

The Hewett Academy, Norwich

Cecil Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR1 2PL

Inspection dates

22–23 March 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders, governors and trustees have established a culture of high expectations. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved rapidly and is good.
- Leaders are relentless in their work to drive forward improvements in teaching, behaviour and achievement. Staff share this drive and want the best for pupils.
- Pupils currently in the school, including disadvantaged pupils, are making good progress across a range of subjects, including English and mathematics.
- The Inspiration Trust has been very effective in securing improvements in the school. The support from an executive principal from within the trust and the appointment of the new principal have added impetus to the rate of change in the school.
- The curriculum provides pupils with opportunities to study a wide range of academic subjects. Pupils have a variety of social, cultural and sporting experiences that support their personal development through well-planned enrichment and optional extra-curricular activities.
- The school's unit for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder provides effective support for the specific needs of these pupils and contributes positively to their development.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make slower progress in reading than their peers. Leaders recognise that these pupils need additional support to develop their literacy skills.
- Absence has been well above the national average but is reducing. The proportion of pupils with high levels of absence is reducing but is still too high. A small minority of pupils are persistently late for school.
- Pupils' behaviour in the school is improving and is good. Pupils' off-task behaviour disturbs learning in a small minority of lessons.
- The sixth form requires improvement. Students studying vocational courses have not achieved as well as they should have. Previous guidance has not always ensured that students have followed courses that best matched their abilities and interests. Plans are in place to offer a different range of courses in September 2018.
- Lower-attaining pupils make uneven progress, particularly in mathematics. Teachers do not ensure that support is always well matched to their needs.
- Pastoral leaders know pupils well and provide them with good support. Further improvements are required to ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable pupils are fully met.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
 - further reducing the number of pupils who are persistently absent and improving the punctuality of a small minority of pupils
 - eliminating the remaining low-level disruption by improving the behaviour of the small proportion of pupils who disrupt the learning of others
 - ensuring that planned changes to the pastoral structure result in the needs of the school's most vulnerable pupils being fully met.
- Further raise attainment and increase rates of progress by ensuring that:
 - teachers consistently provide the support needed to enable lower-attaining pupils to make rapid progress, particularly in mathematics
 - the newly established base for pupils who speak English as an additional language supports pupils in developing their reading skills.
- Improve the effectiveness of 16 to 19 study programmes by fully evaluating the revised provision to ensure that it meets the interests and aspirations of students and improves their achievement.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders, governors and the board of trustees have successfully overcome the school's recent legacy of underachievement. They have established a culture of high expectations and aspirations for pupils and teachers. Leaders have successfully communicated the values of respect, aspiration and dedication to staff and pupils. This has contributed to rapid improvements in the quality of teaching, achievement, attendance and behaviour seen over the past two years.
- Leadership has improved at all levels within the school. The executive principal and the chief executive officer of the Inspiration Trust are accelerating the rate of school improvement. Well-targeted support from within the trust has contributed to improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. As a result, the majority of pupils are making good progress in a range of subjects.
- The current principal has added further momentum to the rate of improvement. She is passionately ambitious for the school and its pupils and her passion is reflected at all levels of leadership. The principal has a precise understanding of what needs to improve. Her clear plans for improvement address the right priorities and are having a positive impact.
- Leaders check that their actions are making a difference. They use regular checks on the quality of teaching to ensure that support addresses any weaker practice. Teachers, including those new to teaching, value the training and support provided through the trust. Middle leaders feel that they have the support needed to develop the skills they require to lead their teams effectively and hold others to account.
- Leaders have designed a curriculum that provides pupils with opportunities to develop knowledge across a broad range of academic subjects in key stage 3. Consequently, they are well prepared to follow and be successful in a variety of courses in key stage 4. Pupils develop their interests through timetabled enrichment activities and a wide variety of trips, clubs and sporting activities.
- Leaders provide well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils understand why they need to study the cultures, beliefs and views of others. Teachers seize upon opportunities for pupils to explore these issues in subjects across the curriculum. For example, pupils in a Year 11 art lesson were able to describe to an inspector how their projects reflected their personal views on conflict and equality. Leaders ensure that pupils are well prepared for life in modern British society.
- Leaders' considered use of the pupil premium funding is boosting disadvantaged pupils' achievement. Leaders have carefully analysed which actions made the most difference to pupils at the end of key stage 4. Leaders ensure that additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and the Year 7 catch-up funding supports pupils to make good progress.
- Leaders have rightly identified the link between pupils' previously poor attendance and behaviour and underachievement. Leaders are taking effective action to improve attendance and dramatically reduce incidents that lead to fixed-term exclusions. They have also significantly reduced the number of lessons where learning is disturbed by

low-level disruption. However, leaders recognise that more work is needed to improve the behaviour, punctuality and attendance of a minority of pupils.

