

# Sheringham High School and Sixth Form Centre

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121214
<b>Local Authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	327433
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 January 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ian Seath 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>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	817
Sixth form	150
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr David Brown
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Tim Roderick
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 January 2006
<b>School address</b>	Holt Road Sheringham Norfolk NR26 8ND
<b>Telephone number</b>	01263 822363
<b>Fax number</b>	01263 821413

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<b>Age group</b>	11–18
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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

Sheringham High School and Sixth Form centre is a smaller than average school with a higher than average proportion of boys. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average, as is the proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds. The number of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is relatively low. The school has specialist arts status. The number of students in the sixth form is increasing.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Sheringham High School and Sixth Form centre is a good school that has improved since the last inspection. It is well regarded in the community that it serves. Since the last inspection it has addressed all of the issues identified, and as a result standards have improved. The good sixth form has expanded and diversified to cater for the needs of more students. Achievement and standards are good. Inspectors observed students making good progress in class throughout the school. In 2008, students attained the highest Key Stage 3 standards ever for the school. At Key Stage 4, students make better progress than expected in mathematics and English. At GCSE, the proportion of students who gain five good grades is around the national average. However when mathematics and English are included the proportion is well above that expected, with an improving trend since the last inspection. Despite this positive picture however, a minority of less able students do not progress as well as they should.

Personal development and well-being are good. This is largely due to the good care, guidance and support that students receive. Most students enjoy their time at the school, and this is reflected in the majority of questionnaires returned by parents. Behaviour is good, though with occasional disruption in a small number of classes. Some parents are concerned about this. Students feel safe because staff have a high level of commitment to their welfare which is reflected in the low incidence of bullying. Older students mentor younger students well so that they develop a good sense of responsibility which stands them in good stead for progression into the sixth form if they so choose. The school's specialist arts status is helping students to appreciate the diversity of culture both in Britain and abroad.

The school's good curriculum has improved since the last inspection, particularly by the inclusion of more vocational options in both the main school and sixth form. As a result, students make good progress in acquiring the key skills necessary for them to be successful. Teaching and learning are good, though in a few classes teachers do not ensure that all students are sufficiently challenged, especially if they find learning difficult.

Good leadership and management have ensured that standards have improved. The school's self-assessment and monitoring processes are good, and in some areas, exemplary. The school has a good understanding of its own strengths and weakness so that good practice is shared effectively. Governors fulfil their duties well. The school clearly demonstrates a good capacity to improve.

## Effectiveness of the sixth form

### Grade: 2

The effectiveness of the sixth form is good. Students speak highly of their time at the school and the trusting relationships that develop with tutors. Since the last inspection the number of students has increased and the sixth form curriculum has improved. Many more vocational options are now available, with plans to expand provision further. Overall, standards are satisfactory and largely in line with national averages. However, this represents good progress for those students concerned. In 2008, the pass rate was 100%. However the proportion of those achieving the highest grades was just below the national average for A level, whilst above for AS. In 2008, all of those students who wished to progress to university were successful. Retention in the sixth form is good with recent evidence of improvement. Guidance and support have improved since the last inspection and are now good. Few students change courses after

they start. Tutorial and flexible day arrangements ensure that students receive a good grounding in aspects of, for example, sex education, careers advice and applications for university. Progress monitoring has improved since the last inspection, and most students are clear about the steps they need to take to meet demanding targets. Teaching in the sixth form is solidly good. However a few classes are very small, which limits the opportunities for groupwork.

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

- Raise standards further by improving teaching and learning so that students of all abilities are sufficiently challenged.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement and standards are good. Many aspects of the school's performance have improved quickly since the last inspection. Despite a small drop in 2007, overall progress has improved significantly. When students enter the school in Year 7 their prior attainment has been very variable, but overall a little higher than the national average. At Key stage 3, progress and standards are good and in 2008, students attained the highest standards ever reached in the school. At Key Stage 4, progress in class is good. In 2008, results in the core subjects of English and mathematics were significantly above national averages, so that students achieved better than expected. While progress in science was satisfactory, the school's own data indicates recent improvements.

Overall, results of GCSE examinations are good, though with some variations. Progress improves as students reach Year 11, and this trend has improved since the last inspection. The proportion of students who gain five or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C has improved slightly, but remains around the national average. However, when English and mathematics are included, this proportion improves to 11% above the national average, showing a marked improvement since the last inspection. Overall, the proportion of students achieving the highest grades A\* and A is around the national average. However, for English it is well above the national average. The achievements of boys and girls are similar. Lower attaining students, and in particular a small number of girls, do not achieve as well as expected.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Personal development and well being are good. Most students enjoy their education. They make good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They have a good sense of right and wrong and articulate well issues which concern them. Their growing involvement in the activities and opportunities of the performing arts college extends their cultural horizons and helps them to appreciate the diversity of culture in Britain and other parts of the world. Students behave well around the school and in class. They actively involve themselves in initiatives to support one another. For example, many mentor younger pupils or are prefects. Students respond well to the new tutoring system with mixed-age groupings. Students feel very safe in school. Anti-bullying strategies are robust and senior students and adults follow up any concerns. Awareness of how to lead healthy lifestyles is satisfactory though not all students in Years 10 and 11 take two hours of physical exercise each week. Good workplace skills are developed as students move through the school. Good progress in literacy and numeracy ensures that work placements are successful, and often linked to the school's

