

Heath Lane Academy

Heath Lane, Earl Shilton, Leicester, Leicestershire LE9 7PD

Inspection dates

2–3 July 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The principal, with the support of senior leaders, has taken swift and decisive action to improve the quality of teaching.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge and a firm understanding of what effective classroom practice is. This has ensured that teaching is now consistently good.
- Senior leaders and subject leaders regularly visit lessons to check on the quality of teaching and the effectiveness with which the curriculum is taught.
- Pupils' outcomes require improvement because pupils do not make consistently good progress.
- Until recently, attainment at GCSE has been too low. Pupils currently studying towards their GCSEs are attaining more highly than pupils have previously.
- Pupils in Years 7 and 8 are making good progress due to the significant improvement in teaching that has taken place.
- Senior leaders have reviewed the curriculum. It now provides pupils with regular opportunities to become secure in their knowledge and understanding across the full range of subjects they study. This has helped to improve the progress pupils make.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and conduct themselves well around the school site.
- Pupils learn about diversity and the need to respect people who are different to them.
- Well-targeted support and good teaching in the sixth form enable students to achieve well and move on successfully to their next steps.
- All staff are highly vigilant of pupils' welfare. They work effectively to keep pupils safe.
- Senior leaders have worked well with professionals from other schools to develop the curriculum, provide high-quality training to staff, and improve the quality of teaching.
- Members of the multi-academy trust board provide high levels of support and challenge to the senior leaders. They have a precise understanding of the quality of the provision.
- Attendance is improving. However, disadvantaged pupils' attendance is too low.
- Pupils of average ability in key stage 4 are not making sufficient progress, particularly in mathematics and science.
- Senior leaders have not ensured that all parents and carers know the significant improvements that have taken place to the provision, particularly in relation to pupils' behaviour and the quality of teaching.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Senior leaders must ensure that:
 - all pupils, including those of average ability, make consistently good progress in a wide range of subjects, including mathematics and science
 - disadvantaged pupils' attendance improves
 - all parents are aware of the improvements that have taken place in the quality of the school's provision, particularly in relation to pupils' behaviour and the quality of teaching.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal has provided strong leadership to improve aspects of the school's provision that were weak prior to her arrival. She has introduced high expectations in relation to pupils' behaviour and the quality of teaching. Pupils and staff have responded well to these raised expectations.
- With the support of her senior leaders, the principal has brought about rapid improvement to ensure that pupils' behaviour and the quality of teaching are good. These improvements have ensured that pupils are making better progress than they did previously, although their progress is not consistently good across all year groups.
- Senior leaders have a secure understanding of the impact of the actions that they have taken to improve the school's effectiveness. Their actions to bring about the necessary improvement to pupils' achievement are appropriately focused.
- Leaders at all levels regularly check the quality of teaching and the effectiveness with which teachers teach the curriculum, by visiting lessons and looking at pupils' books. They are quick to identify where classroom practice is not strong enough and provide effective support and training. This has ensured that teaching is consistently good.
- Through their rigorous and accurate checks on pupils' progress, senior leaders are quick to identify when pupils are not making sufficient progress, or when achievement in a particular subject or class is not high enough. When this is the case, senior leaders are quick to put in place appropriate support. This has led to an improvement in pupils' progress but has yet to ensure that it is consistently good across all subjects.
- By raising expectations of pupils' behaviour and through ensuring that there is a consistent approach to responding to any poor behaviour, senior leaders have ensured that pupils behave well and focus on their learning in lessons. This has ensured that there is a positive climate for learning across the school.
- Senior leaders have rightly revised the curriculum to ensure that it provides pupils with sufficient opportunities to become secure in their knowledge and understanding across all of their subjects. Senior leaders have given careful thought to how pupils build up knowledge over time. They have ensured that teachers' planning of learning builds successfully on what pupils already know, including knowledge that they have gained from other subjects. Regular reviews of the curriculum's effectiveness ensure that senior leaders adapt the curriculum where it is not ensuring that pupils are secure in their understanding and making sufficient progress.
- High-quality training has ensured that teachers have the necessary knowledge and skills to teach the curriculum effectively. This training has focused on sharing best classroom practice and on making sure that teachers are secure in their own subject knowledge. Teachers appreciate opportunities to discuss their subject knowledge and classroom practice with others who teach their subject, including from other schools.
- Senior leaders use additional funding well to provide appropriate support to eligible pupils. Senior leaders regularly review the strategies that they have put in place to support disadvantaged pupils, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and pupils entitled to Year 7 catch-up funding. They are quick to adapt any

strategies that are not fully effective in improving these pupils' achievement. As a result, the progress that disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are making is improving, while pupils in Year 7 who have fallen behind in mathematics and English catch up quickly.

