

Bungay High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124835
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	363984
Inspection dates	22–23 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Derrick Baughan HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	13–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	982
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	260
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Zoe Sprake
Headteacher	Sean O'Neill (Executive Headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	5 March 2008
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. Inspectors spent most of the time observing a wide range of lessons and other support activities such as one-to-one tutorials. Inspectors held meetings with groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at students' work, records of students' progress, parental questionnaires, and a range of school planning and management documentation.

Information about the school

Bungay High School is an average-sized secondary school in a rural setting. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than average. The proportions of students from minority ethnic backgrounds, and those for whom English is an additional language, are very low. The school has met the government's floor targets for academic performance in each of the last three years.

The school has specialist science status and is also a consultant school and an associate training school. The school has been awarded National Healthy School status, the Football Association Charter Mark and a Becta award for transforming learning. The school plans to become an academy in August 2011. In addition, and as part of county wide changes, in 2012 the school will become an 11-18 school with the sixth form planned to be on a separate site within the town.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	1
Achievement	1
Teaching	2
Leadership and management	1
Behaviour and safety	2
Does the school adequately promote the pupils' well-being?	Yes
Does the school adequately promote community cohesion?	Yes
Does the school provide value for money?	Yes

Key findings

This is an outstanding school which has continued to improve over the last few years. Students enjoy school very much and feel safe and very well cared for. The outstanding curriculum, coupled with excellent support, provides a wide range of opportunities in this rural setting. Students use these opportunities very well and develop a variety of skills which prepare them extremely well for the next stage of their lives.

Students make excellent progress, from their slightly lower than average starting points, because of the support they get and the extremely well-developed aspirational culture within the school. Teachers have high expectations and use very interesting activities to help students develop their understanding. Students are usually fully engaged in lessons and work very well either in groups or on their own. Examination results show continuous improvement and, at Key Stage 4, are significantly above the national average. Sixth form results dipped in 2010 but students' attainment in lessons, and based on course work, shows a strongly improving picture.

Teaching is good, especially so in the sixth form, and inspectors observed many lessons with a very productive learning environment which students enjoy and value. However, there are a few lessons where teaching does not sufficiently involve and engage students and develop independent learning skills. In these lessons, students do not make as much progress as they could. The school has a range of measures to improve this, some of which are clearly making a difference although there is still some way to go.

The school is a very well-integrated community which engages closely with the local community and has good links further afield, to provide excellent opportunities for

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students to contribute and develop. Parents and carers, students and staff all say that the school is a safe place, with generally good behaviour that supports learning, although some parents and students feel that behaviour could be improved. Attendance has been improved but is stubbornly within the average range.

The executive headteacher and his team provide outstanding leadership and, working well with staff and students, have improved the quality of provision, noticeably in terms of students' achievement. Other measures to improve the quality of the teaching of English and mathematics have been very effective.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by:
 - continuing to share best practice in engaging students
 - ensuring opportunities for independent learning are made best use of
- Improve attendance to above average through introducing more rigour in the monitoring of attendance patterns.

Main report

Determined leadership and a unity of purpose have resulted in Bungay High School continuing to improve over the last few years. Academic standards have continually risen and similar improvements can be seen in students' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school is a happy community with a strongly embedded culture of aspiration where students achieve extremely well and develop into confident young adults.

Most students make significant progress. Attainment on entry is just below the national average. However, standards at Key Stage 4 have risen year on year and, in 2010, were very high. The proportion of students achieving five or more higher grades in their GCSEs was significantly above the national average, with extremely strong performance in English, mathematics and science, the school's specialist subject. All other major measures of progress and attainment at Key Stage 4 are now significantly above average. Very good use of students' performance data and target setting has contributed strongly to this improvement. All but a very few students achieve at, or above, their predicted level. There are no significant differences in progress and attainment for any groups. All students are thoughtful and well able to articulate their thoughts and engage in discussion.

