

# Cottingham High School and Sixth Form College

Harland Way, Cottingham, East Yorkshire HU16 5PX

## Inspection dates

23–24 May 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
16 to 19 study programmes	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders at all levels, diligently watched over by governors, have taken increasingly effective action since the last inspection, resulting in considerable improvement.
- Pupils in most year groups currently in the school make good progress in most subjects. Wide variability in pupils' achievement in different subjects over time is quickly diminishing.
- Mathematics teaching, and teaching in other historically weaker subjects, has strengthened, resulting in improvements in pupils' progress, especially over the last year.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is not as strong as that of other pupils, particularly in mathematics, but has greatly improved over the last two years. The progress of this group continues to gather pace towards that of other pupils.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. This is because teachers understand their needs and plan for them thoroughly. Leaders keep a close eye on their progress.
- The most able pupils largely make progress in line with similar pupils nationally. Leaders recognise the scope for challenging them further, especially the most able disadvantaged pupils.
- Provision in the sixth form is good and improving. Students achieve well because of the very effective bespoke teaching each receives.
- Behaviour has improved substantially because of improvements in teaching and the management of behaviour. Pupils manage themselves well in and between lessons.
- Pupils are growing in self-confidence as teachers increasingly involve them more fully in lessons. Most pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning and know what they need to do to improve.
- Pupils feel safe. Bullying is rare and dealt with well. Adults teach pupils about a wide range of risks, including those associated with social networking, radicalisation, drugs, alcohol and sexual relationships.
- Leaders and teachers actively promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, preparing them well for life in modern Britain. Pupils get along well together and are accepting of difference.
- Attendance has improved, including for disadvantaged pupils, so that figures are now above the national average. However, a minority of disadvantaged pupils continue to miss too much school.

## Full report

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

- Further strengthen progress so that it is more consistently above average across a wide range of subjects by:
  - building on, and sustaining improvements in, the progress of disadvantaged pupils, so that the differences between the achievement of these pupils and other pupils nationally further diminishes
  - ensuring that teachers more consistently stretch the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils
  - increasing consistency in the quality of teaching where it is less effective, especially in mathematics.
- Reduce the rate of persistent absence of disadvantaged pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Under the determined leadership of the headteacher, many aspects of the school's work have improved markedly since the last inspection, including the quality of teaching, behaviour, attendance and provision for post-16 students.
- Leadership has been further strengthened by the shrewd appointment of additional senior leaders from the beginning of the current school year. These leaders have quickly identified what needs to improve, and taken effective action. As a result, consistency in the quality of teaching has improved and the progress of disadvantaged pupils is improving towards that of other pupils.
- Senior and middle leaders know their subjects really well. They understand the strengths and weaknesses in each teacher's practice because of the regular checks they make on the quality of teaching. These leaders also have a thorough understanding of the progress of key groups of pupils. This work helps leaders to concentrate on the most important priorities. Leaders increasingly effectively hold teachers to account.
- Teachers value the training and support they receive, including the opportunity to reflect on their practice through coaching sessions. This is resulting in continuous improvements in the consistency of the quality of teaching within and between subjects. Leaders understand where to concentrate their attention, including in mathematics and on the progress of disadvantaged pupils and the most able.
- The leader in charge of provision for disadvantaged pupils has identified those aspects of spending of pupil premium funds that last year had less impact than others. More effective use of funds has resulted in a quickening of the pace of improvement. Similarly, effective leadership has ensured that use of funds for Year 7 pupils who did not reach the expected standards in English and/or mathematics by the end of primary school has resulted in a great many catching up.
- Leaders carefully identify and diagnose the needs of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Thorough planning and teaching, which largely meet the needs of these pupils well, result in most making progress in line with other pupils. Additional funding is used effectively to provide specialist support for specific needs.
- Pupils value the helpful and effective independent advice and guidance they receive throughout their school journey, including careers guidance. This means that most pupils, including the most vulnerable, are encouraged towards courses that best suit their aspirations, interests and aptitudes. The proportions of pupils going on to suitable destinations at the end of Year 11 are above the national average.
- Leaders have ensured that a wide range of courses of study are available for pupils, including academic routes qualifying pupils for the English Baccalaureate, as well as artistic and creative subjects and a range of vocational opportunities. Pupils also benefit from many opportunities to engage in extra-curricular clubs and activities. All of this makes for a broad and balanced curriculum.

- Leaders provide a full programme of opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This includes opportunities for discussion about a range of current issues through various subjects, and more discrete opportunities to explore topics in tutor time and assemblies. For example, one inspector observed as pupils reflected on the relationship between the parable of the Good Samaritan and responses to the recent terrorist attack in Manchester.
- Despite being a stand-alone academy, independent of local authority control, the headteacher and governors sought support and challenge from the local authority some time ago. Following the last inspection, the local authority brokered an effective partnership with a local outstanding school. Leaders have made effective use of the challenge and support provided, which has made a substantial contribution to improvement, especially in mathematics and in the progress of disadvantaged pupils.

