



Hobart High School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121153
LEA NORFOLK LEA
Inspection number 280942
Inspection dates 29 March 2006 to 30 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. Paul Cosway LI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Kittens Lane
School category	Community		NR14 6JU
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01508520359
Number on roll	694	Fax number	01508528024
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Peter Fraser
Date of previous inspection	11 October 1999	Headteacher	Mr. John Robson

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 16	29 March 2006 - 30 March 2006	280942

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Hobart High School is an average sized comprehensive school in the small town of Loddon, near Norwich. The local population served by the school represents a wide mix of social backgrounds. Many pupils come from rural areas and are bussed into school. Pupil mobility is very high. The school admits significant numbers of pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 because of the diverse provision in the district around Loddon, including junior, primary and middle schools. Attainment on entry is close to average. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is a little below average. Pupils are mostly of White British heritage. There are very few pupils whose first language is not English and none is at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those with statements of special educational needs, is close to average. The school had been awarded science specialist status just before the inspection began.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school that gives excellent value for money. The school has been modest in its own estimation of its effectiveness. It has judged itself to be good, reflecting its desire to continue to find ways in which it can improve. Most of the teaching is good or excellent and it is outstanding overall. This, along with the excellent ethos for learning, is the key to the school's success and enables all pupils to achieve very well. All pupils make outstanding progress from their levels of attainment when they enter the school, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language. Standards are well above the national average. In some subjects, such as geography and science, they are very high. The school is working to improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning in the very few subjects where standards are close to average. This is an inclusive school. The care and support for pupils and the relationships between the pupils and adults are outstanding, as is pupils' personal development. Pupils enjoy school and say that it is 'brilliant'. They have very positive attitudes towards learning and their behaviour is excellent. Parents feel that their children are very well cared for and that they make very good progress. Almost all agree with the parent who told the inspectors that they are lucky to be able to send their children to the school. The curriculum is good, with a strong range of GCSE subjects, but limited provision for work-related courses. The school's leadership and management are outstanding. The school has excellent procedures in place for tracking pupils' progress. Staff and governors work well together. Issues identified in the previous inspection have all been tackled successfully and there has been excellent improvement. Given the very good systems for self review and the strong sense of teamwork and commitment from all staff, the school is well placed to become even more effective in future.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to monitor and review the work in subject areas that do not achieve as well as others, in order to share best practice and to raise standards even further.
- As planned, extend the range of subjects available to pupils in Years 10 and 11 to include work-related courses, for those who would find these more relevant to their needs than traditional GCSE courses.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Overall, standards are well above average at the end of Year 9 and at the end of Year 11. They vary between subjects. Attainment is high in English and science at the end of Year 9. Standards are high in geography, science, German, design and technology, vocational studies and English by the end of Year 11. In these subjects, the proportions of pupils who attain passes at A* or A grades and of pupils who gain A* to C grades are well above the national average. Every pupil gained at least five GCSE passes. This is a much higher percentage than in most other comprehensive schools. It reflects the

inclusive nature of the school and its aim of ensuring that all achieve as well as possible. The school sets itself and its pupils challenging targets. It exceeded these last year and is on target to meet them this year. Pupils' achievement is outstanding. They make excellent progress from their levels of attainment on entry to the school, which are close to average for their age. Boys and girls achieve equally well, especially in the subjects in which standards are high. Progress is satisfactory in the few subjects in which attainment is close to the national average: physical education and art and design. Although attainment overall is above average in mathematics and pupils make good progress, the numbers gaining the highest grades are lower than in most other subjects. The school is aware that there are a few subjects in which pupils do not achieve well and it is working hard to correct this. Inspectors saw evidence of improvement. The work that the school has done to improve the quality of teaching and learning in these areas and the increased emphasis on target setting are helping to improve the progress that pupils make. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, those for whom English is an additional language and the gifted and talented all make outstanding progress, because of the good provision for their individual needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development is outstanding. Pupils are proud of their school. They have excellent attitudes to learning and enjoy school. This is reflected in the above average attendance rates. Relationships between pupils and between teachers and pupils are exceptionally good and consequently behaviour is excellent. This produces a very strong and positive learning culture, in which 'it is cool to learn'. Pupils are polite and courteous and feel safe and secure. They are treated fairly and know that adults will listen to them. A very small number of parents had concerns about bullying. Pupils said that bullying was rare and any reported issues are dealt with very effectively. Pupils contribute well to local community activities and raise funds for good causes, such as the local air ambulance. They adopt safe and healthy lifestyles, eating wholesome food at lunchtimes and taking full advantage of the many sporting activities available. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The social and moral aspects are outstanding. Pupils respect the views, values and beliefs of others, their appreciation of our multicultural society is satisfactory. Literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology (ICT) skills are well developed. This prepares them well for employment and higher education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding. The vast majority of teaching is good or better with only a small amount satisfactory. An excellent range of teaching and learning strategies supports timetabled lessons, including regular revision sessions, holiday