- A wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities support the curriculum well, broadening pupils' experiences beyond the classroom. Off-site visits, school musical performances and involvement in trust-run competitions enable pupils to develop their knowledge and skills. By raising money for charities and by taking part in inter-school sports competitions, pupils engage with the local and wider community.
- There are regular opportunities for pupils to become secure in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils learn about different religions, cultures and beliefs. They understand the nature of diversity within society and the need to respect all people, including those who have beliefs or values that are different to their own. Pupils have a secure understanding of fundamental British values. They know the importance of the rights that come with living in a democracy.
- The school benefits from having developed close links with other schools, both within and outside the trust. Senior leaders have used examples of best practice evident elsewhere to influence the actions that they have taken to improve the school's effectiveness. For example, they have worked with leaders from other schools to review the curriculum, to provide subject-based training to staff and to check the accuracy of their own evaluation of the school's effectiveness. This has ensured that work to improve the school's provision has been effective.
- Senior leaders regularly seek the views of parents and carers. They are quick to act on any concerns that parents may have. However, they have not ensured that all parents are aware of the significant improvements to the school's effectiveness.

Governance of the school

- Members of the board of trustees provide senior leaders with high levels of support and challenge. Through their regular meetings with senior leaders and the executive principal, trustees have a precise understanding of the school's effectiveness. They know where further improvement is necessary.
- The Raising Achievement Board (RAB), on which several trustees sit, maintains a precise oversight of pupils' achievement. RAB members check on the accuracy of the reports that senior leaders present to them by visiting the school for themselves. They report their findings from these visits to the trustees.
- The trustees have encouraged the senior leaders to work closely with other schools, both within and outside the trust. This has ensured that senior leaders have been able to make use of expertise outside the school. This has proven to be influential in their work to secure improvement.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

- Staff receive regular training in safeguarding. They know the different types of abuse and the signs to look for. They are quick to pass on any concerns they may have about pupils' welfare to safeguarding leaders.
- Detailed records show that safeguarding leaders take timely, effective action to follow up on any concerns about pupils' welfare. They liaise closely with parents, and with external agencies, where this is appropriate. They are tenacious in their work to ensure that pupils receive the support they need.
- Safeguarding leaders are sensitive to local issues that may affect pupils' welfare. They work well with external agencies, including the police, so that pupils know how to keep themselves safe when out in the local community.
- Pupils say they feel safe at the school. They say that there are adults at the school who they know will listen to them and assist them if they have a concern.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- High-quality training in effective classroom practice and subject knowledge has ensured that teaching is good across the school.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use this well to provide effective support and challenge so that pupils develop a secure understanding of what they are learning.
- Teachers carefully plan learning to ensure that pupils build successfully on what they already know. In a Year 9 English lesson, the teacher encouraged pupils to recall what they had already learned about early twentieth century British society to understand the attitudes and opinions of the main characters in 'An Inspector Calls'.
- Teachers use questioning well to check pupils' understanding. Where they identify misconceptions, they are quick to provide further support to ensure that pupils' comprehension is secure.
- Teachers also use questioning well to explore pupils' ideas further and to extend their learning. In a Year 7 art lesson, for example, the teacher considered with pupils how, by focusing on refining their use of tone, they could improve their drawing technique.
- When setting a task, teachers check carefully that pupils understand what they must do and what subject knowledge they will need to use. This enables pupils to complete the task successfully and so become secure in their understanding.
- Teachers provide regular and developmental feedback. Pupils respond well to the feedback they receive to improve their work and extend their learning.
- Pupils engage well with their learning. They work purposefully on the tasks that teachers set them. They are happy to ask for help when they require it. They also support each other well in their learning.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. They manage any occasions when pupils drift off task well. This ensures that pupils' focus returns quickly to their work.
- Teachers develop pupils' communication skills well through encouraging them to read and to use subject-specific language accurately.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. They are keen to do well and engage well with their learning.
- Pupils learn how to be safe, including when online, when out in the community and when crossing the road.
- Pupils learn the importance of living healthy lives. They learn about eating healthily and taking exercise. They learn about healthy relationships.
- Pupils learn about the risk of making unhealthy choices. For example, pupils learn about the harm that taking drugs can cause.
- Pupils across all year groups receive high-quality careers advice and guidance. Pupils in key stage 4 receive individual interviews from an independent careers adviser. This helps them to understand the career opportunities open to them and what they must do to pursue their career interests.
- Pupils learn about different types of bullying, including online bullying. They understand the importance of treating people with respect. Pupils say that bullying rarely happens but when it does occur, staff deal with it effectively.
- Senior leaders closely monitor the attendance, behaviour, progress and welfare of any pupils who attend alternative provision for part or all of their education. School leaders visit these alternative providers to check on the quality of the provision and care that these pupils receive.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and when moving around the school site. They conduct themselves well during social time.
- Pupils who struggle to manage their behaviour receive appropriate support, including through mentoring and counselling. Over time, such support enables these pupils to manage their behaviour more effectively.
- The number of exclusions is reducing as pupils respond appropriately to the higher behaviour expectations that senior leaders have introduced. Similarly, for the same reason, there has been a reduction in the occasions when pupils attend internal isolation due to poor behaviour.
- Overall attendance is improving and is close to the national average. However, disadvantaged pupils' absence is too high.
- The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent has significantly reduced from being above the national average last academic year to being in line with the national average this year. Senior leaders work closely with these pupils to help them to attend more regularly.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Year 11 pupils who completed their GCSEs in 2018, including the most able and pupils of average ability, underachieved significantly in a range of subjects, including in English, mathematics and science. This was due to the weaker teaching that these pupils experienced over time.
- Attainment in English for current Year 11 pupils is improving. These pupils are now making stronger progress than that seen previously. However, in mathematics and science, while current Year 11 pupils' attainment is improving, they are not attaining as highly as they should.
- Pupils in Years 9 and 10 are now making stronger progress than they were previously. The majority of pupils in these year groups are making at least the progress that they should across a range of subjects. This is not the case for pupils of average ability in Year 10, however, whose progress is variable in mathematics and science.
- Pupils in Years 7 and 8, including the most able and those of average ability, make good progress across the full range of subjects. Most are secure in their knowledge and understanding as they have benefited from good teaching and the revised curriculum.
- The difference in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally is now beginning to diminish. This is due to leaders' effective use of additional funding to ensure that these pupils catch up more rapidly.
- The effective support that pupils with SEND receive has led to an improvement in the progress that they are making across all year groups.
- In most year groups, pupils make strong progress in art, performing arts and psychology.
- All pupils who left the school in 2018 moved on to sustained places of education, training and employment.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Strong leadership of the sixth form has ensured that students have received the support that they require to be able to achieve well.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which they use well to ensure that students become secure in their knowledge and understanding, and achieve grades which enable them to move on to their next steps.
- Senior leaders adapt the curriculum to ensure that students can study subjects that interest them and that help them to prepare well for their next steps. Students have been able to study both academic and work-related subjects.
- Students adopt positive attitudes to their work. They are keen to succeed, and take advantage of extra support teachers and leaders offer to ensure that they achieve well.
- Students learn how to be safe, including when online.
- Students take on positions of responsibility within the school. For example, they lead on the organisation of fund-raising activities.

