



Reepham High School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121161
LEA NORFOLK LEA
Inspection number 280944
Inspection dates 7 December 2005 to 8 December 2005
Reporting inspector Mr. John Mitcheson LI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Whitwell Road
School category	Community		NR10 4JT
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01603870328
Number on roll	815	Fax number	01603870988
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs. Jane Raynes
Date of previous inspection	8 May 2000	Headteacher	Mr. Christopher Hassell

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Reepham High School is a mixed comprehensive school for pupils aged 11 to 16. At the time of the inspection it had 815 students. Of these, 97% are from White British backgrounds and less than 1% speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is higher than would be expected for a school of this type and size. The school serves the town of Reepham and a large surrounding area of rural Norfolk. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. It has had specialist Technology College status since 1999 and holds several awards including Sportsmark, Artsmark, school curriculum award, international schools award and Investors in People. It offers learning opportunities beyond the timetabled day to pupils and adults in the local community.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Reepham High School is an outstanding school. It has a very caring ethos, a distinctive character and is well regarded by parents. It is prepared to take risks and be innovative to ensure pupils get the very best opportunities to learn and to take an active role in local community life. Pupils feel safe, enjoy school tremendously and achieve very well. Results in national tests and examinations in almost all subjects are consistently high. It has made the most of its specialist status to make improvements in the school and to establish strong links with local schools and businesses. It has also made the most of its membership of a federation of high schools. The school's evaluation shows it knows itself well, believing itself to be an outstanding school, a view with which inspectors agree. It has demonstrated that it has the capacity to sustain improvement and has made very good progress on the few issues raised in the previous inspection report. Teaching is consistently good and on occasions, outstanding. Results in national tests and examinations are well above average. Girls usually do slightly better than boys although boys' performance improved this year. The school plans to repeat the actions taken to raise further the attainment of boys in GCSE examinations. Some pupils are entered for GCSE and AS level examinations in Year 10, and this policy is proving successful. The leadership team and, in particular, the headteacher are not complacent about the high standards already achieved; they are constantly seeking improvement in all aspects of school life. They have worked hard to improve resources and the school provides excellent value for money. Care, guidance and support of pupils are outstanding. Pupils comment very favourably about the positive relationships in school and the willingness of teachers to make a special effort to help them to succeed. Pupils' personal development and well being are also outstanding. Pupils enjoy coming to school, feel welcomed by friendly staff and other pupils. Behaviour is outstanding in lessons and around the school. Pupils display very positive attitudes towards learning. Year 11 pupils lead by example as prefects, counsellors and members of the school council.

What the school should do to improve further

- focus on raising further the attainment of boys in GCSE examinations - involve pupils in their own, and others' learning by providing opportunities to work collaboratively and to review each others' work - develop further the curriculum in Years 10 and 11 to better meet the needs of all groups of pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Overall, pupils make outstanding progress and achieve very high standards. Performance in GCSE examinations in 2005 was particularly impressive; the proportion of pupils achieving 5 or more passes including English and mathematics was well above the national average. Key Stage 3, results were also exceptionally good, with many pupils exceeding national expectations and achieving higher grades in national tests. When

pupils enter the school in Year 7 their standards are average. Achievement in all core subjects at Key Stage 3 is outstanding; the majority of pupils, including those who have special educational needs, make rapid progress and many achieve well above average standards by the age of fourteen. Boys and girls achieve similar high standards in English, science and, especially, in mathematics in which results are outstanding. The school sets demanding but achievable targets, based on what is known about each pupil. At Key Stage 4, pupils continue to make excellent progress. Whilst boys make better progress, girls achieve better results than boys at GCSE. The school is taking positive action to improve the performance of boys, and results improved in 2005. Above-average GCSE results have been achieved every year since the last inspection, and results in 2005 were the highest ever, with a high proportion of pupils achieving grades A* and A. A significant number of gifted and talented Year 10 pupils achieve higher pass grades in GCSE examinations. Several progress to achieve higher A-B grades at AS level in Year 11.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Inspectors agree with the school that personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils are extremely polite and helpful as a result of the strong emphasis on these attributes promoted throughout the school. Attitudes shown by pupils towards each other are exceptional; they are caring individuals and have a strong sense of right and wrong. Spiritual awareness is evident during assemblies and tutorials. Pupils develop a broad cultural awareness through the international links with other countries established by the school. Relationships between pupils and adults are very positive. Pupils enjoy coming to school as shown by above-average attendance. They value highly the efforts of hard working staff and wear their school uniform with pride. The school environment is treated with respect, particularly the high quality displays of pupils' work around the school. Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils feel safe and secure and feel they can contribute to improving school life. For example, the views of the school council have led to the introduction of healthier options at lunchtimes. Older pupils are proud to act as prefects and councillors, and younger pupils greatly appreciate the care and attention provided when they first arrive in school. Pupils leave school as well-rounded, articulate and mature young people, well prepared and eager to make a significant contribution to the community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is consistently good, with some outstanding features. Inspectors agree with the school that teaching and learning are good overall and that the school's evaluation of lessons is accurate. Teachers use their expert subject knowledge to prepare and deliver stimulating and well structured lessons which capture pupils' attention. Pupils enjoy coming to lessons and participate with enthusiasm, particularly when they are

