

# The Hewett School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121173
<b>Local Authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	358952
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 May 2011
<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>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	924
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	158
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Marion Morse
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tom Samain
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 May 2008
<b>School address</b>	Cecil Road Norwich NR1 2PL
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. A total of 39 classes were observed, and 34 teachers were seen. Inspectors had meetings with leaders, teachers, members of the governing body and representatives of the local authority. They observed the school's work and looked at management and school improvement documents as well as student work. Inspectors took account of responses to questionnaires received from staff and students and from 78 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Inspectors considered whether the school has successfully reacted to the decline in performance seen in 2010 examination results.
- They explored the extent to which the gap in attainment between boys and girls is closing.
- Inspectors evaluated how effectively leaders, managers and governors set and monitor progress towards challenging targets for school improvement.

## Information about the school

The school is around average size. It has a collaborative partnership with other nearby schools and a local further education college. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds, with small numbers from a range of minority ethnic heritages. The number of students known to be eligible for free school meals is high. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities varies greatly from year to year and is generally well above average nationally. The school serves an area where deprivation is much higher than the national average. The school has specialist arts college status.

**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: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

This is a satisfactory school that has shown variability in the achievement of students in recent years culminating in a drop to below national averages in 2010. However there are now encouraging signs that progress is improving and in most classes it is at least satisfactory. Importantly, the progress made by students in Key Stage 3 is accelerating. GCSE results have varied greatly between subjects over the last few years, and the proportion of students attaining the very highest grades has been well below average. However, solid evidence from the school's own monitoring systems, together with observations in class, indicates improved performance in 2011. In recent years, GCSE results have been better for girls than for boys. This gap is now narrowing, and at Key Stage 3 the attainment of boys and girls is very similar. Those students known to be eligible for free school meals demonstrate better progress than their peers.

As at the time of the last inspection, the quality of care, guidance and support and of the curriculum remains strong. Many students who would not otherwise do so achieve because of these strengths. However, despite some improvement, for example in assessment, the quality of teaching has remained satisfactory. Teachers now evaluate the attainment of students systematically, but the use of this information to help teaching in class is uneven across the school. The school's own evaluation of teaching and learning is generous and places too much emphasis on what the teacher does rather than what students learn. Opportunities to fully evaluate standards in class during lesson observations are often missed.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school's self-evaluation identifies most of the challenges that the school faces, although it is too generous in parts. Improvement plans are sensible but the targets they set are often insufficiently precise. Because of this the monitoring of progress towards them is sometimes weak, especially at subject and departmental level. Governors bring many strengths to the school and are committed to its improvement. They have ensured that the school complies with requirements. However, the monitoring of progress towards targets has not always been sufficiently purposeful to ensure improvement.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Within 15 months, improve teaching and learning so that standards and progress rise across the school by:
  - systematically identifying and sharing the best teaching practice

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- ensuring that all students have opportunities to develop skills of independent learning in class
- using assessment data to ensure that all classes are structured to allow students to learn effectively
- adapting the lesson observation system to focus on the accurate evaluation of learning and progress.
- Within nine months, ensure that precise and consistent target setting and monitoring is used effectively to drive up standards across the school by:
  - ensuring that all targets for the improvement of teaching and learning are clear, and that progress towards them is monitored with precision
  - improvement plans include clear, measurable targets.
- Within six months, devise systems that enable governors to set and monitor challenging improvement targets with precision and rigour.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

When students enter the school in Year 7 their prior attainment is well below the national average. The cohort that entered GCSE examinations in 2010 joined the school with exceptionally low standards. As students move through the school they make progress that varies between year groups but has been generally above expectations until 2010 when it dipped. However, observations in class and the school's own assessment data indicate that progress is now at least satisfactory. Significantly, progress in the lower school shows consistent signs of improvement in core subjects, despite low attainment on entry.

GCSE results have shown a decline from 2008 to 2010 relative to national averages. The proportion of students gaining five or more GCSE passes is low, although predicted results for 2011 indicate improvements for this year and beyond, building on the improving progress in the lower school. In recent years the attainment of girls has been higher than that of boys. However this gap is narrowing and at Key Stage 3 it is negligible. Students who are known to be eligible for free school meals make better progress than their peers. The progress of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the rest of the school because of the good care, guidance and support that they receive, and some of these students make exceptional progress. The school's inclusive ethos enables them to feel integrated and respected.

Students enter the school with weak learning skills. In classes where students are given opportunities and encouragement to develop these skills, they do well and both progress and behaviour are good. However, this is often not the case and in these examples learning is no better than satisfactory. Students say that they feel safe in class and around the school and most parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed. Behaviour around the school has improved and in most lessons it is at least satisfactory. Inspectors observed some immature and poor behaviour in Year 7 classes but this was not consistent across the school. Attendance has improved from unacceptably low levels in the past. It is now close to the national average with an improving trend.

Students demonstrate a good understanding of different cultures and religions. The school's specialism enables students to experience a wide variety of artistic and creative

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experiences. For example, remarkable standing artwork and sculptures greet students as they enter and leave the school. The school is an inclusive community that respects and celebrates diversity.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching is satisfactory. Although inspectors observed some classes where teaching and learning were good or outstanding, this was not consistent across the school. Teachers now assess attainment well and so both they and their students have a good understanding of the levels they have reached. This assessment is broadly accurate. However, its use in the planning and delivery of classes is uneven across the school. Where it is used effectively all students learn well because activities and explanations are tailored to their needs, but this is not always the case. Students are generally not given sufficient opportunity to develop skills of application and independent learning, although they develop them quickly in the sixth form. Strategies for the management of behaviour are generally well established. In the weaker lessons, however, learning is sometimes disrupted by the poor behaviour of a small minority of students.