- Leaders know where they need to strengthen work to support pupils' development. They have credible plans in place to achieve this through the reorganisation of pastoral leadership. Similarly, leaders have recruited a specialist member of staff and have purchased additional resources to support pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Governance of the school

- The Inspiration Trust provides an appropriate balance of challenge and support to senior leaders. Following unacceptably low GCSE results in 2016, the trust appointed an executive headteacher from an outstanding school within the trust to strengthen leadership. The trust set challenging and ambitious targets for pupils' outcomes and rigorously held leaders to account for securing improvements. This contributed to the much-improved results in 2017.
- The chair of the trust and the chief executive officer have an accurate view of the challenges faced by the school. School leaders and staff share the trust's vision for the school. Leaders and teachers are clear about how the trust will further improve the quality of education provided by the school.
- The local governing body knows the school well. Governors make use of their breadth of knowledge and skills and challenge leaders about the quality of education. Governors challenged the trust about changes to sixth-form provision to satisfy themselves that these were in the best interests of the school, its students and the local community.
- Governors ensure that leaders use additional funding appropriately. They have a particularly good understanding of the impact that pupil premium funding has had on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in key stage 4.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders carry out the checks required to ensure that all adults in the school are suitable to work with children and young people. Records of checks are up to date and accurate.
- Staff receive relevant training and regular updates to ensure that they keep pupils safe from harm. This includes training in the 'Prevent' duty. Staff rightly make referrals when they have concerns and the safeguarding team follows these up swiftly and promptly passes them on to external agencies when necessary. Leaders are tenacious in following up concerns when they are not satisfied with the response from outside agencies.
- Leaders carry out checks to identify any pupils who are at risk from going missing from education and contact the local authority when they have concerns. Records of these checks were not fully detailed or completed but leaders rectified these omissions during the inspection.

- Pupils learn how to stay safe from risks, including how to stay safe online. They are aware of the different forms of bullying. Pupils say that bullying is rare and that teachers deal with it effectively. This agrees with responses to online questionnaires from staff and the large majority of parents.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have thorough subject knowledge and a detailed understanding of the demands of examination courses. They use these to good effect to plan sequences of learning that develop pupils' knowledge and understanding and support them in making good progress.
- Teachers have created a positive climate for learning. They have established relationships where pupils are respectful and keen to contribute. Teachers apply clear expectations regarding pupils' readiness to learn. Pupils readily respond to teachers' questions and directions, which supports learning and means that good use is made of the time available.
- Teachers of English are highly skilled and support pupils to make good progress. The school's 'expressive writing' programme promotes the development of pupils' writing skills, which they apply successfully to their written work in other subjects. Inspectors saw examples of how pupils applied their high-level literacy skills to make rapid progress in geography.
- Teachers' assessments are now more rigorous and accurate. They use this information to provide pupils with help that focuses accurately on the areas of learning that pupils find most difficult.
- Teachers' level of challenge to pupils is too variable. Where practice is strongest, teachers challenge pupils, including the most able, through questioning that deepens pupils' understanding. Where teaching does not consistently support strong progress, particularly for lower-attaining pupils, teachers do not give pupils the opportunity to think before providing an answer or move on too quickly before checking pupils' understanding.
- Teachers apply the school's chosen approach to feedback consistently. As a result, pupils know what they need to do to reach higher levels of attainment. However, some teachers' checks on the quality of pupils' work are not thorough enough. Where this is the case, pupils are not making the progress or achieving the standards of which they are capable. This is particularly the case for lower-attaining pupils in mathematics.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and well cared for in school. The very large majority of parents and staff agree. One parent whose son moved to the school from another high

school commented, 'My son's well-being has improved immeasurably. He feels safe, supported and organised well.'

