

# The Hewett School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121173
<b>Local Authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	313907
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jennifer Brown HMI

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	1047
6th form	257
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Tom Samain
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 February 2006
<b>School address</b>	Cecil Road Norwich Norfolk NR1 2PL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01603 628181
<b>Fax number</b>	01603 764129

---

<b>Age group</b>	11-19
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 May 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	313907

---

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

The Hewett School is a mixed comprehensive school for students aged 11 to 19. It is just above the average size and intake figures for 2008 indicate that numbers in both the main school and sixth form are rising after a period in which the numbers of roll fell significantly. The school admits students from primary schools across Norwich, including a proportion which are located within socially and economically less advantaged areas. The percentage of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has risen significantly in recent years and is well above average; the percentage with a statement of special educational need is slightly above average. The proportion of students whose first language is not English has risen from 4% to 14% in the past two years, reflecting a rise in the numbers of students from minority ethnic groups. The school is currently in the process of being assessed for Media Arts specialist status and has been accepted onto a national programme for the development of Trust Schools.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The Hewett is an improving school with a number of good features, which provides a satisfactory standard of education. Since the last inspection, the curriculum has developed very effectively to meet the wide range of needs of students who attend the school, and is outstanding.

Partnership arrangements with other providers add to the breadth of choices, both at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. Students value the range of options on offer and this has contributed to the improvements in standards and achievement at Key Stage 4.

The school made a significant break-through in increasing the percentage of students who achieve five or more higher grade GCSEs in 2007. This reversed a long-standing tradition of better achievement at Key Stage 3 than at Key Stage 4 and there is every indication this improvement will be sustained in 2008. While students made good progress overall in 2007, achievement and standards remain satisfactory. This is because of consistent underachievement in mathematics at Key Stage 4, where the quality of teaching and tracking of student progress is not continuing the good progress students make at Key Stage 3. Also the progress made by students with more complex learning difficulties and/or disabilities, while they are at the school, is much lower than that of other students.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Friendly, supportive relationships between teachers and students are conducive to learning. Behaviour in lessons is generally good, although low-level disruptions in a number of lessons inhibit student progress. Lessons have a clear plan with a common format. While plans identify students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and expectations of the outcomes for different groups of learners, differentiated activities are not evident in lessons. Marking does not always give students clear advice about what they can do to improve their work and make good progress and some teachers do not track student progress adequately.

The personal development and well-being of students is satisfactory overall. The school has developed a wide range of strategies to improve the attendance of students, and these are having a positive impact in improving attendance overall and reducing the numbers of persistent non-attendees. Students receive good personal guidance and effective use is made of external agencies to help them overcome difficulties. Vulnerable students respond well to the positive relationships with their teachers and the very well targeted support they receive. Students receive good guidance about the range of curriculum options available to them.

The headteacher and senior managers provide effective leadership and management and a strong improvement focus for both staff and students, which has had a positive impact in many areas. Curriculum leaders account for performance in their areas, but are not consistently using robust information to monitor student progress. The evaluation of teaching and learning is regular and accurate. However, managers do not consistently focus on the effective implementation of whole school policies and provide feedback to teachers that highlight strategies to maximise student standards and progress in lessons.

### Effectiveness of the sixth form

#### Grade: 2

The school has a good and improving sixth form. Standards and achievement are good overall. In 2007, the proportion of students who obtained pass grades in GCE A level was broadly at the national average, while in GCE AS level it was above. In the same year the percentage