given opportunities to lead activities or work creatively, on their own and collaboratively in groups. Learning is good when teachers plan work that engages pupils' interest and use a range of resources, particularly information and communication technology (ICT) to stimulate learning. Excellent relationships between pupils and staff allow pupils to feel confident about asking questions, seeking clarification and asking for help. Teachers are particularly effective in providing intensive support to individuals of all abilities, including those who have special educational needs. Teachers and pupils are effectively supported by teaching assistants. This, together with the excellent behaviour and positive attitudes displayed by pupils in all lessons results in exceptional pupil progress and well above average standards. Assessment is thorough and helps pupils identify their strengths, weaknesses and what they need to improve further. Regular checks are made by senior staff of the quality of teaching and learning. At times, when lessons are overly teacher-centred and pupils remain passive, progress is less marked. Opportunities for pupils to share their work with others and take a more active role in some of the activities could be further developed.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a varied and stimulating curriculum that meets all statutory requirements. Pupils are provided with a core curriculum that includes technology, religious studies and an additional modern foreign language. Pupils who have special educational needs are given additional literacy, numeracy and ICT support. The school has introduced vocational courses in media, applied science, leisure and tourism and NVQ courses at local colleges to meet the needs of those pupils for whom a full programme of GCSEs may not always be appropriate. It plans to introduce more vocational courses to prepare pupils for further education and the world of work. . All pupils in Year 10 enter the GCSE examination in information and communication technology. More able pupils enter the GCSE mathematics and additional science examinations. A few gifted and talented pupils study electronics to AS level in Year 10 and more study AS mathematics in Year 11. Two hours of PE is provided in all years except year 10. The vast majority of pupils participate in an impressive range of educational visits and extra-curricular activities including sport, drama, art and music.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Pupils speak with great pride about the school. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and friendly. Form tutors play a key role in ensuring that pupils are making the necessary progress and meeting the targets set for them. This support is valued highly by pupils. All pupils make exceptional progress including those with special educational needs. The school provides a safe environment; audits ensure the site and equipment are safe. Regular assessment and monitoring has a positive impact on achievement. Pupils likely to underachieve are identified early and positive action is taken to support them. Homework is set regularly and a good system of rewards and letters of praise or concern sent to parents

operates effectively. Mentoring by school staff, business link personnel and university students helps individual pupils to maintain their progress. Pupils receive high quality careers advice, and experience the world of work through placements with local businesses. Good guidance is provided for pupils and parents on the selection of GCSE courses at the end of Year 9. Procedures for child protection are in place and the school meets all statutory requirements.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The headteacher's clear vision is shared by the leadership team and all staff. He has introduced several innovative ideas to raise standards and is well aware of the next steps needed to develop the school further. Management responsibilities are devolved to staff: this has led to a stable, highly motivated and effective leadership team who work very well together to raise standards. Leaders at all levels are highly focused on school improvement and promoting pupils' well-being. The school knows itself well and has acted decisively to address issues raised in the last inspection. Additional teaching assistants support pupils' learning. The coordinator for those pupils who have special educational needs ensures that all teachers provide these pupils with high quality intensive support and personal care in all lessons so that they too can make excellent progress. Teaching is now consistently good, and regular monitoring of teaching and management contributes significantly to raising overall standards. Effective systems are in place to track pupils' progress and intervene early to support identified pupils. The teaching of music has improved. Technology College status has allowed the school to become a focal point for learning in the community and to enhance its accommodation and resources. There is good wheelchair access around the school. It is liaising with local schools to develop electronic learning resources and develop homework clubs in outlying primary schools where parents can support their children's learning, and adults can gain recognised qualifications. Governance of the school is effective. Governors are focused on the main priorities for development of the school, bringing in experience and skills and providing challenge. Resources are managed well and value for money is excellent. Parents are appreciative and very supportive of the school, and an active parents' association plays an important role in fund-raising for the school and the local community.

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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	2	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	1	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	1	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?	2	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	1	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

Earlier this week I visited your school with three other inspectors. Throughout our visit your behaviour was exceptional and you made us feel very welcome. Reepham High School is an outstanding school. You are extremely proud of it and thoroughly enjoy being members of the school. You all display very positive attitudes. Many of you are involved in extra-curricular activities and we were very impressed with your work in the active-listening forum, school council, and the duties you carry out as prefects. You like and respect your teachers very much and appreciate what they do for you. They care for you very well and provide good teaching in lessons and make regular assessments of your progress so you can achieve your very best in tests and GCSE examinations. One of the ways teachers can make lessons even better is by giving you more responsibility in them and planning opportunities for group work so that you become more involved in your own and others' learning. Many of you achieve exceptional results in GCSE examinations and we agree with the school's plans to introduce more vocational courses that will prepare you for further education and the world of work. The school is working hard to ensure boys achieve as well as girls and we have asked teachers to continue to plan lessons that engage and interest boys to a greater extent. The headteacher and his staff lead and manage your school exceptionally well. You can play a part in the great plans the school has for the future by telling your school council representatives your views so they can relay them to senior staff. Once again thank you for your kind welcome, we wish you all well.