

# Woodbridge High School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102854
<b>Local Authority</b>	Redbridge
<b>Inspection number</b>	323704
<b>Inspection date</b>	1 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Heather Yaxley HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<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 (total)	1511
Sixth form	330
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Colin Mann
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Andrew Beaumont
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 October 2005
<b>School address</b>	St Barnabas Road Woodford Green Essex IG8 7DQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8504 9618
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8559 0487

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector. The inspectors evaluated the school's overall effectiveness and investigated the extent to which the students make good progress during their time at the school and the basis on which the school was evaluating different aspects of its provision as outstanding. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

Woodbridge High is a large, fully comprehensive secondary school with a rapidly expanding sixth form. The students' attainment on entry is broadly in line with national averages, although this represents a wide range of abilities. The school is a specialist language and business, and enterprise college with an applied learning specialism. The students come from a wide range of social and cultural backgrounds. Almost 50% of students come from minority ethnic heritages and approximately 30% speak at least one of 51 different languages at home. However, few of the students are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of those with a learning difficulty and/or disability is below that found nationally and the two main groups identified by the school are those with a moderate learning difficulty and those with specific learning difficulties (dyslexia). The number of students eligible for free school meals is about average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Woodbridge High provides its students with a good standard of education and this includes the sixth form. The headteacher and leadership group continually strive for excellence and are well on the way to developing the school and sixth form into the outstanding provision that they want it to be. There is good capacity to turn their ambition into reality in time, as demonstrated by the effectiveness of changes made since the last inspection. For example, according to information available for 2008, the strong focus on raising standards has successfully turned around the dip in performance at Key Stage 3 in 2007 so that standards are now above national averages. Although there appears to be a slight dip in results for GCSEs this year, they have been above national averages for the past two years. In general, students make good progress from their individual starting points. Students of different backgrounds and abilities achieve equally well.

A particular strength of the school is the quality of the curriculum, which is now outstanding. The range of courses is excellent, with a wide mix of traditional and practical GCSE courses, as well as provision for students wishing to pursue vocational courses. As one student said, 'there is something for everyone here'. Careful planning ensures that students have excellent opportunities to progress to the sixth form and build on what they have already achieved at GCSE level. As a result, increasingly high proportions of students choose to stay on to the sixth form, as well as aspiring to go on to university. This contributes well to the level of their academic success and economic well-being.

The school's specialist status is having a very positive impact across the curriculum as whole. The business, enterprise and language days are a well-established feature of the school, reflecting its specialisms very well and they make an excellent contribution to broader enterprise skills. The teamwork across subject areas, which is a feature of these days, has been extended to the revised Year 7 curriculum, which makes very good links between different subjects. The days that are devoted to Teach a Friend a Language make a particularly good contribution to fostering understanding and tolerance between different groups of students.

The quality of teaching and learning is generally characterised by lively lessons where students enjoy the work and make good progress. The introduction of STAR (Student Teacher Achievement Review) folders is helping students to aim higher towards agreed targets and to review how well they are doing on a regular, planned basis. Teachers' marking is inconsistent in its support to help students improve their work. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and there are high expectations for students to keep up with the brisk pace in lessons. This works well to support the learning and progress for most students but in some lessons the most able are not sufficiently challenged.

The behaviour of students is good and although the rate of exclusions is high, there is a very strong, tangible sense of discipline and order in lessons and around the school. This ensures a culture that is highly focused on learning, respect and responsibility. The students get along well with one another and racial harmony is clearly evident within the school community. Students are staunchly loyal and highly supportive of the school. They respond very positively to good care, guidance and support from staff, ensuring their emotional well-being and academic success.

The leadership and management of the school are good, engendering high quality professional debate amongst staff and using training opportunities to drive school improvement. Some of

the initiatives put in place over the past year need more time to consolidate and ensure consistent practice. While good improvement has taken place because of a clear focus on raising standards, attention to the progress that students make is not always firmly rooted in the school's monitoring of its practice and improvement plans. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties and effectively maintains financial stability but does not always play a full part in challenging the school's performance or in the strategic development of the provision as a whole.

## **Effectiveness of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 2**

The sixth form provides a good standard of education. It is popular with students, is growing steadily and standards are rising. Pass rates at A level are generally above average whilst the proportion of students gaining the higher A and B grades is close to average. The most recent results show that students made good progress in the majority of subjects and achieved significantly above expectations in several others. The school recognises that in a small number of subjects, progress needs to be improved.

The curriculum is an outstanding feature of the sixth form, offering a wide range of courses at different levels, including applied courses linked to the school's specialist status. The success of the curriculum is reflected in the very high proportion of students who choose to stay on into the sixth form. Students are offered a good programme of enrichment activities, including sports. They also take advantage of good opportunities to contribute more widely to the school, for example by helping younger students with their work. The overall quality of teaching is good.

Leaders and managers have already overseen significant growth of the sixth form and have done particularly well in developing the curriculum. Some elements of sixth form provision are not as well developed as others, for example, aspects of support and guidance to enhance students' personal development. The school is aware of this and appropriate plans are in place, such as improved arrangements for tutorials starting this year. The sixth form is therefore well placed to make further improvement.

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

- Leaders and managers to focus more clearly on the progress that students make when evaluating the impact of their actions.
- The governing body to be more fully involved in challenging the school's performance and contributing to the strategic development of the provision.

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**Annex A**

**Inspection judgements**

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

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

**Achievement and standards**

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

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<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.

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2	
The attendance of learners	3	
The behaviour of learners	2	
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	2	

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	2	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

### 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	2	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	
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	



**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

14 October 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Woodbridge High School, Essex, IG8 7DQ

We are writing to thank you for your help during the recent inspection of your school and to let you know about the judgements that we made. Although we were not able to get to see all of you, we did our best to talk to as many students as possible when we were in lessons and more generally around the school. We are particularly grateful to the groups of students that spoke formally to us and to those who showed us around. Without a doubt, we know that you are very loyal and supportive of your school. You are very appreciative of the guidance that you get from staff and more and more of you are choosing to stay on to the sixth form. You are right to be proud and we think that your school, including the sixth form, provides you with a good standard of education. In particular, the curriculum serves you very well and for this reason, we have judged this aspect of the school's work as outstanding.

One of the reasons that your school is so successful and is able to continue to improve is because of the good work of the leaders and managers. They have made many good improvements and those of you who have been at the school for some time will be able to appreciate the changes that have been made since the last inspection in 2005. As in all things, there is always room for more improvement and we know that Mr Beaumont and the leadership team have plans for Woodbridge High to be an outstanding school. We think that the following things will help towards that:

- leaders and managers to focus more clearly on the progress that different groups of students make
- the governing body to be more fully involved in challenging the school's performance and play a greater part in its strategic development.

We hope that you will take an opportunity with your family to read the full inspection report. It is not too long and will give you more detail about our judgements. We know that you will want to play your part in any further improvements and we wish you well in all that you plan for yourselves in the future.

Many thanks again.

Yours sincerely,

Heather Yaxley

Her Majesty's Inspector