

# Fakenham High School and College

Field Lane, Fakenham, NR21 9QT

## Inspection dates

13–14 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>3</b>
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires special measures.

- Students' attainment has declined over the last three years and in national examinations in Year 11 it has fallen to below average.
- Achievement is inadequate because too many students do not make sufficient progress in a range of subjects, including English.
- Teachers' expectations of what students should achieve in the main school are not always high enough.
- Behaviour and safety require improvement because there is some low-level disruption in lessons due to weak teaching. Students are allowed to lose concentration and to stop learning. Rates of persistent absence are high.
- The school is not showing sufficient capacity for improvement.
- Leadership and management are inadequate because the headteacher's efforts to bring about improvement in teaching and achievement have been unsuccessful. This results from weaknesses in the work of some of the senior leaders and the heads of department of some underperforming subjects.
- Too much teaching is inadequate or requires improvement.
- The governing body is not checking effectively enough on the use of additional government funding (the pupil premium).

### The school has the following strengths

- The overall effectiveness of the school's sixth form, located at Fakenham College, is good. Students' attitudes to learning, the progress they make and the teaching they receive are good.
- Students in both the school and the college are courteous, willing and polite.
- A new marking system is starting to help improve students' progress.
- A greater focus upon literacy and developing independent learning is helping to engage students in lessons.
- Most middle leaders are keen to implement systems that will improve progress.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 37 lessons taught by 36 teachers, including seven that were observed jointly with members of the school’s leadership team.
- Meetings were held with various groups of students selected at random by the lead inspector. These included students whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. In addition, many informal opportunities were taken to talk with students during the inspection.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents including development plans, policies, self-evaluation reports, various monitoring files, safeguarding and curriculum materials, governing body documents, and information for families. A house assembly was also observed.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, other members of the senior leadership team, the head of the sixth form, heads of department, class teachers, teaching assistants, the school’s special educational needs coordinator, administrative staff and members of the governing body. Conversations were held with the school’s improvement adviser from the local authority.
- The inspectors took into consideration the 29 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). The 51 responses to the questionnaire for school staff were also taken into account.

## Inspection team

Linda Austin, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Duncan Cooper	Additional Inspector
Kathleen Yates	Additional Inspector
Michael Miller	Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.*

### Information about this school

- This is larger than the average-sized secondary school. The Department for Education has recently approved the school's application to become an academy as part of a trust called Norfolk Academies which is sponsored by the Transforming Education in Norfolk (TEN) group. This change of status will take place in the next few weeks.
- The sixth form, called Fakenham College, takes students from different parts of North Norfolk as well as its Fakenham High School's own students.
- The proportion of students for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for those known to be eligible for free school meals, those in care and those with a parent in the armed services) is average. There were no looked after students or students with parents in the armed services in Year 11 in summer 2012.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well below average. The proportion supported through school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is also well above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectation for students' progress and attainment.
- The school is a specialist technology school with an additional specialism for applied learning.
- Thirty students are currently studying for a BTEC qualification in construction at the Rural Norfolk Federation training centre.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality and effectiveness of teaching so that students' achieve higher standards, particularly in English, by ensuring that:
  - lessons are planned and delivered to enable students to make at least good progress
  - questioning is used to challenge all students to think more deeply about their learning
  - teachers check students' understanding of their work frequently during lessons to enable the teaching to be adjusted to meet students' learning needs
  - teaching captures students' interest and makes sure that they are fully engaged in lessons and always behave well
  - lessons are planned more precisely to meet the learning needs of all groups of students, including those who find learning difficult and those who are eligible for support through the pupil premium
  - students' notes in the sixth form are checked more regularly to ensure they have records of sufficient quality and depth to support their examination work
  - good practice is shared systematically to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- Improve the quality and effectiveness of leadership at all levels by ensuring that:
  - by the end of the current academic year, a more effective system for tracking students'

progress is put into place

- targets are set for each student with the expectation that all should make at least good progress
- all senior and subject leaders monitor and evaluate regularly the progress of all groups of students in order to hold all staff fully to account for students' achievement
- reduce rates of persistent absence so that they are in line with or below the national average
- the governing body develops effective systems to hold the school to account for the quality of teaching and the progress that students make, and to monitor the use and impact of the pupil premium on students' progress.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is inadequate

