

Inspection of a good school: Henley-in-Arden School

Stratford Road, Henley-in-Arden, Warwickshire B95 6AF

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 December 2022

Outcome

Henley-in-Arden School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

New senior leaders and the trust have brought a clear drive for excellence and high ambitions for all pupils. They want pupils to do well and develop as well-balanced young people who follow their interests and talents. Senior leaders have high expectations of themselves, staff and pupils. Teachers and pupils work hard to meet these expectations. Pupils achieve well and move on to strong destinations.

Pupils are friendly, welcoming and happy. They value their education. Positive relationships are clear in everyday school life. Pupils behave very well. Lessons are calm and orderly. Pupils feel and are safe. Pupils know that there is always someone they can go to if they are worried about something. Pupils are confident that their teachers will deal with any bullying should it occur.

Leaders have planned a strong offer to further pupils' wider development. Pupils have many varied opportunities to extend their learning beyond the classroom and pursue their passions. Pupils benefit from a wide range of clubs, activities and events. These include sporting and performing arts clubs, visits and outside speakers. Pupils value these opportunities and many are thoroughly involved in them. For example, many pupils were involved in the Christmas music show at the time of the inspection.

Parents on the whole value the school and most of them would recommend it to others. The school has a real community feel to it.

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

Senior leaders are clear about their vision. They have redesigned the curriculum to meet those aims. The curriculum now in place is ambitious, broad and balanced. One year group in the school is still following the previous curriculum. However, leaders have put effective plans in place to make sure that no pupil misses out on any learning. As a result, all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), study a broad range of subjects.

Leaders have mapped out what knowledge and skills pupils should learn and when in each subject. Learning is clearly sequenced and ensures that pupils are able to build up their knowledge over time. Overall, this is done well. In a few subjects, this work is at the early stages. Subject leaders have not yet identified clearly enough what key knowledge pupils need to learn and when. Leaders are supporting subject leaders with this work.

Leaders usually ensure that provision for pupils with SEND helps them to be successful. Teachers have a range of information about pupils. This includes how best to support them in lessons. Generally, this works well, and pupils receive the help and support they need to learn. However, leadership of SEND is not always sharp enough. As a result, some paperwork is not as precise as it should be and communication with parents is not always as strong as it could be. Some parents of pupils with SEND have concerns about this. Leaders are aware of this and have devised plans to address this aspect of their work.

Teachers generally use assessment well. They know when pupils have fallen behind or need extra help. They adapt their learning to ensure that all pupils can achieve well in their learning. Occasionally, the tasks that teachers set for pupils are not as well matched to pupils' needs as they could be. When this happens, some pupils find the work too challenging. As a result, some of their work is left unfinished or not attempted at all.

Leaders prioritise reading. They know which pupils need additional support. Pupils who need extra help to improve their reading fluency receive support and become better readers. They enjoy reading and do so more often.

The 'character curriculum' is very well planned and ambitious. Pupils learn about a range of topics to ensure that they become well-informed young adults. This includes work around healthy relationships, substance misuse and sex education. Pupils learn about possible career routes and further education options. Pupils enjoy these lessons and are well prepared for their next steps and future life.

Staff are overwhelmingly positive about their school. They enjoy working here and say that senior leaders listen to their suggestions and concerns. Trust executives, senior leaders and those responsible for governance have a robust understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They act swiftly and with precision when they identify aspects of the school's performance that fall short of their high expectations.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff receive regular training on how to spot that a pupil might need help. All staff know what to do if they are worried about a pupil. They work well with external agencies to ensure that pupils get the help and support they need.

Leaders complete appropriate checks on everyone they employ and keep accurate records of these checks.

Pupils say that everyone watches out for each other. They learn about how to keep themselves safe in everyday situations. This includes possible dangers that exist in their local community as well as online and on social media platforms, for example.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Subject leaders in a few subjects have not yet identified clearly enough what key knowledge pupils need to learn and when. As a result, learning is not yet as well sequenced as it could be in these subjects. Leaders need to ensure that learning in all subjects is effectively sequenced so that pupils can build up their knowledge and skills over time.
- Leadership of SEND is not as sharp as it should be. Consequently, record-keeping and communication with parents are not clear. Leaders should ensure that this aspect of their work is as effective as it could be.
- Teachers choose learning tasks that are not always well matched to pupils' needs in some lessons. When this happens, pupils do not always complete the work or do not attempt it and their learning slows. Leaders should ensure that all teachers use learning materials that are matched to pupils' needs so that they can effectively access their learning.

Background

When we have judged a school to be 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 November 2013.

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](#)' 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.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 136991 |
| Local authority | Warwickshire |
| Inspection number | 10256992 |
| Type of school | Secondary |
| School category | Academy |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 16 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 690 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Dr Celia O'Donovan |
| Headteacher | Joseph Roper |
| Website | www.henleyschool.com |
| Date of previous inspection | 15 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- Since the last inspection, the school has joined the Arden Multi-Academy Trust. Many of the senior leaders are relatively new in post.
- A very small number of pupils attend alternative provision at one registered provider.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, including the executive headteacher, headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteachers. The lead inspector held a meeting with governors, including the chair of governors. Inspectors met with trustees, including the chair and the chief executive officer of the trust. Meetings were held with curriculum leaders and the SEND coordinator.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, science and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with

subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Other subjects were also considered during the inspection.

- Inspectors met with early career teachers about the support they receive.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of safeguarding information, including the school's safeguarding policy. They spoke to staff, including kitchen and support staff, about safeguarding arrangements. Inspectors looked at how pupils learn to keep themselves safe. The lead inspector spoke to safeguarding leaders about the reporting and recording of any safeguarding incidents.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Inspectors spoke to many pupils during the inspection.
- Inspectors took account of parents' free-text comments and the responses on Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also considered the responses to the pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Bianka Zemke, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Tim Bassett

Ofsted Inspector

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