- Leaders have not been clear enough with pupils about when and how pupils should pass on concerns, or what will happen as a result. Consequently, pupils are not always aware of who they should talk to if they have a worry, or of what might happen if they pass on a concern. Leaders need to make sure that all pupils know who to talk to in which circumstances, and what sort of actions might follow.

Background

When we have judged good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 2013.

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	137218
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10288501
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	919
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jonathan Waters
Headteacher	Dan Woodcock
Website	www.ebhigh.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 January 2018

Information about this school

- The school makes use of four unregistered and two registered alternative providers.
- 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

- 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, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, other leaders, the chief executive officer of the trust and representatives of the trust board and academy advisory committee.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: art, geography, science and design technology. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also spoke to leaders, reviewed plans and looked at samples of pupils' work in modern foreign languages and mathematics.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector reviewed the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks, spoke with the designated safeguarding lead and the trust's safeguarding and attendance lead, and looked at safeguarding records. Inspectors also spoke with pupils and staff about safeguarding.
- Inspectors spoke with staff and groups of pupils, as well as taking account of the of the 73 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and 162 responses to Ofsted's survey of pupils' views.
- Inspectors considered the 190 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 185 free-text comments, as well as one email received from a parent during the inspection.

Inspection team

Andrew Hemmings, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Carole Herman

Ofsted Inspector

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