

# Chantry High School and Sixth Form Centre

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124841
<b>Local Authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	315080
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joan Hewitt

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	1130
6 <sup>th</sup> form	164
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Parsons
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anne Rickwood
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15–18 November 2004
<b>School address</b>	Mallard Way Ipswich Suffolk IP2 9LR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01473 687181
<b>Fax number</b>	01473 602693

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by five Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Chantry High School and Sixth Form Centre is a relatively large school with a shared sixth form, in an area of social disadvantage. The majority of students are of White British backgrounds. The percentage of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. The school gained Specialist Humanities College status in 2006. In 2007, the school gained Healthy Schools Award and the Basic Skills Quality Mark for Literacy. The headteacher is on secondment and there is currently an acting headteacher.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

**Grade: 2**

Chantry High School is a good school. It has some outstanding features. Students benefit from the high levels of care and commitment shown by all staff. Consequently, their personal development and well-being are excellent. A strong feature of the school is the quality of the positive relationships in and out of lessons. Students socialise in a relaxed and calm atmosphere during breaks. They enjoy their time at school and speak positively about the opportunities open to them.

Students enter the school with standards that are well below national averages. By the time they leave in Year 11, standards are in line with national averages and this represents good progress. Students are prepared well for the world of work. The senior leadership team is working hard to ensure that more students achieve a good GCSE in both English and mathematics by the time they leave. The school rightly focuses its work as a Specialist Humanities College on raising students' literacy skills and this is beginning to show in the improved standards. The school does excellent work with its partners to provide older students with work-related activities, which they find very motivating.

Teaching and learning are good and improving. This is largely due to the new, systematic approach the school has taken to help the teachers to plan and teach successful lessons. In the best, students are encouraged to be independent and teachers match the work well to their needs. A new system for tracking students' progress is beginning to help them to identify the next steps they need to take to improve their learning. Leaders are providing further guidance to teachers to ensure that all use the tracking information effectively.

The curriculum is outstanding. The school has successfully used the results of consultation with students to provide an impressive range of courses to suit the diverse needs of the youngsters. The literacy groups in Year 7 give students a good opportunity to improve their reading and writing. The school provides good support for the high proportion of students with learning difficulties and disabilities, which, in turn, helps them to have better access to the curriculum.

The school's care, support and guidance are exemplary. The staff are very caring and go the 'extra mile' every day. Teachers take pride in making sure that they listen to the views of individual students and meet their needs. A particularly strong feature is the provision of the 'Learning Curve'. This unit provides outstanding pastoral and academic support for vulnerable youngsters who are at risk from exclusion or who are identified as unlikely to enter employment or other training when they leave the school.

The leadership and management of the school are good. The acting headteacher, in partnership with the headteacher, is passionately committed to ensuring that the school caters for students of all abilities and that individual progress is monitored. The senior leadership team supports them very well. Most middle leaders also play an effective part in checking that the planned actions are resulting in improvement, but this is not consistent across all subject areas. The school has a good capacity to

improve. The good leadership inspires staff and students and effectively promotes the school's aims to 'listen more, achieve more and care for each other more'. As a result, the students achieve well and strive to do even better.

## **Effectiveness of the sixth form**

**Grade: 2**

The sixth form is good. In 2007, examination results improved significantly in most subjects and were broadly in line with national averages. This indicates good achievement, given the low standards on entry to the sixth form. The school has worked hard in recent years to integrate more students into the sixth form who do not attain five or more GCSE grades A\* to C. The guidance provided in preparing them for the future is excellent. Students are aware of their learning goals and subject teachers and tutors monitor their progress against their targets effectively. The students are involved well in the regular reviews of their progress, which in turn helps them to take greater responsibility for themselves. The monitoring of teaching and learning by senior leaders is effective. The students' personal development is outstanding. Members of the sixth form act as role models for the younger students in a range of activities. An example of this can be seen in the way the students support those in the main school in resolving their problems. Leadership and management of the sixth form are good. Leaders promote good links with external organisations, particularly the local further education colleges and secondary school. These partnerships provide good opportunities to match students appropriately to the courses on offer. The school provides students with their own designated area and this gives them a good working environment.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Increase the percentage of students leaving the school with a good GCSE grade in English and mathematics.
- Improve the contribution made by middle leaders so that evaluation of the impact of actions is consistently good.
- Make sure that all teachers make best use of new tracking and assessment system to help students to identify next steps in learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

**Grade: 2**

Students achieve well. At the end of Year 11, the students' standards are broadly average and the percentage gaining five or more A\* to C grades is in line with the national average. However, there are some important areas where students do not make the progress expected of them, notably in mathematics at Key Stage 4. The school acknowledges that there is more work to be done in ensuring that more students leave Year 11 with good GCSE passes in both English and mathematics. It is using its status as a Specialist Humanities College to do some very good work in improving the reading and writing skills. Attainment in the sixth form varies between subjects, and the school is taking effective action to ensure that it is more consistent. All groups of learners, including the most able, make good progress as they move through the school.