- Pupils are respectful to one another and to adults. There are few incidents of racist, homophobic or derogatory language and pupils agree that teachers deal effectively with those that do occur.
- Pupils have opportunities to develop leadership skills and contribute to school life through the school council, acting as ambassadors in classes and taking on anti-bullying ambassador roles. Pupils develop a sense of responsibility through these roles.
- All pupils from Year 8 onwards receive high-quality, independent careers information and guidance. The school has developed links with local employers and apprenticeship providers. The trust aims to build further upon the positive links that leaders have established.
- Leaders are increasingly successful in raising pupils' aspirations. Pupils have visited local employers and universities to raise their awareness of the opportunities available to them. Pupils have taken part in a local event aimed at promoting social mobility and the importance of academic success. Students from a local university also carry out voluntary work in the school as literacy and numeracy champions, supporting disadvantaged pupils.
- The hub for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder provides pupils with high-quality support. Pupils develop their social skills and participate successfully in lessons in the main school.
- Pastoral leaders know pupils well. Pupils say that there is someone they can approach if they need support and feel that they will receive the help that they need. Leaders ensure that pupils, including those in need of considerable additional support, are well cared for. For example, leaders recently provided an evening workshop supporting emotional well-being. However, the help provided for those with the most complex needs, including pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, requires more frequent review.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' conduct around the school site before school, at breaktimes and at lunchtime is good. The school is an orderly environment and pupils respect their surroundings; there is very little litter around the site.
- Pupils typically arrive to lessons on time and ready to learn. The large majority of pupils take pride in their work and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning.
- Leaders have taken clear action to improve attendance and behaviour in the school. One Year 10 pupil described how behaviour had 'improved massively' since the school became an academy. Other pupils echoed this view in their discussions with inspectors. Pupils understand the school's behaviour and rewards system and feel that its application and raised expectations from teachers have contributed to the improvements that have taken place. Teachers agree that behaviour has improved and feel well supported by leaders in the management of behaviour.

- The number of fixed-term and permanent exclusions has reduced significantly. Leaders have used alternative ways of addressing poor behaviour, including through working with other schools in the trust. The school's information about behavioural incidents confirms pupils' views that behaviour is improving. However, it also confirms that, in some lessons, learning is disrupted by low-level behaviour incidents.
- Leaders have worked hard to reduce absence through celebrating high and improved attendance. Their efforts have borne fruit, with absence and persistent absence reducing rapidly, though both remain above the national averages. Despite leaders' best efforts, a number of pupils still have very high rates of absence, including some of the most vulnerable pupils.
- Pupils typically are punctual for school. There is, however, a significant minority of pupils who are regularly late for school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' achievement by the end of key stage 4 in 2016 was unacceptably low. Pupils made significantly less progress than pupils with similar starting points nationally in a range of subjects. This was also true for disadvantaged pupils, who made significantly less progress than other pupils nationally.
- In 2017, pupils' progress by the end of key stage 4 improved considerably. Pupils made progress that was in line with that made by similar pupils nationally across a range of subjects. Although progress was less strong in science and humanities, this showed an improvement compared with the previous year. Disadvantaged pupils' achievement was also much improved and in line with that for other pupils nationally overall and significantly better than for other pupils nationally in English.
- Inspectors' observations of learning and scrutiny of pupils' work confirm that current pupils in all year groups typically make good progress across the subjects that they study. Rates of progress in science and geography are accelerating. The most able pupils are making good progress in a range of subjects because their teachers consistently challenge and support them to attain higher standards.
- Disadvantaged pupils currently in the school are continuing to make good progress. This is because leaders have carefully targeted and evaluated the support provided to ensure that it helps pupils to overcome the difficulties they face. This is particularly true for pupils in key stage 4.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make progress in line with that made by other pupils who have similar starting points. The work of the unit for pupils who have autistic spectrum disorder supports their progress through ensuring that they are able to participate in lessons in a range of subjects and that those in key stage 4 successfully complete examination courses.
- Leaders have implemented an effective programme to promote reading. One Year 10 pupil told an inspector that the 'Everybody reads' programme had meant that she had developed 'a habit of reading for pleasure.' Inspectors heard pupils reading with confidence, including those who had not attained the standard expected for their age at the end of key stage 2. Pupils who speak English as an additional language have reading skills that are less secure and would benefit from greater help with reading.

- The proportion of pupils who join the school with standards lower than those expected in reading, writing and mathematics is higher than in most secondary schools. Pupils supported by the Year 7 catch-up funding improve their literacy and numeracy skills, though most remain below the standards expected for their age. Leaders' evaluation of the impact of this support on pupils' progress in other subjects is less clear.
- Inspectors' observations of learning and scrutiny of work show that lower-attaining pupils make less consistent progress where teachers do not provide them with the help and guidance that they need to overcome difficulties. This is particularly, though not exclusively, true in mathematics.