- When students join the school in Year 7, their attainment is average. Nevertheless, when they leave the school, they are working at below nationally expected standards for their age group. Their achievement is inadequate. Attainment is particularly low in English. In summer 2012, GCSE results in English placed the school near the bottom of all schools nationally.
- Students' progress in the five years from Year 7 to Year 11 declines markedly for most groups of students. Although the school's data indicate some improvement in students' rates of progress in the current year, students' learning in lessons is not fast enough to make up for the lost ground of previous years.
- In summer 2012, the proportion of Year 11 students gaining five or more GCSE passes at grades A\* to C, including English and mathematics, was only 3 percentage points above the government's expected minimum. However, boys fell below this standard, and the amount of progress made by all students in English and mathematics fell below expected minimum levels.
- Students supported by the pupil premium funding do not achieve well enough. In 2012, their average points score (the measure by which all students are assessed nationally at the end of each stage of their education) gained by this group of students in Year 11 in English and mathematics was below similar groups nationally as well as that of other students at the school.
- In 2012, just over a third of the students eligible for the pupil premium made the expected levels of progress in English between Years 7 and 11, whereas more than half of other students did so. In mathematics, over a half of the students eligible for the extra support made the expected levels of progress between Years 7 and 11, while two thirds of those not eligible for the funding did so.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs made the progress expected of them by the end of Year 11. They are making expected progress or better in the additional literacy catch-up groups.
- The school enters some students early for the GCSE examination in mathematics but has not allowed the majority of them to improve their grades through re-entry. Students' important literacy skills are being developed across the school but have not had an impact on the English results. Numeracy skills have yet to be developed in a systematic way across all subjects.
- While students have not yet completed the Level 2 BTEC course in construction taught at the Rural Norfolk Federation training centre, external quality assurance shows that all assessment objectives have been met.
- Students make good progress in the sixth form. The school has an open-entry policy, which means that students join the school from across North Norfolk, often having failed to meet the entry requirements for their own schools' sixth forms. This is an important feature of the school's inclusive approach to giving all students the opportunity to gain qualifications, and means that, together with Fakenham students, attainment on entry to the sixth form is below average.
- Sixth form students achieve well and most leave with attainment in line with the national average across a range of subjects. Achievement by Year 13 is particularly good in English and mathematics. Achievement and progress are good as a result of high expectations on the part of

the teachers of what students can achieve.

### **The quality of teaching is inadequate**

- Teaching is inadequate because it is not helping students to make up for previous underachievement or to make sufficient progress in their subjects. During the inspection, not enough of the teaching seen was good or better.
- The pace of learning is too slow in many lessons and the work set does not challenge students of different abilities to learn or hold their attention. Sometimes expectations of how students should behave are too low and students are allowed to lose concentration and to stop learning. Teachers do not frequently ask students questions to extend their learning or to check their understanding of the work. Sometimes teachers do the thinking and the problem solving for students.
- Teachers do not always make sure that activities are set at the right level. Often the work set does not challenge students to learn enough to help them gain higher National Curriculum levels and GCSE grades. Teachers' planning of lessons does not ensure that students supported by additional government funding, and some who are disabled or have special educational needs are able to make good or better progress.
- The application of a new literacy policy by teachers is beginning to improve students' speaking, listening and writing skills in the lower school. However, the teaching of numeracy skills across subjects is not as effective as it should be.
- A helpful new initiative involves students in writing their own responses to teachers' marking. This is done in green ink and was seen in practice in a number of lessons. However, in many subjects, the written comments were not focused enough on showing students what they have to do to improve their work. There was little evidence to show that students had acted upon teachers' comments in some subjects.
- Where the teaching is good, expectations of what students can achieve are high. There is a good use of information and communications technology (ICT) to support learning, as was seen in a lesson on global warming. Students concentrated well and learning proceeded at a fast pace in a geography lesson about Antarctica, when the use of a video clip, followed by research using a range of accessible resources, inspired students to make very good progress. In these more effective lessons questions are used well to provoke students to think for themselves and students are encouraged to assess a partner's work or evaluate their own work.
- Teaching in the sixth form ensures that students make good progress. The teachers' subject knowledge, combined with high expectations of what students can achieve, is resulting in confident, self-assured learners who are provided with the skills to assess their own progress. An example of this was seen in a Year 12 and 13 mathematics lesson on calculation, when challenging questions linked to previous learning helped students to develop their own explanations.
- In a few lessons in the sixth form, teachers miss opportunities to ask more searching questions. Students' notes are not always checked to ensure that the information in them is accurate enough for revision purposes.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement**