gaining the highest grades of A or B was a little below average in A level and well above average in AS examinations. Preliminary results for current Year 12 and Year 13 students indicate that achievement is improving significantly because a higher proportion of them are going to reach or exceed their targets and fewer will fail to do so. Sixth form students are outstanding role models for younger students and make an important contribution to the life of the school. Teaching and learning in the sixth form are good. Relationships between students and teachers and between the students themselves are excellent. Teachers structure their lessons carefully and make good use of assessment information to ensure that students know how to improve. Much has been done to evaluate and improve the quality of teaching and this is starting to impact on achievement. The curriculum offer in the sixth form is outstanding. Successful partnerships with other establishments have resulted in students having access to a very broad range of subjects, which includes vocational options and courses to improve literacy and numeracy. They also have the opportunity to take part in a large number of enrichment events and visits. There are excellent links with outside institutions that enhance students' awareness of the world of work and finance. Students speak very highly of the good support and guidance they receive in their studies and in their higher education and career choices. Leadership and management of the sixth form are good. Managers are proactive in raising achievement and in adapting the curriculum so that it matches the changing needs of students.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Increase the rate of improvement of standards and achievement in mathematics at Key Stage 4.
- Ensure all teachers implement whole school policies to maximise the learning and progress of all students in lessons and consistently provide high quality written feedback when assessing students' work.
- Ensure all managers regularly evaluate the impact of whole school policies on the quality of learning and the achievement of all students.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 2**

The percentage of students attaining five or more higher grades at GCSE improved significantly in 2007 to just above the national average and the progress they made overall was good. The proportion of students attaining five or more higher grades, including English and mathematics, also improved and there are good indications from information provided by the school that these improvements in standards will be sustained in 2008. Standards at Key Stage 3 fell significantly in 2007 and were well below average, but students made satisfactory progress overall in relation to their low attainment when they entered the school.

Standards and achievement in the core subject areas are variable. Standards and achievement in science have improved at both Key Stage 3 and 4 since the last inspection. Students make good progress in mathematics at Key Stage 3, but this does not continue at Key Stage 4 where achievement and standards, though slowly improving, are consistently below average. In English, standards and achievement at Key Stage 4 are satisfactory, but progress at Key Stage 3 has

declined, so results in national tests were very well below average in 2007. Information provided by the school and observed during the inspection indicates progress in English has improved and is now satisfactory.

The achievement of vulnerable students, such as those looked after by the local authority is satisfactory, but the achievement of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is more varied. Students with fewer complex needs progress very well, in contrast to those with more complex needs, whose progress is much lower than that of other students at the school.

## **Personal development and well-being**

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Students' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Student behaviour is satisfactory. The behaviour of the majority of students in and around the school is good, but low-level disruption in a number of lessons inhibits student progress. The school is developing a new initiative to address this through engaging students more effectively in lessons.

Although still below the national average, attendance rates are continuing to improve. From September, Parent Support Advisors will work with families and the community to promote even higher rates of attendance. Students feel safe at school. They report that any incidents of racism or bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively. The school manages the behaviour of more challenging students very well and this has significantly reduced the number of students excluded from school for poor behaviour. Students adopt safe practices and are well aware of the dangers of misusing alcohol, drugs and tobacco. They are encouraged to eat healthily, although students and parents complain that food sold in the school is over-priced. The school offers a broad range of extra-curricular activities, including many that encourage students to take regular exercise. Students make a positive contribution to the school, expressing their views on the school website, readily volunteering to take part in school events and through membership of year group and the whole school council. While students have good opportunities to develop skills relevant to future employment, their numeracy skills are currently too low.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory with some good elements, although inspectors saw inadequate lessons in a small number of curriculum areas. Teachers have good subject expertise and warm and supportive relationships with students. They plan most lessons well and share clear learning objectives with students. In a number of lessons, challenging, varied activities enable learners to make good and sometimes outstanding progress. Good plenary sessions help students review what they have achieved and the grades and levels reached. Many teachers use resources, such as information and communication technology (ICT) and electronic whiteboards, effectively to make activities stimulating. A small number of persistently disruptive students hindered learners' progress in some lessons in different curriculum areas. In the lower school, Years 7 to 9, there are not clearly established whole school routines to manage question and answer sessions and class discussions. This can result in students shouting out answers and talking during teacher explanations. Tasks set by teachers do not consistently meet the

needs of all students, particularly the gifted and talented and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Most, but not all, teachers mark work regularly and in a helpful way, so students know the levels at which they are working and how to improve. In the best practice, students receive constructive feedback in lessons and in marked work and frequently assess their own progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 1**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

The curriculum provision is outstanding. Students aged 14-19 have access to an extremely broad and diverse range of academic and vocational courses through partnership arrangements with local institutions. In Years 10 and 11 students are increasingly offered a learning pathway to suit their individual needs. Many undertake a day's vocational training in local college, and from September 2008, this will become two days for students studying the new Diplomas. In Years 7 to 9, a full range of subjects meets national expectations and provides the opportunity for some students to study a second modern language. Careers guidance is good, and all students undertake two-week work placements in Year 10. A good range of educational visits enhances the curriculum and after-school clubs and sports activities further extend opportunities for students to learn and achieve beyond the school day.