## Personal development and well-being

**Grade: 1**

The students value highly the school's exceptionally supportive, caring and welcoming atmosphere. Good and improving attendance demonstrates their enjoyment. Spiritual development is good, demonstrated by their response to the opportunities for reflection in assemblies. Students' moral, social and cultural development is outstanding; qualities of respect and courtesy permeate the school. Drama and musical productions attract wide participation and are, like the school itself, inclusive in their spirit. Bullying is rare and students feel secure in the school's safe environment. They know to whom they can turn, should any problem arise. The school's Healthy Schools Award is evident in the excellent meals provided, which students enjoy. Overall, behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Students make an outstandingly positive contribution to the school community. They have the opportunity to take on a wide variety of responsibilities and the excellent ethos in the school is due in no small part to the respectful attitudes of its students.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

**Grade: 2**

The teachers have good subject knowledge and they plan carefully. This, linked with good classroom management, creates an environment that students enjoy and in which good learning takes place. In the lessons where teaching is good or better, work is well matched to the needs of all students. In the best lessons, teachers use questioning effectively, move lessons on at a good pace and use assessment procedures well to plan the next stages of learning. In these lessons, work is marked thoroughly, providing a clear indication of the standards students have reached and how they could be further improved. In a minority of lessons, the level of challenge and pace are not so well developed and activities are not sufficiently matched to the different needs and abilities of the students. In these lessons, teachers do not always make full use of the school's recently developed assessment procedures to set targets and inform their teaching. In these cases, teachers do not give students sufficient opportunities to work independently, in pairs or in small groups.

### Curriculum and other activities

**Grade: 1**

The school's wide range of courses and programmes is outstanding. The curriculum is exemplary at Key Stage 4 because it is designed to respond to the individual requirements of the students and this ensures that it meets the needs and abilities of all. Consequently, it makes an outstanding contribution to students' achievement and personal development. It is a testament to the school's commitment to one of its core aims to 'achieve more'. The accreditation as a specialist College for Humanities is beginning to make an impact, for instance, on the levels of students' literacy.

The school has developed strong partnerships with other local schools, colleges and providers. These links provide extra opportunities for the curriculum to support students' learning well. Students enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular activities

providing both sporting and cultural experiences. Students have access to an excellent programme of work-related learning and work experience, and they are well prepared for their future life of work and learning.

## Care, guidance and support

**Grade: 1**

The staff are very successful in supporting and monitoring vulnerable students. Liaison with outside agencies is highly effective. Learning managers follow up concerns quickly and prevent the escalation of difficulties. Regular meetings involve a wide range of agencies able to offer support to youngsters who are at risk. This enables the school to work with other professionals to provide rapid and appropriate responses. Safeguarding procedures are in place and child protection systems are robust. Specific students are identified and given help to develop their social skills, boost their confidence and improve their preparation for adult life. Transition arrangements are well organised through effective collaboration with the local primary schools and further education colleges. A minority of parents and carers expressed concern about behaviour but inspectors judge that these fears are unfounded. Managers swiftly identify students who are at risk of failing to complete their education. These students then have access to effective alternative provision. Impressively, the school continues to contribute to their care and support when they leave the school.

## Leadership and management

**Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. There is a clear focus on school improvement. Senior managers reinforce the school's drive to raise students' achievement and teachers and leaders at all levels are held accountable for their areas of responsibility. The headteacher and acting headteacher work successfully together, and are supported effectively by the senior team. They combine energy and clear thinking with experience to provide a strong lead for the school's outstandingly caring environment. The teachers' commitment to the youngsters in their care reflects the senior team's passionate belief in making sure that the school cares for every student. Ambitious academic targets are set for its students. The school helps them to reach these targets through the recently introduced system for tracking their progress. This has begun to make an impact on the students' progress and, where it is used effectively, it enables the school to tailor the targets to each student's potential. Senior leaders, including governors, have a good understanding of the school's strengths and most important priorities. Leaders deploy staff and other resources successfully to achieve good value for money. Governors support and challenge the school well.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.</b>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16–19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage		
The effectiveness of boarding provision		
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	<b>2</b>	

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	<b>1</b>	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	<b>1</b>	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	<b>1</b>	
How well learners enjoy their education	<b>2</b>	
The attendance of learners	<b>2</b>	
The behaviour of learners	<b>2</b>	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	<b>1</b>	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	<b>2</b>	

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

All white boxes must be completed. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	<b>2</b>	
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	<b>2</b>	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	<b>2</b>	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	<b>2</b>	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	<b>2</b>	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Yes</b>
Does this school require special measures?	<b>No</b>	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	<b>No</b>	

**Annex B**

8 February 2008

Dear Students

**Inspection of Chantry High School and Sixth Form Centre Ipswich IP2 9LR**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. You were very helpful and friendly. It was interesting to hear your views about the work you do and how the school looks after you and prepares you for the future.

We think Chantry High School is a good school. It does everything well and there are some things that are impressive. All the adults in the school provide a high quality of care and support for you. You told us that you always know who to go to if you are having problems and that adults will help you.

You are making good progress and your lessons are interesting and planned carefully so that everybody can learn and achieve. You learn best when teachers help you to take responsibility for your work. We have asked Mrs Rickwood and Mr Fell to carry on helping more of you to get five good GCSE passes, including English and mathematics, at the end of Year 11.

Your teachers check and mark your work carefully and some of the marking tells you what you need to do next. You told us about the new 'progress tracker' and we think it is beginning to help you understand and achieve your targets. Some teachers use this very well with you. We have asked Mrs Rickwood and Mr Fell to make sure everybody makes good use of it.

The variety of subjects you can do is excellent and the school makes sure there is something for everyone. Some of you are combining your studies with work placements. We think this will help you to be good citizens when you leave school.

Mr Fell and other senior staff make regular checks on the quality of your lessons. Other staff help them and some of them do this very well. We have asked the headteacher to make sure staff always do this and this will help you to do the best you can.

We think Chantry High School is a good place to learn. You can play an important role in making sure it becomes even better by continuing to work hard and listening to advice from your teachers.

Yours sincerely

Joan Hewitt  
Lead inspector