



Archbishop Sancroft High School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121188
LEA NORFOLK LEA
Inspection number 280951
Inspection dates 22 March 2006 to 23 March 2006
Reporting inspector Dr. Ian Seath LI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Wilderness Lane
School category	Community		IP20 9DD
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01379 852561
Number on roll	428	Fax number	01379 852561
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr.Dennis Osborne
Date of previous inspection	29 November 1999	Headteacher	Mr. Stephen Carter

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 16	22 March 2006 - 23 March 2006	280951

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Archbishop Sancroft High School is a small Church of England mixed comprehensive school for students aged 11 to 16. There are 428 students on the roll, most of whom are white British. The first language of almost all of them is English. The school serves the south Norfolk area around Harleston, a rural area of low deprivation and high stability. The proportion of students with special educational needs is a little higher than the national average. Attainment on entry is around the national average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Archbishop Sancroft High School is a good school that does well by its students, although further work needs to be done to stretch the most able students. The large majority of students do well in their GCSEs, although girls do not make as much progress as boys. The school provides a good foundation to take them forward into further study elsewhere if they choose. The school has successfully addressed all the issues identified in the last inspection. It is well-supported and liked by parents, students and teachers and has a well-maintained and pleasant campus that is enriched by many displays to celebrate achievement. Students receive good care and support. They feel safe and welcomed. Behaviour around the schools is good, and students move in an orderly way between classes. Students are generally attentive and calm and show respect both for those around them and their environment. However in a small minority of instances, the poor behaviour of a few individuals disrupts the learning of others in class. None of the teaching observed was unsatisfactory, and in many examples it was good. More could be done to share this best practice. The school has a good understanding of its own teaching and learning. The school has made good progress to address variable performance in English over recent years. In common with many other subjects, performance in GCSE English improved markedly in 2005, and there are early signs that progress also improved. However it is too early to be sure that these improvements will be sustained. Leadership and management are good, and the school has demonstrated that it has the capacity to improve further. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Address the imbalance of achievement between male and female students. - Continue to improve performance in English. - Develop more effective strategies to improve the achievement of the most able students. - Continue to improve teaching and learning by the identification and sharing of the best practice.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Overall, achievements and standards are good despite much variation in the performance of English in recent years. When students enter the school in Year 7, their prior attainment is broadly around the national average. Overall progress at Key Stage 3 has been variable in recent years. Although it declined in 2004, in 2005 it recovered significantly. Overall, most students progress in line with expectations at Key Stage 3. Progress in English is satisfactory, but is better in mathematics and science. The progress of students with special educational needs is satisfactory. Overall progress at Key Stage 4 has improved and GCSE results demonstrate that it is generally good. The school recognises that progress in English has varied considerably in recent years. In 2005 it was satisfactory, but good for mathematics. Overall, students do well and the proportion of students achieving 5 or more GCSE passes at grades A* to C is

above the national average for the majority of subjects, in some cases markedly so. Female students progressed less well than males. Pass rates generally improved over and above national improvements in 2005. The school has addressed issues of performance in English. (GCSE pass rates improved substantially in 2005). In addition, the school's own data indicate recent significant improvements in progress in this subject. However it is too early to be sure that these improvements will be sustained. Although the proportion of students achieving A* to C grades is above the national average, the proportion of the highest grades A* and A is below the national figure in many subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development and well-being of students is outstanding. They feel safe and secure and enjoy coming to school. They speak highly of the support from, and access to, staff. Behaviour is generally good, though a small minority of students occasionally disrupt the learning of others in class. The school has an effective behaviour policy. Students generally treat those around them with respect and are rightly proud of their school and their work. Attendance has improved and is now above average. The very effective mentoring scheme ensures that students who are likely to underachieve are identified and supported with designated mentors from outside the school. This programme is critically evaluated each year and has a significant and positive impact on students' progress and performance. The school makes a significant contribution to students' awareness of healthy life styles through a wide range of sporting activities and guidance on healthy living. Participation in team events is very good. Catering staff work closely with staff and students to produce an excellent range and balance of healthy food and drink options. Many Year 11 students contribute to the school community by helping younger members of the school to develop their personal and study skills. A stimulating and well developed programme of citizenship develops personal skills and prepares students well for later life. Careers guidance and work-related experiences are very good. The school is well supported by local businesses to the benefit of students.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Inspectors agreed with the school's own evaluation that teaching and learning are good overall. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Teachers have good subject knowledge which enables them to teach with confidence. The school's own evaluation of teaching and learning is accurate. It has an appropriate emphasis on the continual development of teaching, though in a minority of examples insufficient attention is given to the learning rather than the teaching. The school does identify and share some good practice. However the process could usefully be extended further so that the best teaching practice is more effectively shared between subjects and departments.