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- Leaders, governors and the trust have recognised that study programmes have not always met students' needs or supported their achievement well. Consequently, they took the decision to relaunch sixth-form provision from September 2018 with a focus on a small number of vocational courses and related A levels.
- Students completing vocational qualifications have made below-average progress over the past two years. The progress of students completing these courses was in the lowest 20% nationally in both 2016 and 2017. Students completing A levels have made progress in line with the national average, although progress declined from the highest 40% nationally in 2016 to the lowest 40% nationally in 2017.
- Students who have not attained a grade C GCSE in English or mathematics when in Year 11 have made less progress and been less successful in improving their grades than similar pupils nationally.
- Independent careers guidance is available and visiting speakers and other activities promote students' personal development and welfare. Students were not positive about the impact of this aspect of their study programmes and some had only recently realised that individual careers guidance was available.
- School leaders decided not to appoint a replacement when the head of sixth form left at the end of the last academic year. The principal, who has previous experience of leading a sixth form, and vice principal have taken responsibility for the leadership of the sixth form. Current students felt that leadership of the sixth form could provide them with greater guidance and that communication from leaders was an aspect that required improvement. Leaders acknowledge that students have not received advice that ensured that they chose appropriate study pathways.
- Students agree that there is a lot of help available to support them in making applications to universities. This has ensured that those who wish to progress to university study are successful in securing places on courses. However, students stated that they would appreciate more information about options other than study at university to allow them to make informed decisions about the next steps in education, training or employment.
- After completing their programmes of study, almost all students move on to higher education, training or employment.

- Observations of learning and scrutiny of assessment information indicate that, as a result of effective teaching, current students are making improved progress and are on track to achieve their target grades in the majority of subjects.
- Students have positive attitudes to learning and arrive well prepared for their lessons. Students attend regularly and make good use of the time available for personal study.
- Students spoke highly of their teachers. They appreciate the depth of their subject knowledge and willingness to help. Students felt that 'the teachers make the sixth form.'

School details

Unique reference number	142059
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10046633

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	340
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	56
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of local governing body	Sally Culling
Chair of the trust	David Tibble
Chief executive officer	Dame Rachel de Souza
Executive principal	Gareth Stevens
Principal	Rebecca Handley Kirk
Telephone number	01603 628181
Website	www.inspirationtrust.org/hewettacademy
Email address	office@thehewettacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The Hewett Academy is a much smaller than average sized secondary school. It opened as an academy in September 2015 under the sponsorship of the Inspiration

Trust. The board of trustees and local governing body are responsible for governance of the school.

- The Inspiration Trust provides support for the school, including support through an executive principal from an outstanding school in the trust. The trust has also commissioned reviews of the school's effectiveness from educational consultants to inform school improvement plans.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds is higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils whose first language is not English is increasing and is just above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is above the national average.
- The school runs a support unit for pupils who have autistic spectrum disorder that is funded by the local authority and provides education for pupils from the region who meet the local authority criteria for admissions.
- Sixth-form students completing qualifications in sports studies do so in partnership with Thetford Football Club. The decision to change the range of courses and qualifications offered from September 2018 means that there were no Year 12 students in the school at the time of the inspection.
- The school uses alternative provision provided by Action Community Enterprises when appropriate.
- The current principal joined the school at the end of the 2016/17 academic year.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning across all year groups and a range of subjects. Almost all of these observations were carried out jointly with school leaders. Inspectors also heard pupils read, visited form periods, scrutinised pupils' work and spoke to pupils about their learning when visiting lessons.
- Inspectors looked at a range of the school's documents, including assessment information, evaluation of the school's performance, improvement plans, attendance and behaviour records and information relating to leaders' checks of the quality of teaching. Inspectors also reviewed a number of the school's policies and procedures, including those relating to safeguarding.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, members of the local governing body and a member of the parent advisory board. The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer from the Inspiration Trust and chair of the board of trustees.
- Formal discussions were held with groups of pupils from each key stage to explore their experiences of school. Inspectors also spoke to pupils in lessons and when observing them at informal times, such as lunchtime. There were no responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey.
- Inspectors analysed the 38 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and considered the five free-text comments provided by parents and one letter sent to the inspection team.
- Inspectors also considered the 46 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. Formal and informal discussions took place with staff members to gather their views about the work of the school.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

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Her Majesty's Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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