

Hastings High School

St Catherine's Close, Burbage, Hinckley, Leicestershire LE10 2QE

Inspection dates

28–29 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and governors have managed the expansion of the school effectively, ensuring that it continued to provide a good quality of education during this period of considerable challenge.
- Leaders, governors, staff and pupils are ambitious for the school's success. Leaders recognise areas in need of further development and are determined to make the necessary improvements.
- Leaders have created a positive and collaborative culture. Staff and pupils are proud to be members of the school and all are keen to succeed.
- Pupils make good progress throughout the school. Attainment in 2017, in the majority of subjects, was considerably above the national average.
- Pastoral provision is a strength. Pupils are very well cared for and individuals' needs are well met.
- Teaching is good and particularly strong in the mathematics department. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this to plan activities which interest and motivate pupils. They provide high levels of challenge.
- Pupils' conduct around school and in lessons is excellent. Pupils are respectful, polite and well-mannered.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. It provides a wide range of opportunities to extend and enrich pupils' experiences.
- Pupils value the support they receive and enjoy coming to school. Attendance is good.
- Recent appointments have added strength to the leadership team. Monitoring activities are increasingly robust.
- Middle leaders are beginning to take greater responsibility for provision in their areas. Senior leaders support their development well.
- Teachers provide well for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities in lessons. However, leaders do not have a strategic overview of the provision for this group of pupils. They make less progress than others.
- Leaders do not evaluate the impact of additional funding with precision. They are, therefore, unable to ensure that it has as much impact as it might.
- Governors are knowledgeable and committed to the school. They challenge leaders and staff about their performance. However, although governors monitor the spending of additional funding, they do not hold leaders to account for its impact.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that leaders carefully evaluate all aspects of the school’s work with precision and detail, amending plans and taking decisive action swiftly when weaknesses are identified
 - ensuring that governors hold leaders fully to account for the impact of additional funding
 - further developing middle leaders to enable them to hold staff to account
 - developing a strategic approach to overseeing and evaluating the provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Over the years 2015 and 2016, the phased implementation occurred of the expansion of the school to include a key stage 4. Leaders have managed this complex and demanding change effectively, ensuring that pupils continue to make good progress. As a result, the first cohort of Year 11 pupils achieved good outcomes in 2017.
- Leaders and governors are ambitious for the school. They have high aspirations for pupils' success. They have created a culture where all feel valued. There is a clear sense of collaboration and community.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas in need of further development. They are taking effective action to bring about the necessary improvements.
- Pastoral leadership is excellent and a significant strength of the school. Senior leaders are well supported by a team of student-support staff and form tutors, to ensure that pupils' needs are closely monitored and effectively met. For example, leaders track pupils' behaviour carefully, intervening and supporting quickly and effectively. Such attention to detail and the care for pupils is instrumental in maintaining their excellent personal development, behaviour and welfare.
- The recently appointed deputy headteacher has added considerable capacity to the leadership team. He has introduced new systems to improve assessment practices. This has strengthened target-setting procedures, enabling greater accuracy of progress tracking.
- The deputy headteacher has also introduced examination review meetings, which have strengthened the accountability processes in the school. Middle leaders are beginning to evaluate their department's work and to develop plans for improvement. These meetings, followed by ongoing reviews, support the work of the teaching, learning and assessment leaders.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and pupils are enthused by their learning as a result. There is an extensive extra-curricular programme which ensures that pupils' experiences are rich and varied.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their understanding of fundamental British values are well promoted in all aspects of school life. In lessons, for example, pupils develop their understanding of morality through debate and discussion.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They have a good understanding of diversity and are accepting of those who have different values and beliefs. Leaders have ensured that pupils understand the opportunities available to them once they leave school. For example, they undertake work experience and attend skills shows to ensure that they recognise the variety of options open to them.
- The leaders of teaching, learning and assessment have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in this aspect of the school's work. Staff are supported to develop their practice through a range of activities. Leaders have recently introduced

the means to provide bespoke support through 'personal learning plans' but these have not yet had time to have an impact on the quality of teaching throughout the school. Nevertheless, staff are positive about the support they receive to improve their practice.