- Students' attendance is high.
- Students receive effective careers advice and guidance, which informs them well about the career opportunities open to them. They are able to take advantage of work placements, where such opportunities are appropriate to their interests.
- Students have adults to whom they can speak if they have a concern. The safeguarding leaders who support these students are those who support pupils throughout the school. The effective systems to safeguard pupils in key stages 3 and 4 are the same that leaders use to keep students in the sixth form safe.
- All students who have attended the sixth form have moved on successfully to their next steps, whether at university, in an apprenticeship, or in work-based training.

School details

Unique reference number	138327
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10087309

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	561
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	14
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Ian Dunn
Principal	Megan Morris
Telephone number	01455 845061
Website	www.hla.leics.sch.uk/
Email address	office@hla.leics.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Heath Lane is smaller than the average-sized secondary school. It is located in Earl Shilton.
- The school was formed from the merger of The Heathfield Academy, which was an 11–14 school, with William Bradford Community College, which was a 14–19 school. The merger took place in August 2016.
- The school is part of the Midlands Academies Trust. The trust is made up of four secondary schools, of which Heath Lane Academy is one. The headteachers of each of the four schools work in close partnership across the trust. The trust has a board of

trustees, members of which sit on the RABs for each of the four schools. There is an executive team that consists of the chief executive officer and an executive headteacher, who has oversight of the trust's four schools.

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is well above average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is average.
- The school works with seven alternative providers to provide pupils at the school with education off site. These providers are: TECK, in Coalville; Si Sports, in Leicester; Enstruct, in Leicester; E2, in Leicester; Glenfield, in Leicester; Melton Hub, in Leicester; and UNEEK, in Hinckley.
- The principal took up her post in September 2017. The vice-principal took up his post at the same time.
- The trust has decided to close the sixth-form provision at the end of this academic year, due to the low number of students who attend the provision. At the time of the inspection, there were no sixth-form students at the school for inspectors to meet and no lessons for inspectors to observe.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 24 lessons across the whole school. Nine of these observations took place jointly with senior leaders, including the principal. An inspector also observed an assembly.
- During their visits to lessons, inspectors looked at pupils' books and spoke with pupils.
- Inspectors also looked at pupils' books as a separate activity, with subject leaders.
- Inspectors held a range of meetings, including with the principal; senior leaders; the leader responsible for safeguarding; the head of sixth form; subject leaders; the special educational needs coordinator; the leader responsible for careers advice and guidance; and a selection of staff.
- The lead inspector met with two trustees, one of whom sits on the school's RAB.
- An inspector listened to some pupils read.
- An inspector spoke with representatives of three of the alternative providers of which the school makes use.
- An inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour before school, between lessons, and during breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors met formally and informally with pupils from across key stages 3 and 4.
- Inspectors took into account the 52 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including the 23 responses to the free-text service.
- Inspectors took into account the 47 responses to the online staff survey and the 100 responses to the pupil survey.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation relating to the school's provision, including: self-evaluation and improvement planning; behaviour and attendance; achievement; governance; and safeguarding.
- The lead inspector checked the school's single central register and the school's system for recruiting staff.

Inspection team

Simon Hollingsworth, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

John Edwards

Ofsted Inspector

Clive Worrall

Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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