The school's curriculum is well organised and provides a broad range of opportunities for students to extend their learning. The range of provision offered through the school's specialism and through collaborative partnerships is strong. For example a number of students attend vocational provision at a nearby further education college for one day

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every week. The school offers clear and extensive pathways that meet the needs of the vast majority of students. The 'Achievement Centre' gives those students who need it more focused attention to continue the work they started in class. Although the curriculum is strong overall, the extent to which the core skills of literacy and numeracy are developed in subjects other than English and mathematics is insufficient. Opportunities to develop writing or reading skills, for example, are often missed when teaching new topics or subjects.

Care, guidance and support are good. Well-directed teams meet students' varied needs effectively. As a result, interventions enable students to make at least satisfactory progress, with some striking examples of individual students who have been helped to achieve well despite profound barriers to learning. 'The Base' offers extended access to other agencies to give students and their families specialist support. The proportion of school leavers who do not go into employment, education or training is reducing, and the proportion progressing to higher or further education is increasing. Students speak well of the support that they receive.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The senior leadership team has given the school a clear direction for improvement following the decline in examination results seen in 2010 and, to a lesser extent, the year before. They have, rightly, put much effort into the development of the quality of provision while ensuring that both the curriculum and care, guidance and support have sustained their strong position from the last inspection and met the changing needs of students well. Teaching and learning have improved, but the school's monitoring system is not sufficiently precise to give the school a good indication of learning and progress in class. Too much emphasis is placed on what the teacher does rather than what the students learn and, as a consequence, the evaluation outcomes have been too generous. The school identifies areas in which teaching is strong, but the very best practice is not systematically shared between subjects or key stages.

Systems for school improvement are developing and the causes of the decline seen in 2010 are well understood. School improvement plans are realistic about the challenges faced by the school and usually accurately identify what needs to be done. However the setting of improvement targets and actions is often insufficiently precise and, because of this, the monitoring of progress towards them is not sufficiently well developed. Self-evaluation is broadly accurate though a little generous in a few areas.

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The school's promotion of equality of opportunities is good. Inequalities in the achievement of boys and girls are reducing, especially in the lower school. The school complies with requirements, and an equalities action plan exists. However, the targets that it sets are not sufficiently precise and therefore progress towards them is not well monitored. Governors bring many skills and a wide range of experience to their roles. They are committed to the improvement of the school and have ensured that safeguarding requirements are met well. However the extent to which they set and monitor progress towards precise challenging targets across all aspects of the school is limited.

The school promotes community cohesion well. Parents and carers are informed well about their children's progress. Reports are detailed and comprehensive. The school undertakes innovative work with vulnerable children and families and they are well supported. The school regularly seeks the views of parents and there are examples where policies have changed as a result. The school council is active and influential. The school works well with other schools and colleges to ensure that learning opportunities are comprehensive. Good links exist with a wide range of support agencies.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding a mbition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Sixth form

Students enter with prior attainment below average, make satisfactory progress, and leave with qualifications that are in line with expectations. The retention of students between Years 12 and 13 is around average. Achievement in vocational subjects is generally higher than for A-level and AS-level courses. In class, the most successful learning takes place when, as with Key Stages 3 and 4, students are able to practice skills of independent learning and to discuss their topic or subject. Some classes are too dominated by the teacher, however, so that opportunities to do this are limited. Good care, guidance and

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support ensure that students regard their time in the sixth form highly. They quickly develop into mature and accomplished learners and most of those who wish to do so progress to further or higher education.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	3
Leadership and management of the sixth form	3

## Views of parents and carers

Inspectors received 78 completed questionnaires by the end of the inspection. This is exceptionally low and may not be a representative sample. Of those parents that responded, the very large majority were happy with their child's experiences at school and agreed that their child enjoyed themselves. The largest areas of concern, although still from a small minority of parents, were around the way the school deals with poor behaviour and the extent to which children make enough progress. Overall, these responses and concerns reflected the findings of the inspection.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Hewett 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 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 78 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 924 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	21	27	49	63	4	5	3	4
The school keeps my child safe	18	23	51	65	6	8	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	21	27	39	50	15	19	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	23	45	58	12	15	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	12	15	56	72	6	8	2	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	12	15	43	55	16	21	3	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	8	10	48	62	16	21	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	24	31	43	55	6	8	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	26	47	60	6	8	3	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	15	34	44	17	22	6	8
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	10	45	58	12	15	5	6
The school is led and managed effectively	19	24	50	64	5	6	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	31	45	58	7	9	2	3

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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



20 May 2011

Dear Students

**Inspection of The Hewett School, Norwich NR1 2PL**

As you may recall I visited your school with colleagues earlier this week. Those of you that we met were polite, helpful and keen to show the school at its best. I would like to thank you for that.

We found that your school is satisfactory. When we arrived we were concerned about the decline in results seen last year, but it is now clear that the school knows what happened and has made changes to make sure that results will be better this year. The school has a number of strengths, for example the curriculum and the support you receive, but at the same time there are some areas that it could improve.

We have asked the school to work on improving three main areas. The headteacher and the leadership team agree with us that these are the most important improvements for your education. We have suggested a number of ways that teaching can help you to learn better. These include sharing the best teaching practice more effectively and looking more closely at the learning taking place in class. We have also asked that the school and governors are more precise about setting targets, and that they improve how they measure the school's improvement towards them.

Your school has a lot going for it and it is up to you to make the most of what it has to offer. The school will be making determined efforts to improve further, but can only go so far; the rest will be up to you. The simple things are important, like punctuality, good attendance, sensible behaviour in class, and above all the confidence to ask if something is not clear so that you learn effectively.

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

Yours sincerely

Ian Seath

Her Majesty's Inspector

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