- Leaders have ensured that additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils is appropriately allocated. Disadvantaged pupils make good progress and achieve as well as other pupils nationally. However, leaders do not evaluate the impact of specific strategies sharply enough to ensure that it is as effective as it might be.
- Similarly, the Year 7 catch-up funding is appropriately used to provide additional tuition for eligible pupils. Pupils make good progress in numeracy and literacy. However, leaders do not strategically track the impact of the funding.
- Leaders have not developed a strategic approach to the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Teachers provide well for this group of pupils in lessons and they are effectively supported by pastoral staff. Leaders have ensured that additional funding is appropriately allocated but do not monitor its impact. Leaders do not have a strategic oversight of provision across the school.
- Leaders do not evaluate the impact of all aspects of the school's work sharply enough. They have written action plans to address areas identified in need of improvement but these do not always contain the necessary precision and detail. Leaders are aware of the need to ensure that they are more robust in some aspects of their monitoring.

Governance of the school

- Governors share leaders' aspirations for pupils and ambition for the school. They are passionate about the school and committed to its success.
- There is a wide range of experience and knowledge in the governing body. Governors have conducted a skills audit to ensure that they identify any gaps in their knowledge and understanding. They use this information when recruiting new governors to ensure that the governing body maintains a spread of expertise.
- Governors have the skills to hold leaders to account and do so in most aspects of their work. For example, they question and challenge senior and middle leaders about pupils' progress. However, they have not ensured that leaders are held to account for the impact of additional funding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The designated safeguarding lead is well supported by a team of safeguarding officers, pastoral leaders and form tutors. Leaders have developed positive relationships with parents and families which further support the work of the school.
- Staff are well trained and fully recognise their responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils.
- Leaders ensure that appropriate action is taken when concerns arise. They involve

external agencies as appropriate and are tenacious in following up concerns. This means that action to support pupils is swift.

- Records do not always reflect the robustness and effectiveness of work to safeguard pupils. Leaders recognise the need to sharpen up record-keeping in order to strengthen practice further.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan well-structured lessons. This, alongside positive relationships between staff and pupils, creates a purposeful environment, conducive to learning. Lessons start promptly and time is used productively. Pupils are keen to do well.
- Many teachers use questioning well to probe and develop pupils' understanding. The most able pupils are challenged through targeted questioning.
- Provision to support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities in lessons is good. Teachers recognise and understand individual pupils' needs and support them well. Teaching assistants are effective in helping pupils to develop their independence and to learn.
- The quality of teaching is particularly strong in the mathematics department. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils are able to achieve and plan challenging activities. Pupils are well supported and make rapid progress.
- Teachers and tutors contribute to the development of pupils' numeracy and literacy skills across the curriculum. For example, pupils undertake numeracy activities in tutor times and key words are emphasised in different subject areas to help pupils extend their vocabulary and to improve their spelling.
- Considerable work has been undertaken to develop the school's approach to assessment. Leaders have introduced new assessment practices which encourage pupils to take greater responsibility for evaluating their work. This is most effective where pupils are supported to understand the strengths and weaknesses in their work. For example, in physical education, pupils were filming their practical work and assessing its quality against success criteria, making very good progress as a result.
- Homework is used consistently to consolidate learning. Pupils value these activities and say that they help them to learn.
- Most teachers use information about what pupils are able to achieve to plan tasks that challenge them. A whole-school priority has been to ensure that work is differentiated to match pupils' needs. The majority of teachers plan activities of varying challenge. However, in many lessons, pupils are able to select the activities on which they work and teachers do not routinely ensure that they have selected appropriately. This means that sometimes the most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged and the least able are not effectively supported.
- Not all staff consistently follow the school's marking and feedback policy, particularly at key stage 3.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are confident and self-assured. They are proud to be members of the school.
- Pastoral support is extremely strong across the school. Pupils describe positive relationships with their form tutors and heads of year. Staff in the 'student support centre' and 'the hub' provide a range of formal support and informal assistance to ensure that pupils are happy and secure. For example, some pupils access mental health support which ensures that they are able to succeed in their studies; others benefit from the opportunity to chat to staff, boosting their esteem and enabling a positive approach to life at school. Pupils are very positive about the help and encouragement they receive from all staff.
- A cohesive programme of careers education, throughout the school, is effective in preparing pupils, including those at risk of disengagement, for the next stages of their education, employment or training. The vast majority of pupils progress to further education.
- The well-developed tutor programme ensures that pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. For example, they learn about e-safety and the potential risks of alcohol and drugs.
- Pupils feel safe at school and know whom they should approach if they have concerns. They say that bullying is extremely rare but are confident that it would be dealt with swiftly and effectively, should it occur.
- The very small number of pupils who attend alternative, off-site provision, are well supported to promote their personal development and well-being. Providers make regular contact with school leaders and pupils' needs are well met.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Their conduct is excellent, both in lessons and around school. Incidents of low-level disruption are extremely rare. Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors, for example holding open doors and offering to help with directions.
- Pupils approach school life with a positive purpose. They are punctual to school in the morning and to each lesson throughout the day.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive. Staff are strong role models. Pupils are respectful towards staff and to each other.
- Effective pastoral support and secure behaviour-management systems mean that exclusion is used as a last resort. Rates of fixed-term exclusions are extremely low and considerably lower than national averages. Internal exclusion is also used sparingly.
- Attendance, including that of disadvantaged pupils, is above the national average. Effective support ensures that the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school is low. The small number of pupils who find it difficult to attend regularly

