

Archbishop Sancroft High School

Wilderness Lane, Harleston, IP20 9DD

Inspection dates 14–15 November 2013

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| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory | 3 |
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The school promotes a strong sense of community within which students thrive.
- The strong senior leadership team has secured good improvements in teaching and learning since the school's last inspection. Hence, standards have been rising and are above average by the end of Key Stage 4.
- Students across the school, including disabled students, those with special educational needs and the more-able, make good progress and achieve well.
- Teaching is good. Teachers have high expectations and provide students with work that is interesting and varied.
- Students receive good feedback on how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work. Consequently, they know what more they need to do to achieve their target levels or grades.
- Students behave well in lessons. Around the school, they are very polite, friendly and mature. Students form excellent relationships and demonstrate high levels of respect for one another and adults. They feel, and are, safe in school, and most parents agree.
- School leaders, including governors, are very robust in checking the quality of the school's work. They work together to pinpoint any issues quickly and deal with them very effectively. Senior leaders actively promote initiatives to improve the school's performance.
- The range of subjects taught, together with a wide variety of enrichment and extra-curricular activities, provides students with a broad education. Consequently, they develop into well-rounded individuals who are well-prepared for the next steps in their education.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Many good lessons are not outstanding because teachers provide too few opportunities for students to think for themselves and make really rapid progress.
- In some lessons, work is not closely matched to the ability levels of all students.
- Students do not always respond to written comments or questions when work is marked.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team carried out 24 lesson observations, most of which were conducted jointly with members of the senior leadership team. The team also made a number of shorter visits to lessons in order to gain evidence of the quality of support for disabled students and those with special educational needs and the effectiveness of spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and members of the senior leadership team, governors, subject leaders, other staff and a representative from the local authority.
- They spoke informally to students in lessons and around the school as well as holding more formal discussions with representative groups of students from Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4.
- In planning and carrying out the inspection, the inspection team took account of the 37 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View).
- The inspection team took account of 45 Ofsted questionnaires completed by staff.
- Members of the team observed the work of the school. They looked at the school's self-evaluation summary, the improvement plan, a range of policies and procedures, documents relating to the work of the governing body and the arrangements for ensuring that students are safeguarded. Documentation reviewed included data relating to students' attainment and progress, records of behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

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|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Gulshanbir Kayembe, Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Piers Ranger | Additional Inspector |
| Michael Stanton | Additional Inspector |

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The very large majority of the students are from White British backgrounds and all speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported through school action is below the national average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of students for whom the school receives the pupil premium is similar to the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for children in the care of the local authority and students known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Alternative part-time education is currently provided for a very small number of students at the North Suffolk Skills Academy.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of students by the end of Year 11.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all teaching is good and more is outstanding by:
 - ensuring that work provided is always set at just the right level and is not too easy or too hard for any student
 - making sure that teachers always adjust the work set for disabled students and those with special educational needs so that they are able to complete it without being over-reliant on teaching assistants
 - providing students with more opportunities to develop their ability to think for themselves and develop an even greater enthusiasm for learning.
- Encourage students to respond routinely to any comments, suggestions and questions from teachers when their work is marked so they can improve it even more quickly.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students begin at the school with attainment levels that are broadly in line with national averages. However, even within this broadly average range of attainment there are some differences within different year groups, with some groups containing markedly more low attainers than others.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 has been rising since the last inspection and the 2012 results, the most recent published data, were above average in English and mathematics. The proportion of students gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C including in English and mathematics was also above the national average. Students made good progress between the end of Key Stage 2 and the end of Key Stage 4 in mathematics and very good progress in English, where their performance placed them in the top 20% of schools nationally.
- While results in 2013 were not as good as those of 2012, the performance of students currently in the school indicates that this was a one-year dip rather than a significant decline in standards across the school. Progress across all year groups currently in the school and in each subject is good.
- Current Year 11 students are on track to achieve at least as well as students in 2012 and indeed significantly better in some areas such as science, where results have been low over the past two years due to significant changes in staffing.
- A strong focus on developing the quality of teaching in science has led to rapid improvements in the provision within the subject. All groups of students are now making good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of scientific processes and ideas.
- Students have good literary and numeracy skills which support their work and progress in all subjects. These are coupled with good attitudes to learning, strong team work and well-developed skills of collaboration. These qualities enable students to make the most of the learning opportunities they are given in lessons.
- Year 7 students who have low levels of literacy are provided with extra help through, for example, specially designed reading programmes. These are very successful in improving literacy and some Year 7 students have made one or more year's progress in reading in less than a term.
- Students eligible for the pupil premium funding are benefiting from the ways in which it is being used to support their learning. The school has used this funding sensibly to provide extra tuition in subjects such as English and mathematics and support in class. Consequently, the gap between their attainment levels and those of others is closing especially in English. The school's data indicates that by the time the current Year 10 students take their GCSEs, there should be no significant difference in the results of students eligible for support through pupil premium and others.
- Recent re-organisation of the support for disabled students and those with special educational needs has led to improved performance and rates of progress. Well-developed additional support outside lessons enables these students to keep up, or catch up, with others. Support in lessons is a little more uneven but is being improved and, in the main, leads to good progress.