arts college status. Attendance is around average and has improved in recent years. The proportion of students who are persistently absent has declined and is now around average.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good. Students make good progress as a result of effective teaching and their positive attitudes to learning. In most classes they enjoy opportunities to discuss issues and participate in group activities. Teachers use resources imaginatively to interest and stimulate students, such as the use of historical propaganda film clips seen in a Year 11 history lesson. Teachers explain key points and ask questions well because they have secure subject knowledge which they communicate enthusiastically. However, progress in a small number of lessons is slower. Typically, this is when the pace falls away and higher attaining students are not challenged enough. Occasionally, teachers do not take sufficient account of the targets for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Students' behaviour is generally good with only a small number of lessons where it is less than satisfactory. Most students' work is helpfully marked, with teachers indicating how well students are doing and what they need to do to improve. A minority of teachers' written comments are too general and not linked to improvement. Teaching assistants work hard to help students and provide helpful support to individuals in lessons. Students speak well of their relationships with teachers, as do the majority of parents.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school offers a good curriculum, with a broad range of traditional academic options and an increasing number of vocational courses. Some of the vocational courses are taught at a local college and another secondary school. Because of the school's specialist status, all students are recommended to take an arts subject in Key Stage 4. Furthermore, the specialist status has enabled the school to become highly valued in the local community. The careful arrangement of option blocks means that, whatever their aptitudes or interests, students can choose courses that match their individual needs. Students are supported well in developing their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. This encourages their personal development and they are well prepared for the next phase of their education or working life. Many students participate in an extensive range of high quality extra-curricular activities, including many that are arts-related. Flexi-days and activity weeks provide additional opportunities including trips abroad. Parents recognise that the school's extra-curricular provision is very important in this rural area. This is a strong feature of the school, and one reason why students enjoy coming to school so much.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. Staff demonstrate a high level of commitment to students' welfare. The recent focus to give pastoral leaders greater responsibility for providing academic support is helping to improve students' achievement and enjoyment of school. Good liaison with primary schools helps new students settle into school quickly and well. As one student said, 'We hit the ground running'. Procedures to improve attendance have been successful and the work of the learning support unit and the family mentors has done much to consolidate

this work. Support for vulnerable students is good. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the very few with English as an additional language achieve well because they receive good support both in the learning support unit and through the work of teaching assistants, who understand students' needs well. Art college status is extending learning for gifted and talented students. Students are given good advice on how to reach challenging targets through accurate tracking of their progress and regular review days. They are well informed about work and future academic options.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. Since the last inspection the headteacher and senior staff have provided the school with a clear and purposeful direction for improvement. All the issues identified for improvement at the last inspection have been successfully addressed, and the result has been improving progress and standards. Attendance has improved and is now satisfactory. The large majority of parents who replied to questionnaires indicated their support for the school.

The school has an accurate understanding of its own strengths and weaknesses. The lesson observation system gives an accurate view of teaching and learning and is used effectively to identify and share good practice, a weakness at the last inspection. Self-evaluations are good and, for many departments, they are excellent. They are sufficiently self critical and define actions for improvement with precision. Data is used increasingly effectively to set challenging targets. Progress towards them is monitored well. Communications are good and staff feel well supported in their roles.

Teachers have a good subject knowledge and are appropriately qualified. Resources are satisfactory. The school meets requirements for child protection and race relations. Both are monitored effectively by governors, who exercise their role well. They bring a good range of skills and experience to the school and are well informed about all aspects of school life. Governors challenge poor performance well.

The school demonstrates a good contribution to community cohesion. It has good links with other institutions, especially for the provision of vocational courses. Value for money is good overall, though some courses in the sixth form are very small. The school has demonstrated good capacity to improve further.

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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	3
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?	2	2
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	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	

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

23 January 2009

Dear Students,

Inspection of Sheringham High School and Sixth Form Centre, NR26 8ND

As you will be aware, I spent two days at your school earlier this week, together with three other inspectors. During this time we talked with many of you as well as with your teachers. We sat in on your classes and looked at your work. Throughout this you were courteous and helpful, and for that I thank you. Your school has many strengths and one of them is you.

Your school is a good one that has improved since the last inspection three years ago. If you put the effort in, you are likely to be rewarded by a good set of GCSE results, and if you choose to go on to the sixth form you will also be successful. Your school has introduced many improvements. In particular, it is offering you more and more vocational subjects as an alternative to GCSEs and A levels.

We thought, and you confirmed, that the teachers have good relationships with you, and that you enjoy most of your classes. But we also found that, in just a few classes, you are not all challenged enough to achieve your best. We have asked the school to improve teaching further so that all of you can do well, and they will be working on this. The school knows what it has to do to improve further and plans are well in hand to do exactly that. For example, results in science have not been quite as good as maths and English. One of the things we found is that science is improving because of the actions which the school is taking.

At the last inspection too many of you did not attend regularly enough. This is now improving well but it is important that absence remains low. You told us that the amount of bullying is low. You can help to keep it this way by talking to an adult if you are affected.

I wish you all well, and thank you once again.

Ian Seath

Her Majesty's Inspector