## **Governance**

- The governing body keeps a close eye on the work of the school, checking that leaders' actions are having the required impact. Regardless of improvements made, governors are not complacent and aspire to even better progress and the further diminishing of differences between the achievements of key groups of pupils, especially the disadvantaged.
- Because of the regular checks on progress that governors make by visiting the school, and the helpful and accurate information leaders provide, governors understand where the strengths and weaknesses are. They ask the right questions, holding leaders to account for the difference actions make to teaching, behaviour, attendance and pupils' outcomes. There is scope for some governors to be even more tenacious in the way they respond to leaders' assertions.
- The governing body carries out its statutory duties thoroughly to make sure that finances are managed properly, that safeguarding arrangements are effective, that policies are regularly reviewed and that the headteacher, other leaders and teachers are set suitable improvement targets. Governors consider decisions about teachers' pay and progression, making sure these are based on performance.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The designated safeguarding lead and child protection officer produce meticulous records of all matters relating to pupils who are at risk or suffering harm. Adults are vigilant and report and record any concerns they may have.
- Leaders are diligent in making checks when recruiting, to ensure that adults can be considered safe to work with children. A full and proper record is made of these checks. Staff understand their responsibility to report any concerns they might have about the behaviour of an adult towards a pupil, and how to treat allegations from pupils, parents and others.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Improvements in teaching have led to enhancements in the progress of groups of pupils across all year groups and in most subjects, especially over the last year.
- Teachers' questioning of pupils to probe their thinking is well developed. Many teachers were observed targeting questions at particular pupils to check their understanding and secure their involvement. Consequently, pupils are more fully involved and engaged in their learning than at the time of the last inspection.
- Most teachers have a good understanding of the barriers that potentially get in the way of the learning of each of the disadvantaged pupils. Teachers are sensitive and responsive to these needs in their teaching and relationships with pupils. The 'disadvantaged first' policy means all staff prioritise disadvantaged pupils and keep a very close eye on the progress they make.
- Teachers have become more adept at matching work to the needs of groups of pupils with different prior attainment. This has resulted in many pupils making improved progress, particularly disadvantaged pupils. This practice is not entirely consistent across all subjects.
- Most teachers check during lessons that work is not too easy or too hard. In some cases, teachers do not check carefully enough that the most able pupils are attempting the most challenging work. In mathematics, pupils do not get to grapple often enough with really challenging problems. This holds back the progress of some of the most able pupils.
- Teachers' knowledge is well developed in most subjects, including in the core subjects of English and mathematics. Teaching in some subjects is especially strong, including in the performing arts, in German and in engineering, for example.
- The use and application of mathematics in science is becoming more prevalent and pupils' writing skills are developing in a range of subjects, particularly the humanities, where some teachers are especially effective at giving pupils opportunities to write at length and to think about how to structure their writing for best effect.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Teachers help to build pupils' self-confidence. Increasing numbers of pupils ask questions in lessons and seek advice on their work. Pupils presented as self-assured, mature, polite and friendly when inspectors chatted with them.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They say that bullying occurs from time to time, but that adults deal with it well. All pupils questioned said they have trusted adults they can speak with if they have any worries or concerns, including form tutors and heads of year. Pupils, especially the younger ones, value the peer mentor support system.

- Adults provide valued guidance to pupils on how to stay safe. Pupils of all ages learn much about such matters as sex and relationships, bullying, exposure to radicalisation, how to stay safe online, and the dangers of alcohol and substance misuse.
- Leaders and other adults actively prepare pupils for life in modern British society. The programme of assemblies for all year groups covers a wide range of relevant topics, such as freedom of speech, that help pupils reflect on difference and encourage them to show tolerance and respect. Pupils are developing open minds. Most are respectful of others regardless of race, religion and sexual orientation. Adults are quick to address any inappropriate language or banter.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The introduction of a 'positive discipline' strategy means that teachers reward pupils more often and sanction them more consistently when they break the school's clear rules. This has resulted in a substantial improvement in behaviour and better readiness for learning.
- There has been a sharp drop in the number of behaviour incidents since last year. Most pupils regulate their own behaviour well and on the occasions where the behaviour of a few pupils is less positive, adults manage it well. The rate of fixed-term exclusion has dropped substantially to below the national average, and the use of internal isolation is effective in helping most of those with behavioural difficulties to improve.
- Pupils have their required equipment with them and move swiftly between lessons. They get down working straightaway on starter tasks in each lesson. Disruption in lessons is rare and pupils largely concentrate and work hard throughout their lessons. They get on well together.
- Attendance has improved overall to above the national average and the rate of persistent absence has fallen to below average. However, despite making some inroads with some disadvantaged pupils because of the extensive and robust measures in place, too many still miss school more than a day each fortnight on average. This remains a barrier to progress for these pupils.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Progress by the end of Year 11 in 2016 was a little above the national average overall, better than at the time of the last inspection. Over time, progress in a variety of subjects has been variable, ranging from weak to exceptionally strong. Improvements in the quality of teaching across most subjects mean that pupils currently in the school are making more consistently good progress.
- Pupils' progress and attainment have been better in English than in mathematics, especially for the disadvantaged pupils. This year, all groups of pupils currently in the school are making faster progress in mathematics because of the improvements in leadership and teaching, although achievement in mathematics is still trailing behind that in English.