revision clubs and liaison with home to ensure that work is up to date. Teachers have very good knowledge of their subjects and excellent working relationships with the pupils. The pupils arrive at lessons ready to learn and are very well motivated. This creates a very positive learning environment in which pupils enjoy their work. Teaching assistants give very good support to pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. In the best lessons there are high expectations, teaching is challenging and pupils are actively involved in their learning. The high quality of learning in these lessons is supported by regular marking, with constructive comments enabling the pupils to know how to improve their work, and by regular monitoring of pupils' progress towards their target grades. In a few lessons, teachers use a limited range of learning activities, so that pupils are passive and insufficiently challenged.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's judgement that the curriculum is good. It meets requirements and has some outstanding features. There is the opportunity for all pupils to study both French and German at GCSE, for example, and a wide variety of activities in physical education. The excellent range of extra-curricular activities include many music and sporting clubs, dance, drama and the Duke of Edinburgh award. Very good catch-up sessions are offered to those pupils who need additional help to get to the required standard in English and maths. Opportunities to take GCSE examinations early extend and challenge the most able pupils and those with particular musical, artistic and sporting talents have good opportunities to shine. The school has responded imaginatively to the challenge of covering all aspects of ICT by putting on a special two-day course for all Year 10 and 11 pupils who are not taking ICT as a GCSE subject. This is run in conjunction with a local business. There is a wide and successful range of GCSE courses on offer, but the school recognises that some pupils would benefit from work-related courses. Only one is currently available, but the school plans to introduce more for the next academic year.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The quality of care provided by the school is outstanding. All requirements for child protection are in place and appropriate risk assessments undertaken. The very successful, integrated system of care ensures that there is excellent communication within the school. Parents are fully involved. All this ensures that pupils are well known, monitored and supported both pastorally and academically. Any areas of concern are identified quickly and dealt with very effectively. The school policy of keeping class sizes small means pupils' individual needs are met well. Pupils know their targets and how they can improve the standard of their work. Suitable focused support is given in a range of settings to assist them in raising their expectations and achievement. The very good careers programme gives advice on opportunities when leaving school and raises aspirations for higher education. Effective arrangements to deal with discipline problems have resulted in very low exclusion rates. The pupils are appreciative

of the care they receive, describing the school as 'brilliant', offering 'a wealth of opportunities', with 'excellent support' which is 'personal' to each one of them.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher, ably supported by his senior team, has tackled all the issues raised in the last report and improvement since then has been excellent. He has a strong focus on raising achievement and has rigorously reviewed the work of the school very closely, using all available data as well as monitoring of lessons, in order to find areas for improvement and then act upon them. He is well supported by everyone associated with the school and all have high expectations for continued improvement. The governing body is supportive of the school and monitors its work well. As a result of all this, the school's capacity to improve further is outstanding. Parent questionnaires and pupil surveys form an important part of the school's very effective self-evaluation procedures. Every department has its own improvement plan and these are well-considered and effective. The school budget is used very efficiently to create small classes and to ensure that teachers and learners have the resources they need to succeed. The support and office staff are efficient and effective. Care is taken to provide pupils with a well-managed, attractive and clean learning environment that celebrates them and their achievements. Everyone is valued and all are given opportunities to succeed.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much to all of you who spoke to us and answered our questions during the recent inspection of your school. We very much appreciate the help that you gave us and we were very impressed by your courtesy and excellent behaviour throughout our visit. We decided that your school is outstanding and is very well-placed to improve even further in future. These are some of the strengths that we found. - Standards in the Year 9 tests and GCSE examinations are well above average. - In some subjects you do remarkably well. Results in a broad range of subjects are high. - The leadership of the school is excellent. - The quality of teaching is outstanding overall. - Your excellent attitudes to school, along with your behaviour in class and around the school, create an environment in which you make rapid progress. - The curriculum is good and the range of after-school clubs and activities that you can join is outstanding for a school of your size. - Your personal development, the care and guidance you receive and the ways that you are prepared for the next stage of your education are outstanding and contribute to the progress that you make. There are some areas that are strengths, but could be improved even further. - You achieve very well indeed in many subjects, but in others you do not make such rapid progress and we are asking the school to work to improve these. - Some of you would benefit from being able to follow work-related courses and we have asked the school to provide more of these. Very many of you are very proud of your school. We think that you are right to be so, and that the school should be proud of you. Best wishes for the future.