## **Care, guidance and support**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The quality of care, guidance and support to students is good. The Student Achievement Centre is pivotal in addressing the behavioural, social, emotional and learning needs of students. This inclusive centre supports individuals innovatively and provides them with help and guidance to improve their educational performance. The Centre continues to play a significant part in improving attendance rates and in reducing disruptive behaviour in lessons. The school makes very good use of many outside agencies to support the needs and development of students. Systems in place for child protection and procedures for safeguarding students' health and safety are thorough. Information gained through assessment is used to set students' targets at Key Stage 4, but it is not as used as effectively at Key Stage 3. In many lessons, teachers track students' progress well and set them regular targets, but this practice is not consistent. Hence, students do not always have a clear understanding of the levels at which they are working.

## **Leadership and management**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The headteacher and senior managers provide a clear direction for improvement. This had resulted in significant improvements since the last inspection in standards and achievement at Key Stage 4, attendance, the management of challenging behaviour and the curriculum. There are indications that actions taken to address underachievement in English have been successful, but they have not yet had sufficient impact in mathematics.

Realistic and challenging targets for improvements in standards and achievement and attendance are set and many met or exceeded. The school maintains a strong commitment to equality of opportunity for all students, but has not yet ensured all learners are consistently achieving as well as they can across all subject areas. Curriculum leaders are held accountable for performance in their areas, but they are not consistently using robust information to monitor student progress towards their targets. Senior and middle managers regularly evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. However, current processes are not thorough enough in evaluating the extent to which teachers are consistently implementing whole school policies, or in identifying and following up areas for development both formally and informally.

Financial management is sound. The school has successfully managed to move its budget from a deficit position over the last three years. Difficulties with teacher recruitment have affected the quality of teaching and learning and student achievement in some areas of the curriculum. Support for new staff is good. Governors have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and make effective use of their expertise to fulfil their responsibilities well.



**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Inspection judgements

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

### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
How well learners enjoy their education	3	
The attendance of learners	2	
The behaviour of learners	3	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	2

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

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

22 May 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of The Hewett School, Norwich, NR1 2PL

Thank you very much for making us so welcome and for the way in which you shared your views with us, both in formal and informal meetings and within lessons. You are clearly proud of your school. You told us how much you enjoy the sport and other activities at the school. You appreciate the good relationships you have with your teachers, their friendliness and the support they give you. Older students told us how much they value the wide range of curriculum options they have in the upper school and in the sixth form. You attend a school that has many good features and provides you with a satisfactory quality of education. We were particularly impressed by the following.

- The way in which the headteacher, with the support of senior staff, has been successful in improving standards in GCSE examinations and attendance.
- The outstanding curriculum for 14 to 19 year olds resulting from arrangements the school has with other local schools and the Further Education college.
- The contribution many of you make to the school and wider community by volunteering to help in school events and being active members of the school council.
- The quality of care and support you receive when you are experiencing difficulties.
- The way governors use their expertise to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

To make your school better we have recommended that:

- the rate of improvement in standards and achievement in mathematics at Key Stage 4 increases
- all teachers make sure you make the best progress you can and mark books regularly to give you feedback on how you are doing and good advice on how you can improve your work
- the headteacher and all other managers at the school regularly check that policies they have introduced to improve how well you are achieving are making a difference.

The headteacher has been working very hard with other staff to improve the quality of education at the school. You must also play your part by attending school regularly. On behalf of the inspection team thank you for making our visit so enjoyable and we wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Jennifer Brown HMI

Lead inspector