- Progress for disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, is improving towards that of other pupils across a wide range of subjects. The progress of this group was exceptionally poor a few years ago but has improved steadily year on year and continues to do so.
- Achievement has been, and continues to be, especially strong in a number of non-academic subjects, for example engineering, some of the performing arts and physical education. Progress in more academic subjects, such as the humanities and French, has been more variable but is improving quickly because of strengthened leadership and teaching.
- Outcomes in science by the end of Year 11 have been exceptional for a number of years, up to and including in 2015. There was a dip in performance in some science examinations in 2016. Under the strong direction of the science subject leader, pupils across the age range are making good progress in science subjects.
- Most pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making progress in line with other pupils from similar starting points because of the effective provision for them.
- In 2016, pupils in Year 11 with high prior attainment achieved as well as similar pupils nationally across a range of subjects. Leaders recognise the scope for more of the most able pupils to reach the highest standards in most subjects and year groups, given more consistently strong challenge for these pupils.

## **16 to 19 study programmes**

**Good**

- The sixth form is a particularly strong phase of the school. Students are proud to be part of the sixth form. They are unequivocally positive about their experiences. They appreciate the commitment and dedication of their teachers and the personalised support and strong pastoral care they receive.
- The school is part of a sixth form consortium with two other local schools: Hesse High School and Wolreton School and Sixth Form College. This is a strong partnership established over 25 years, enabling the academy to offer a wide range of academic and vocational courses, and contributing to improvements in teaching and outcomes.
- Teaching is highly effective. Because of the high expectations set by teachers and detailed feedback, students work hard to refine and improve their work and take the next steps in their learning.
- After a dip in results in 2014, students now make good progress across a range of subjects. They make particularly strong progress in drama, physical education and classical civilisation. Students' progress overall is above the national average for A level and in line with the national average for AS level and applied general courses. The proportion of students who achieve the top grades in their A-level courses is higher than the national average.
- Leadership is strong and the head of sixth form has an accurate view of the strengths and areas for improvement. Through sharp analysis and effective tracking of students' progress, assessment information is used well across subjects to support students to meet their targets.

- Students are eager to participate in a range of leadership roles, including supporting younger pupils with reading and mathematics. Students debate and discuss current affairs, and are prepared well for life in modern Britain. Sixth form students understand and show respect and tolerance. One student said: 'This is an inclusive school where we are expected to respect others equally.'
- Students benefit from a comprehensive personal development and careers programme which includes workshops on healthy lifestyles, talks on university finance, mental health and well-being, and support for university applications. The vast majority of Year 12 students undertake a work experience placement that helps prepare them for the world of work.
- There is effective support for students who have not achieved a grade C or above in GCSE English and/or mathematics by the end of Year 11. As a result, these students make more progress than similar students do nationally.
- There is a sharp focus on preparing students for the next stage of education, training or employment. A high proportion of students go on to higher education and an increasing number of students are taking up apprenticeships. However, students did report that they would appreciate more advice and guidance about apprenticeships, and leaders are addressing this. The proportions of pupils staying on in the sixth form between Year 12 and Year 13 to continue their studies are above average.

## School details

Unique reference number	136921
Local authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	10032001

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	989
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	125
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Professor John Greenman
Headteacher	Mr Scott Ratheram
Telephone number	01482 847 498
Website	<a href="http://www.cottinghamhigh.net">www.cottinghamhigh.net</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@cottinghamhigh.net">office@cottinghamhigh.net</a>
Date of previous inspection	6–7 May 2015

## Information about this school

- Cottingham High School and Sixth Form College is an average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average.
- One in 10 pupils is from a minority ethnic group and very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average.
- The school plans to collaborate with two other schools, Hessle High School and Wolfreton School and Sixth Form College, as a multi-academy trust in September 2017.

- None of the pupils on roll attend alternative provision off the school site.
- The school met the current floor standards in 2016. These are the minimum expectations of pupils' progress set by the government.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website and complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 43 lessons to check pupils' learning. Some of these observations took place with senior and middle leaders. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' workbooks and chatted with pupils about their learning. They also discussed with pupils what it is like to be a young person at the school.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders to discuss the actions they have taken since the last inspection. Inspectors also held discussions with a number of teachers, two governors and a representative from the local authority.
- A range of documents were scrutinised, including the school's self-evaluation, the school development plan, leaders' monitoring notes, and records relating to attendance, behaviour and safeguarding. Inspectors examined school assessment information.
- One hundred and forty-one responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were considered, along with written responses from parents. Inspectors also considered 188 responses to the pupil questionnaire and 124 responses to the staff survey.

## Inspection team

Philip Riozzi, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Michele Costello	Her Majesty's Inspector
Deano Wright	Her Majesty's Inspector
Michael Maddison	Ofsted Inspector
Gordon Watts	Ofsted Inspector

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