are closely monitored and considerable work is undertaken to support them to improve and maintain their attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- 2017 was the school's first cohort of Year 11 pupils. Pupils' examination results showed that they had made good progress in the majority of subjects, including in English. Their progress in mathematics was particularly strong and considerably above that made by all pupils nationally.
- Pupils' attainment was significantly higher than the national average in most subjects. This includes subjects within the EBacc qualification.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress. In 2017, their attainment was slightly higher than national averages in most subjects, including in English and mathematics.
- The proportions of pupils who achieved both a standard pass and a strong pass in English and mathematics was considerably higher than the national average in 2017.
- Current pupils are also making very good progress. Leaders' tracking information indicates that pupils' outcomes will continue to improve. Work in pupils' books supports this.
- The small proportion of pupils who enter the school with literacy and numeracy levels below those typical for their age receive additional tuition. This, alongside high expectations of what they can achieve, supports pupils to catch up with their peers.
- Strong outcomes for pupils are supported by effective guidance and advice. Pupils are well prepared for their next steps as a result. The very small minority of pupils who are unable to succeed in mainstream school are well supported to secure appropriate pathways to continue and further their education.
- Year 11 pupils made less progress in art, information and communication technology, business studies and computer studies in 2017. Leaders are taking appropriate action to support improvements in these areas.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities made slower progress than the national average in most subjects in 2017. Inspectors noted good support in lessons for this group of pupils. However, leaders do not currently systematically track the progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. This means they are unable to evaluate the impact of strategies to support them.

School details

Unique reference number	140103
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10036087
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	830
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Tim Lea
Headteacher	Nick Goforth
Telephone number	01455 239414
Website	www.hastings.leics.sch.uk
Email address	hastings@hastings.leics.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school converted to academy status in September 2013. It is a stand-alone academy.
- The school expanded to include pupils in Year 10 in September 2015 and Year 11 in 2016.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- A very small number of pupils attend off-site provision through the Hinckley and Bosworth Education Partnership at Enstruct, Teck, Uneek Loft and Glenfield Youth Centre.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' achievement and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about Year 7 catch-up funding on its website.

- The school does not comply with the Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish about Year 7 catch-up funding.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 42 lessons, some jointly with senior leaders.
- Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, other staff and representatives of the governing body.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in lessons and a sample of pupils' books.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, around school and at lunchtime. They also observed pupils' learning and behaviour during registration.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and spoke with pupils in discussion groups and informally around the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, its improvement plans, minutes of meetings of the governing body, information about the attainment and progress of all pupils, records relating to behaviour and safeguarding, and information on the school's website.
- Inspectors considered the 92 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and an email communication from parents.

Inspection team

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