- Most students are polite, respectful and want to learn. There are good working relationships in the sixth form.
- Overall attendance is average, but the rate of persistent absence continues to be too high. Attendance is above average in the sixth form. A few students in the main school are not always keen to attend some lessons; almost all sixth formers are keen to attend at the college.
- The school provides well for students with medical needs and for school refusers through the provision of a separate room where they are taught by a specialist teacher until they are ready to join regular classes. A wide range of external agencies provides for students with behavioural difficulties. A number of staff expressed some concern through the questionnaire about the management of behaviour.
- Students report that there are few instances of bullying and that when they occur students are confident that the school will sort things out. They report that they feel safe at school. The sixth formers reported that they had not experienced any racism or bullying in the college.
- Students report that there has been an improvement in behaviour in the last two years. Behaviour seen in the best lessons was good and students actively supported each other when working together. However, some students stop participating fully in lessons and misbehave when tasks are not well matched to their abilities and activities do not interest them.
- Students understand how to deal with the risks they might face, both within and outside of school, and understand issues relating to substance abuse and the dangers associated with using the internet.
- School staff carefully monitor the behaviour and safety of students learning at the Rural Norfolk Federation training centre.

**The leadership and management are inadequate**

- Leadership and management are inadequate because the school's leaders have not done enough to make sure that improvements to teaching and the progress of students have been fast enough, particularly in English and science. Despite the determination of the headteacher and his strong commitment to make the school successful, students' achievement is too low.
- Leaders and managers have not been sufficiently effective in reducing rates of students' persistent absence.
- The governing body and headteacher have established appropriate formal checking of teachers' performance, ensuring that promotions and salaries are linked to better teaching. The training of teachers is now linked to improving their practice in the classroom. The school has taken action, where possible, to resolve problems relating to leadership and teaching, but not always with the desired effect. The good and outstanding teaching in the school is not shared enough among all teachers to support improved practice.
- The local authority has provided adequate support to develop systems to monitor students' performance. Consequently, the new marking system and literacy policy are resulting in an improvement in students' progress in some lessons.

- Because many students are not making the progress of which they are capable, the school is not demonstrating its stated commitment to equality of opportunity. Not all subject leaders monitor the progress of different groups in order to be sure that there are no significant differences in their achievement.
- A combination of vocational and academic subjects in the school and the college enables students to follow courses which are increasingly appropriate to their learning needs and interests. The quality of the courses followed by students off the school site are checked by the school.
- The school's positive and supportive values promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. A range of activities takes place in 'curriculum enhancement days', including Indian dancing, African drumming, and philosophy and ethics lessons. An assembly observed about Wateraid provided a strong message about social responsibility. A good range of trips including visits abroad to France, Krakow and South America combined with other visits and enrichment activities helps to build the students' confidence and self-esteem.
- The school's effectiveness has declined since its previous inspection. This, together with the weak progress in resolving the key issues from the previous inspection, means that leaders lack the capacity to improve the school. Newly qualified teachers may not be appointed. When the school shortly becomes an academy, inspectors strongly recommend that the academy should not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is fully aware of the areas for improvement for the school, including what has to be done to improve teaching. Governors have recently benefited from more focused data provided by the school that is enabling them to ask challenging questions. However, they have not always been provided with sufficient information about students' rates of learning and progress. They have not been assertive enough in holding leaders to account for teaching and achievement. Governors with specific responsibilities usually carry these out conscientiously and take up training to help them in their governance work. The practical safeguarding of students meets government requirements. The responsible committee checks on the setting of targets for teachers; these are now linked closely to national teaching standards and salary structure. The governing body has not been active enough in questioning school leaders about the impact of the pupil premium spending on the progress of students for whom it is designed.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	121185
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	406006

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

<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>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1025
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	216
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Ian Ponton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Matthew Parr-Burman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 May 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01328 862545
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