In the sixth form, students make good progress relative to their starting points. The school has an open entrance policy due to the rural nature of the area and the lack of many post-16 alternatives. Academic standards for sixth form students had been rising but in 2010 there was a downturn. The school identified this and concerted action has dealt with it effectively. This year's students are on target to reverse this downturn and improve on previous years' results. In addition, the excellent curriculum includes a wide range of vocational options for students to enter into

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directly, or to transfer to or from A level studies. Success rates in these vocational programmes are extremely high with a significant percentage of very high grades. All students make significant improvements in their confidence and develop good independent learning skills. As a result of the high standards in English and mathematics, and their excellent literacy skills, students are extremely well equipped for the next stage in their lives.

Students' progress is monitored well and the school uses data extremely well to support staff and students in closely monitoring progress. For example, in mathematics, students use a very good system for evaluating their own progress towards each target. This is well supported by staff. Students' know their targets extremely well, whether they are achieving them and what they need to do to improve.

Teaching is good and makes a good contribution to students' success. Teaching was noticeably better in the sixth form where proportionally more examples of outstanding teaching were seen. In addition, all students have access to a very wide range of excellent group, and one-to-one, additional support options. This is particularly true for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They are integrated well within the school and play a full part in it. Staff work extremely well with learners who have multiple barriers to achievement. Numerous cases were seen of such help resulting in the young person gaining qualifications, moving into further education, or employment.

Teachers consistently have very high expectations of all pupils in the school. They use a range of good activities to help students develop. A number of effective improvements have been made, particularly in English and mathematics, to help students. For example, in mathematics, students are given fortnightly 'rich tasks', where they work for a 100-minute lesson, in small groups, on a particular problem. These tasks are used well to develop mathematical modelling skills which students use to good effect in other subjects. Many examples were seen of teachers taking the opportunity to reinforce numeracy and literacy in other subject lessons.

In the best lessons, teachers use a good variety of activities to maintain students' interest. Examples of excellent co-operative learning were seen, where students worked exceptionally well with each other. The assessment of learning is very good with staff and students working well together to identify standards and what can be done to improve. Planning and organisation are highly effective with high levels of challenge and expectation resulting in excellent progress. Teachers make good use of question and answer sessions to develop and monitor students' understanding.

Students work is marked well, with detailed comments about how they can improve. However, in a small number of lessons, planning is not so evident and the monitoring of students' progress is less effective. In these lessons, students are not so involved in learning and questions are not used well enough to develop their understanding and monitor their progress. Challenge for higher attaining students was insufficient in a few lessons.

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Students thoroughly enjoy school, are proud of it and feel safe. Incidents of bullying are rare and dealt with well. However, the school has identified a very small increase in the number of incidents identified as being racist in nature, from none in the years 2007/8 and 2008/9, to five in the years 2009/10 and 2010/11. The school has taken action to deal with this. Students are mostly very positive about the school but 11% believe that behaviour around the school is not good and 9% feel that bad behaviour can disrupt lessons. The great majority of students behave well in lessons and around the school. Staff provide good guidance about keeping safe. Of particular note is the excellent guidance about e-safety. Students are respectful to each other and the introduction of a three-period day has resulted in improved punctuality. The number of fixed-term exclusions has been significantly reduced. However, the figure for attendance has remained stubbornly within the average range. The school works very hard to ensure equality and support diversity. For example parents and carers of students from Macau praise highly the efforts that the school has made to integrate them. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school, except for behaviour, with 18% feeling that lessons are sometimes disrupted by bad behaviour.

The school is a striking example of an integrated community with everyone working towards a single vision. All the staff at the school share this vision of an improving school with a strong culture of aspiration and achievement for all. Staff responses to the questionnaire were unanimously positive. The focus on students' achievement is relentless. The headteacher and senior staff blend exceptionally well together to work with staff, students, parents and carers and governors to establish this culture. The governing body plays its part extremely well and has strong links with the school in a variety of ways. Its members hold the school to account well, use their respective skills to good advantage and have a very thorough knowledge of the school, its strengths and areas for improvement. Relationships with local schools, employers and the rest of the community are very effective in meeting the needs of young people, and contributing well to their development.

