

Goffs School

Goffs Lane, Cheshunt, Waltham Cross, EN7 5QW

Inspection dates 4–5 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Students make good progress in most subjects. It is improving fast, and often outstanding.
- By the end of Year 11, students' attainment is well above average and especially high in English and mathematics.
- Teaching is good, and an increasing amount is outstanding. In the majority of lessons, work is demanding but carefully adapted to students' learning needs, and the pace of learning is fast.
- Students' behaviour and attitudes are outstanding.
- Students feel very safe, because bullying is extremely rare and they are very confident that any incidents that concern them will be dealt with swiftly and effectively.
- The headteacher's outstanding leadership has promoted the significant improvements made in recent years.
- Leaders deal with inadequate teaching exceptionally well and provide excellent training for teachers to further improve their skills.
- Leaders' concentrated drive on improving attainment and progress is working extremely well.
- In the sixth form, students also do well thanks to a good and improving education.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, work is not hard enough for all students, and the pace of lessons is too slow.
- The way teachers prompt students with questions does not always encourage them enough to contribute to the development and understanding of new ideas.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 49 teachers teach 51 lessons or parts of lessons.
- Meetings were held with staff, pupils, parents and carers. Inspectors spoke to a representative of the local authority and a governor by telephone.
- Inspectors looked at the school's work, students' achievement information, development planning and the school's self-evaluation.
- Inspectors took into account the 63 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).

Inspection team

Edward Wheatley, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Paul Bartlett	Additional Inspector
Janet Allcorn	Additional Inspector
David Webster	Additional Inspector
Brenda Watson	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school converted to an academy on 1 October 2011. When its predecessor school, Goffs School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be satisfactory overall.
- The academy is larger than most secondary schools.
- Students come from mainly White British backgrounds. Very few students are at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is below average, and the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and for whom the school receives additional income (the pupil premium) is well below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding, by summer 2013, by ensuring that:
 - work is always closely matched to the needs of students
 - the pace of learning in lessons is always fast
 - teachers' questioning fully involves all students in discussion that contributes to improving their understanding and knowledge.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students make good and often outstanding progress from average starting points, and their progress has improved significantly in recent years. Where there was some relative underachievement by able students in the past, this has been almost entirely eliminated. These students now make good or better progress, and so are catching up fast on past underachievement.
- Levels of attainment are above or well above average in most subjects, and have risen in recent years. The proportion of students reaching the higher grades at GCSE has increased considerably since the last inspection. Students' attainment in English and mathematics is high by the end of Year 11. In science, students' attainment is above average and rising.
- In the sixth form, students' progress is good, and often outstanding. Students join the sixth form with a wide range of abilities, and their progress is improving year on year.
- Students read very well, and the small number of students starting school with weaker aptitude in reading quickly gain the skills they need. Students have very good writing skills. These are learned effectively through high-quality writing tasks in most subjects.
- Students have a very wide vocabulary and express their ideas imaginatively, and in detail. For example, in a Year 9 science lesson on antimicrobials and antibiotics, students discussed their ideas about the differences and similarities between the two. They then wrote about them, producing detailed, accurate notes using correct scientific vocabulary, and well-expressed explanations.
- Students have good mathematical skills and understand the mathematical procedures they use. They carry out mental calculations well and explain how they do so. They use graphs extremely well and lay out calculations that show their working clearly.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make good and often excellent progress. The very small number of pupils at the early stages of learning English makes outstanding progress. Students known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding make extremely good progress. This is because the school allocates staff and other resources very effectively to meet the learning needs of these students.
- Learning in lessons is good and frequently outstanding. Students work together exceptionally well. They show considerable respect for each other's ideas, share resources, and discuss their findings and ideas. In most lessons, they make very good contributions to discussions. Occasionally they do not become fully involved, and in a very small number of lessons their progress slows briefly when work is not quite hard or fast enough.
- Parents and carers are pleased with how well their children learn, the recent improvement in progress, and their growing confidence in their children's ability to do well.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers plan lessons well; sometimes exceptionally well. They usually make very good use of frequently collected, accurate assessment information to ensure work meets students' learning needs.
- Teaching is well supported with regular homework, which teachers ensure is closely

connected to lessons and which they always mark. The great majority of students value the homework as contributing to their learning and progress.