- Most lessons provide a good level of challenge for the more-able students and, consequently, they do well. Teachers are very aware of the more able students in the class and often pitch questions at a higher level for them.
- The small number of students who attend alternative provision are carefully monitored to ensure they attend regularly, behave well and achieve results that will enable them to progress successfully to their next stage of education.
- The school no longer enters students early for GCSE examinations. In the past, early entry for mathematics has not had an adverse impact on students' results.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is usually good and this is the case across different subjects and year groups. Consequently, students make good progress in their learning as they move through the school.
- The school has eradicated all inadequate teaching and only a relatively small proportion requires improvement. Much work has been done to improve lesson planning so that tasks provided are well-structured and interesting. They engage students' actively, are relevant to students and enable them to achieve stated learning outcomes.
- Teachers have developed a sophisticated approach to assessing students' progress which combines thoughtful, probing questioning, observations of how well students are working in lessons, varied ways of gaining feedback from students at key points in lessons and assessing written work to identify next steps in learning.
- Work is often provided at varying levels for different ability groups in the lesson but this is not always the case so that, for some students, the work is sometimes a little too easy or a little too hard.
- Teaching assistants generally make a good contribution to students' progress by encouraging them at all times, clarifying points of difficulty and ensuring students persevere when in difficulty. Occasionally, when teaching assistants are present, teachers rely a little too much on them to support students through a task rather than pitching the work at a more accessible level for lower attainers, disabled students and those with special educational needs.
- In the best lessons, teachers develop students' abilities to use their initiative and think for themselves exceptionally well. Work is very closely matched to individuals so it is very specific to the next steps in learning for each one. Consequently, in these lessons, students demonstrate the ability to solve problems or find things out for themselves, as well as developing a strong desire to learn and the energy and drive to succeed. However, these features are not evident in enough lessons for teaching to be outstanding overall.
- Teachers make good use of group and pair work to involve students actively in tasks. This enables them to learn from one another. In addition, students enjoy this approach and their strong social skills mean that they readily engage in good quality discussions when working in groups or pairs.
- When work is marked, teachers often set additional questions or tasks to extend and challenge students further. However, students do not always respond to these additional challenges and so miss opportunities to take their learning further forward.

- Nonetheless, students have a good understanding of their own progress and current performance. Their regular involvement in peer and self-assessment, together with clear feedback from staff, helps them to have a secure understanding of how to improve.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students' attitudes to all aspects of learning are consistently good across year groups and subjects. These have a positive impact on the progress they make. The school's carefully designed teaching programmes and its strong sense of community enable all groups of students to thrive.
- In class, students respond well to teachers' instructions, allowing lessons to flow smoothly and maintain good momentum. Occasionally in lessons that require improvement, some students begin to lose a little of their enthusiasm and drive because the work is not pitched at the right level for them and is too easy or too hard.
- Students' enjoyment of school is reflected in their good levels of attendance. Students are punctual to school and take advantage of all that is offered including opportunities for after school activities.
- Behaviour is very good around the school. The views of a relatively small proportion of parents who responded in Parent View, who felt the school does not ensure students behave well, are not borne out by the inspection evidence.
- The school's pastoral team work very effectively to create an inclusive and positive climate for learning. They deal quickly with any behaviour issues that do arise and make clear that they expect students to conduct themselves sensibly and maturely. Those with behavioural or other needs are supported exceptionally well.
- Bullying is rare and students show great care and consideration for one another. Students learn how to keep themselves safe, including when on the Internet.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides inspirational leadership and sets high expectations for the performance of the school. He, together with his senior leadership team, communicates these expectations clearly so that all staff are working together towards making the school even better.
- The school is outward looking and makes good use of external partners and the Local Authority to help it to secure tangible improvement. The Local Authority support has been good and contributed to the school's improvement since the last inspection. The school has the capacity to continue to improve.
- The leadership of teaching is strong. The performance of teaching staff is carefully analysed to identify areas for improvement. This, together with evidence from wider evaluations of the school's work, provides important information that feeds into school improvement planning and programmes for improving teaching.
- Training and coaching are used very effectively to secure improvements to teaching. In science, for example, there has been rapid improvement in the quality of teaching as a result of high

quality coaching and mentoring. The school is helping staff to be more innovative and creative in the teaching techniques they use while still being rigorous and demanding.

- The roles of middle leaders, for example subject and departmental heads, are being developed well so that they are making an increasing contribution to school self-evaluation and improvement.
 - Students' progress is well monitored and tracked and action taken to reverse any slippage. Challenging targets are set for students and staff to achieve. Student data is carefully checked to ensure it is accurate and that it provides an accurate view of how well students are progressing.
 - Students follow a wide range of relevant and interesting courses. Most do GCSEs in Key Stage 4 but vocational options and alternative courses are made available for students who would benefit from them. Older students receive effective independent advice and guidance to enable them to make decisions on the next stage in their education and their future lives.
- **The governance of the school:**
- Governors are actively involved in monitoring how good the school is. Their strong links with senior and middle leaders enable them to be well informed about the school's work. Governors have a secure understanding of the quality of teaching and ensure that there is a good link between performance and pay. They receive regular information about the performance of different groups of students, including the impact of the pupil premium funding. Their improving understanding of data places them in a good position to ask challenging questions of school leaders. Governors' frequent checks and rigorous annual review of safeguarding enable them to ensure all statutory requirements relating to the care of students are met.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| Grade | Judgement | Description |
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 2 | Good | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

School details

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| Unique reference number | 121188 |
| Local authority | Norfolk |
| Inspection number | 425329 |

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

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| Type of school | Secondary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 11–16 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 358 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Alan Thorp |
| Headteacher | Richard Cranmer |
| Date of previous school inspection | 8 February 2012 |
| Telephone number | 01379 852561 |
| Fax number | 01379 855829 |
| Email address | office@ashs.norfolk.sch.uk |

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