The whole school is active in the local community. Students contribute positively in a number of ways. They are also fully involved within the school and have a very strong voice. For example, students have carried out lesson observations and given feedback from their perspective. Current sixth form students, and those who will be moving into the new sixth form centre when it opens, have had a significant input into the development of that site. As a result of this, and very good teaching in religious education, students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Many examples were seen of students displaying a very mature understanding of these issues. For example, students developing websites in information and communication technology lessons considered issues such as whether the sites could be used by people of all faiths and beliefs.

The curriculum and quality of provision are under regular review and development. The school has a very effective policy of incremental improvement by establishing improvements in stages and then building on each success. This approach has

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proved extremely effective and resulted in good progress. Staff contribute well to this process and the school knows itself very well. Staff are quick to spot problems and effective in dealing with them. Self-assessment is thorough and the school had identified, and were dealing well with, all the issues found by inspectors.

The school has managed well the planning for the forthcoming changes. It has not allowed this planning to affect improvements and has worked extremely well with staff, students and the local community to manage this work. The school is in an excellent position to make the transition to academy status and, next year, to an 11-18 school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bungay High School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 127 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 982 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Q1 My child is happy at school	55	44	70	56	1	1	0	0
Q2 My child feels safe at school	59	46	67	53	1	1	0	0
Q3 The school helps my child to achieve as well as they can	52	41	71	56	3	2	0	0
Q4 The school meets my child's particular needs	44	35	80	63	0	0	1	1
Q5 The school ensures my child is well looked after	47	37	78	61	2	2	0	0
Q6 Teaching at this school is good	49	39	72	58	2	2	0	0
Q7 There is a good standard of behaviour at this school	30	24	83	65	11	9	0	0
Q8 Lessons are not disrupted by bad behaviour	26	20	75	59	21	17	1	1
Q9 The school deals with any cases of bullying well	42	34	70	56	5	4	0	0
Q10 The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	31	83	65	4	3	0	0
Q11 The school responds to my concerns and keeps me well informed	48	38	71	56	5	4	0	0
Q12 The school is well led and managed	74	58	51	40	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The achievement of all pupils.■ Behaviour and safety.■ The quality of teaching.■ The effectiveness of leadership and management. <p>and taking into consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ how well the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.

24 June 2011

Dear Students



Inspection of Bungay High School, Bungay, NR35 1RW

Thank you all for the very warm welcome that you gave to me and the rest of the team during our recent visit to your school. You are rightly proud to be students at Bungay High School as we judged that your school is outstanding. This is in no small measure a result of the excellent achievements in 2010, at Key Stage 4. However, we noted that all of you were achieving well in lessons and on track to repeat that success.

We also noted the very high success rates in vocational qualification, for those who wanted to go down that route. Despite the dip in last year's sixth form results, current students are doing well and on track to improve on those results. Therefore, we judged your achievement overall to be outstanding.

Your successes are due to the way that you work hard in lessons and work well together to help each other. In addition, you receive good teaching, particularly in the sixth form. You have a wide range of support options to help you even more. The very broad curriculum provides you with a range of opportunities. We noted that the open entry to the sixth form, coupled with the vocational options, gives you excellent opportunities to try various options for your post-16 studies.

You clearly enjoy learning and we enjoyed watching you work and wished we could have seen more. We all enjoyed observing your achievements. For example, I enjoyed the creativity shown by the Year 10 group in music composition.

Your school is extremely well led and the staff work together well to support you and provide you with an excellent experience. There are a couple of areas where we agreed with Mr O'Neill that your school could improve. We agreed that teaching could be even better and that your attendance could improve. We are sure that you will play your part in this.

I wish you well for the future and hope that you are excited about the changes coming, for example for those who will be the first students in the new sixth form centre.

Yours sincerely

Derrick Baughan
Her Majesty's Inspector

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