

Inspection of a good school: The Hazeley Academy

Emperor Drive, Hazeley, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK8 0PT

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 February 2024

Outcome

The Hazeley Academy continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Toni Whiteman. This school is part of 5 Dimensions Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Tony Nelson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Malcolm Dobell.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very happy at this inclusive school. They greet visitors cheerfully in the corridor and treat each other with respect and kindness. The school has successfully created a caring culture based on strong routines, excellent relationships, recognition of success and restorative practice. This is highly evident and means that pupils feel extremely safe.

Staff have high expectations of all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils rise to these expectations and work hard. The house system helps to promote a sense of belonging. Purposefully designed activities foster strong relationships between staff and pupils. For example, the highly cherished transition event, the 'Hazeleyfest', includes crucial team-building activities and it is where pupils forge long-lasting friendships with their peers. Everyone participates in activities designed to develop character. For example, all pupils relish the opportunity to take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.

Pupils benefit from expert pastoral care. 'Return 2 Learn' mentors intervene proactively to support pupils' learning and behaviour effectively. The school does not tolerate bullying. Pupils learn how to recognise and distinguish unkind behaviour from bullying. Pupils relish the opportunity to be anti-bullying ambassadors. They confidently champion their strategy in assemblies and in local feeder primary schools.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The ambitious curriculum is well designed and coherent. The school has identified precisely the knowledge and skills pupils need to know and learn. Clear expectations ensure that teachers skilfully use shared approaches, in line with the schools' own

'developing abundant learning' strategy. This ensures that pupils learn and remember crucial knowledge and skills. Regular effective training further develops teachers' strong subject expertise. At key stage 4, a growing number of pupils gain qualifications in the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects. This prepares them very well for the next stages of their education. Students in the large, over-subscribed sixth form benefit from a strong emphasis on academic achievement, prudently balanced with developing independent learning skills and community service. As a result, all students secure their chosen next steps in education, employment or training.

Teachers check what pupils know using a variety of methods. In most lessons, teachers address misconceptions regularly and effectively. This is especially true in the sixth form. For example, in mathematics, students benefit from high-quality discussions that challenge their thinking and deepen their understanding of complex concepts that are commonly misunderstood in examinations. In philosophy and ethics, students learn critical skills that enable them to present reasoned arguments and balanced views. However, particularly in key stage 3, teachers do not check what pupils know and can do precisely or frequently enough. This means that some pupils, including some disadvantaged pupils, do not benefit from enough opportunities to deepen their understanding or to rectify misconceptions. Consequently, they do not achieve as well as they could.

The schools' processes to identify pupils' different needs and starting points are accurate. Expert staff provide effective support for pupils with SEND. Similarly, specialist support helps pupils who cannot read well enough yet. This helps them catch up quickly. Reading is a priority throughout the school. The form-time reading strategy is highly effective. All pupils benefit from specialist weekly instruction that builds vocabulary and increases engagement in reading. The vibrant, well-resourced library is at the heart of the school. Pupils value the specialist support they receive from very knowledgeable library staff.

Pupils' behaviour is calm and orderly because of the school's high expectations. Everyone shares a consistent understanding of the rules and routines. This means that pupils learn in positive and purposeful learning environments. Pupils attend school regularly. This is because they are highly engaged in school life. Appropriate support helps pupils who do not meet the schools' high expectations of attendance or behaviour to improve.

The provision for pupils' wider development is a strength of the school. Pupils benefit from rich and varied experiences that enhance their understanding of growing up in modern Britain. The school provides a plethora of opportunities to develop pupils' leadership skills. 'Principal students' in the sixth form make highly significant contributions to the school. They demonstrate passion and commitment to the projects that they lead. The student-led equality group is a beacon of strong practice. Pupils cherish the annual culture day, that celebrates everyone's own heritage. One student, representative of many, said it is, 'the best day of my life'. Expert and knowledgeable staff lead the school's approach to providing excellent careers guidance, which supports pupils to make informed choices about their next steps after Year 11 and Year 13.

The trust provides highly effective support and capacity to the school. The vision of the trust permeates the school. The '5Cs' of 'character', 'confidence', 'creativity', 'contribution'

and 'community' underpin all aspects of school life. Governors know the school well. They bring expertise, appropriate challenge and effective support. Staff are very loyal to the school. One member of staff told the inspectors that he and many of his colleagues, 'Love the school because they are so invested in it'. Staff really value the professional development that they receive. They are confident that the school considers their workload when making decisions about new actions to improve the school further.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, teachers do not systematically check gaps in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. This means that some staff do not consistently adapt their teaching to support pupils' learning as well as they could. The school needs to ensure that teachers further refine their practice to accurately identify what pupils know and can do and adapt their teaching to address misconceptions or close any gaps.

Background

When we have judged good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2015.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	136844
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	10313351
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1587
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	358
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Malcolm Dobell
CEO of trust	Tony Nelson
Headteacher	Toni Whiteman (head of school)
Website	www.thehazeleyacademy.com
Dates of previous inspection	18 October 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current head of school took up her post in September 2022.
- The school currently uses two registered alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders of the school. The lead inspector held meetings with the chair of the board of trustees, the chair of the board of governors and some governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, modern foreign languages and philosophy and ethics. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation provided by the school. This included the school's self-evaluation, published information about pupils' performance and minutes of trustees' meetings.
- Inspectors spoke to a wide range of pupils and observed their behaviour in lessons and at social times.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, including free-text responses. They also took account of the responses to the staff and pupil surveys and gathered the views of parents, staff and pupils throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Linda Culling, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Phillip Blagg

His Majesty's Inspector

Michelle Payne

His Majesty's Inspector

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