- The great majority of lessons include opportunities for students to work independently and in small groups, and to express their understanding and knowledge clearly and accurately. The skilful use of group work encourages good working relationships, respect and consideration for each other's ideas. It also promotes students' moral, social and cultural development.
- In outstanding lessons, work is demanding and fast paced, and teachers use a wide range of learning activities. Teachers fully engage students in discussion about what they are learning, and link this to National Curriculum levels or examination grades. For example, in a Year 9 English lesson on developing writing techniques, the teacher made sure students knew what levels the work was pitched at, and how they could reach higher levels. The activities included reading aloud, small-group discussion and individual writing. The pace of the lesson was fast and learning was excellent. Students of all abilities made outstanding progress.
- Teachers and classroom assistants provide excellent support for students. While some students need more support than others, staff make sure that there are many opportunities for independent or small-group work, so that students develop confidence in their own abilities.
- Occasionally, work is not matched closely enough to students' learning needs and the pace of learning is too slow. On other occasions, teachers' questioning does not engage all students effectively, so their understanding and knowledge are not as thorough as they should be.
- The curriculum is outstanding in the main school and sixth form. It is adapted well in line with the aspirations and interests of the students, and supports them in the career or continuing education they choose. The teaching of literacy, numeracy and computer skills is good and embedded well in all subjects.
- The teaching of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good, and often excellent. The school uses a mixture of in-class support and withdrawal from lessons to meet the long- or short-term needs of these students extremely well.
- Teachers' marking is excellent. It gives students an accurate view of how well they are achieving, how to improve, and what the next steps in learning are. Students respond well and carry out the improvements to their work that the teachers suggest.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Students are overwhelmingly enthusiastic about school. Their behaviour is almost always outstanding, and they work extremely hard. They are eager to attend booster classes in the evenings, at weekends and during holiday time, because they know they will benefit from them, and because they know teachers are keen to support them.
 - Students respect and help each other readily. They make friends with others from different backgrounds. They take on responsibilities in and beyond the school. Sixth form students, for example, provide valuable support for younger students in lessons, and become involved in local charity work.
 - Students say they feel very safe at school, and have no worries about any form of bullying. Parents and carers are generally in agreement and talk glowingly of the support provided for students, whatever their personal worries or health problems. Students say unacceptable behaviour is rare and is dealt with quickly and effectively.
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- Students' attendance is above average. It has improved considerably in recent years because the school works closely with students and families to encourage regular attendance.
- Students are looked after well, with considerable sympathetic support for students or families experiencing difficulties.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher provides outstanding direction for the school's improvement. She is exceptionally well supported by all leaders and other staff in the relentless and successful effort to drive up standards and improve students' progress. Students, parents and carers are fully aware of, and supportive of, the determination to continue the school's programme of improvement.
 - The school accurately identifies its strengths and weaknesses. Leaders are single-minded and effective in eliminating any rare incidences of inadequate teaching, and also in providing high-quality training to help teachers improve their teaching. Teachers' pay scales are directly linked to performance management targets and the performance of students.
 - The school has effective links with the local authority. It has provided good-quality training and support in helping the school improve the quality of teaching.
 - Concerted and sustained work to boost achievement is having a good impact. Attainment is rising throughout the school. The small gaps in progress between different groups of students in the past, especially the most able and in the sixth form, have narrowed. The school is demonstrating very strong capacity to sustain this improvement.
 - The curriculum is exceptionally well managed. It includes a wide range of courses to support students in making choices that are well matched to their future aspirations. They have many opportunities to find out about other cultures and to explore a wide range of social issues. This promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and plays a significant part in helping to eliminate all forms of discrimination.
 - Links with families are highly successful. Parents and carers are very pleased with the level of communication and that they can contact staff, including the headteacher, at any time. They feel well informed, supported and confident that any concerns they have will be resolved effectively.
- **The governance of the school:**
- works very closely with the headteacher and other leaders to set ambitious targets for improvement
 - holds the headteacher to account for students' performance
 - ensures safeguarding and other requirements are fully met
 - ensures additional resources, including funds derived through the pupil premium, are used effectively to help pupils who are at risk of falling behind in literacy and numeracy.
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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

Unique reference number	137532
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	406676

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

Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1292
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	242
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Anstey
Headteacher	Alison Garner
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01992 424200
Fax number	01992 424201
Email address	admin@goffs.herts.sch.uk

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