In most lessons, a variety of activities ensures that students learn effectively. These lessons are sensibly planned with good behaviour management so that students know what is acceptable and what is not. They are not afraid to ask challenging questions, and may be encouraged to do so by the teacher. All students are involved and make contributions. In the minority of less successful lessons, students are unsure about asking questions, and their learning is not effectively monitored. Teachers use a limited variety of techniques to stimulate learning, and in a few lessons a small minority of students become bored and disrupt the learning of others. The extent to which learning is assessed is inconsistent. In the best examples, homework is marked and returned promptly with helpful comments so that students are clear about what they need to do to improve. This is not always the case however, and occasionally work is not returned for some time. Poor spelling is rarely corrected. Additional learning support is provided promptly for those who need it. However the initial evaluation for support needs, through external agencies, is often delayed. Learning support assistants work well to complement and support teaching and learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum that meets statutory requirements. Students participate in an excellent range of extra-curricular activities. Many students take advantage of numerous residential and foreign trips. All students benefit from careers and work experience. The school is developing its range of vocational courses for students in years 10 and 11. Those with an interest in agriculture are able to take a GCSE in rural studies and the school has developed an innovative practical skills course. Opportunities to stretch the most able students are limited. Students who are identified as having special educational needs are given Communication Skills lessons. The school provides well for students' personal, social and health education, as well as developing their understanding of being responsible citizens through a stimulating programme of study taught to all. Students have mock interviews and mentoring by members of the local business community as part of their careers lessons in Year 11. All students have access to the Connexions Personal Adviser. Pupils with special educational needs are well taught and provided for.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. The school environment is safe and supportive. Students enjoy their time at school and appreciate the quality of the teaching. They are well guided and supported by their teachers and tutors. Students are often mutually supportive of each other. Bullying is rare and is promptly and effectively dealt with. Older students provide effective additional mentor support for younger peers. Extensive extracurricular provision strengthens relations between staff and students. The school has well developed links with primary schools and post-16 providers. Good guidance is given to students and parents to help them choose options for Key Stage 4. Careers and post-16 guidance is good, and is helped by external mentors and very good

information resources in the library. However subject guidance which explains precisely what students need to do to improve their work is not consistently done by every department. Provision and support for students with special educational needs is good. Arrangements for safeguarding students are satisfactory, though not all governors have been trained in child protection issues.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Inspectors agreed with the school's judgement that leadership and management are good. The headteacher and his senior colleagues provide effective and energetic leadership. The school has a largely accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses, and is clear about what it needs to do to improve. The senior team has a good balance of strengths and they are effective in their roles. The addition to the senior team of a head of teaching and learning has helped a more systematic spread of the best practice, though this could usefully be developed further between departments and subjects. At departmental and operational level, self-reviews generally have precise measurable actions and outcomes. They are sufficiently critical and are effectively used. However, the school's overall self-evaluation document does not focus on targets sufficiently well. It is not critical enough of some underperformance. Procedures for recruiting and appointing staff are effective. Inconsistencies in the performance of English are being addressed. Whilst it is too soon to judge their long-term effectiveness, there are early indications that actions are resulting in improvements. Finances are well managed and carefully monitored. Resources are effectively deployed to give good value for money. The school has productive links with primary schools and post-16 providers that provide continuity to its students' education. Resources for teaching and learning are good, especially in science. The governing body provides a good strategic overview. It is kept well informed by the headteacher. It gives good support to the school and its leaders and ensures that the senior team are accountable for the school's performance. The school has good capacity to improve.

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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?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	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	2	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	2	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?	2	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?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	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	2	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, three of us visited your school for two days. We talked with many of you, sat in on many of your classes, looked at your work and talked to many of your teachers. We were also pleased to receive many letters from your parents about the school. Archbishop Sancroft is a good school, and you have a right to be proud of it. It has many strengths, and one of them is you. Throughout our visit you were courteous and helpful, and the majority of you were keen to learn and worked well. We would like to thank you for this. Your behaviour around the school and in class was also good. However, one of the things we noticed was that in a small number of classes the poor behaviour of a few students distracted the others. The school is aware of this and is taking steps to prevent it, but you can also help. Some of your parents were also concerned about behaviour in class. One of the things you told us was that you enjoyed your time at school, that you were well cared for and felt safe. We thought the school was very good at this and provided many opportunities for activities and visits outside school. You also told us that the amount of bullying was low. You can help keep it that way. If you are affected you must tell either a teacher or your parents, or preferably both. We have asked the school to do some other things. One is to make sure that all homework and assessments are regularly marked with comments that explain to you how to do better even if you have done well. Another is to look at ways of helping you to learn more effectively by sharing the very best ideas about teaching between subjects and teachers. Your school is improving, and the headteacher and his colleagues have plans to make it improve further so that your achievements will improve. We think they will succeed, and so will you. Thank you again, and I wish you well.