



Highcliffe School

11-18 Academy & Specialist College



Ofsted Report

12th-13th March 2013



April 2013

Dear Parent

OFSTED REPORT: 12th – 13th March 2013

I am pleased to write to you on behalf of the Governing Body to inform you of the outcome of our recent OFSTED Inspection. I am delighted to inform you that the school has been graded as a good school.

In the last fifteen months there have been three different OFSTED Inspection frameworks, each progressively more stringent in the application of standards than the previous one. It is therefore impossible to compare one report with another over time. The way in which schools are being judged has been changed and, as OFSTED puts it, 'this means that inspectors now make judgements that were not made previously'.

This was the first inspection of Highcliffe School as a converter Academy. Our inspection was based upon the September 2012 framework and was one of the new wave of 'no notice inspections'. This meant that we heard of the inspection team's visit just after midday on the 11th March. I am therefore, extremely grateful to those parents who were able to complete the Ofsted on-line questionnaire overnight.

The Lead Inspector, Janet Pearce HMI, led the inspection and following the most recent OFSTED letter to schools (February 2013), the HMI impressed upon the school that 'good meant really good' and that her superior (HMCi: Sir Michael Wilshaw) had 'raised the bar' again. The inspection outcome is that Highcliffe School has been judged 'Good' in terms of overall effectiveness and also in the four sub-categories. This judgement is in line with our own school self-evaluation, under the Ofsted framework (Publication date: Thursday 18th April 2013).

All staff and Governors work extremely hard with the common purpose of improving the school. The inspection team recognised that 'school leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement', and 'that they have a commitment to ambitious rates of academic progress and all round personal development for every student'. Our students should also be credited and I would like to thank them for welcoming the inspectors to lessons and sharing their views of the school with them; their behaviour and attitude were judged to be 'good, and often outstanding'.

The full report can be accessed on the school website: www.highcliffeschool.com .

The HMI reported that she was confident that the school has the 'potential to be outstanding' and that the school 'provided an enriching environment and a positive climate for learning'. As a school, we will continue to focus relentlessly on improving further with the ambition of being graded 'outstanding' at our next inspection, motivated by the desire to provide the very best for our students who, as OFSTED state, clearly value 'the support they receive and the support they give each other'.

Yours sincerely

Martin Axton
Chair of Governors

Parkside, Highcliffe, Christchurch, Dorset, BH23 4QD

Deputy Headteacher
Mr N Campbell BA (Hons)



Deputy Headteacher
Mr N O'Connor BSc (Hons)

Highcliffe School

Parkside, Christchurch, BH23 4QD

Inspection dates

12–13 March 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Students achieve high results that compare favourably with those of students in similar schools. Students make good progress from their starting points.
- Teaching is consistently good. Teachers plan well-structured lessons with many opportunities for students to think about how well they are doing.
- The sixth form is good and provides a wide range of academic courses. Students are ambitious and work hard to achieve good results. They are prepared well for the next stage of their education, including places at top performing universities.
- School leaders are relentless in seeking ways to improve the school. The headteacher and her senior team are completely committed to the school, its place in the local community and celebrating the personal development and growth of every student.
- Behaviour is good in and out of lessons. Students are courteous and friendly. There are strong and mutually respectful relationships between students and staff. Students appreciate the extra help and support provided by staff. The school is a calm and happy place.
- The school provides an impressive range of extra activities and opportunities for students to participate, including links with schools and students in other parts of the world.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Students are not achieving exceptionally well because there is some variation in the quality of teaching. In a small number of lessons teachers miss opportunities to challenge students or match activities to the abilities of the students.
- Some students do not make enough progress in mathematics. Some girls and students supported at school action plus do not achieve well.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 46 lessons, including seven joint observations with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at students' work and listened to some students read.
- Inspectors met with groups of students across the age and ability range to discuss their views on progress, teaching and behaviour and safety in the school.
- Inspectors met the leaders of English, mathematics and science to discuss teaching and progress.
- Inspectors met the headteacher, senior leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body, three other governors, the school's self-evaluation partner, a group of middle leaders and a group of teachers.
- Inspectors took into account the 108 responses to the on-line parent survey (Parent View) and the 33 responses to the paper-based staff questionnaire. The lead inspector received two letters from parents.
- Inspectors checked the school's records on safeguarding and child protection. They looked at the school's records of students' current results and progress. They also considered the school's behaviour records and figures for attendance and exclusion.
- Inspectors considered school evidence of performance management and teachers' pay rewards over the last three years.
- Inspectors looked at minutes from governors' meetings and a range of documents including information about teachers' training and professional development.

Inspection team

Janet Pearce, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Martin Brown	Additional Inspector
Anne Looney	Additional Inspector
Faysal Mikdadi	Additional Inspector
Marian Marks	Additional Inspector

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www.highcliffeschool.com
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