

Inspection of a good school: Hazel Leys Academy

Gainsborough Road, Corby, Northamptonshire NN18 0QF

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 October 2023

Outcome

Hazel Leys Academy continues to be a good school.

The principal of this school is Beverley Trotman. This school is part of Greenwood Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Wayne Norrie, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Michael Hamlin.

What is it like to attend this school?

Respect is central to everything at this vibrant and inclusive school. Pupils are considerate of each other and respect their caring teachers. They trust all adults to listen to them. This helps pupils to feel safe.

Pupils enjoy school. They learn a lot about interesting topics and benefit from many experiences to bring their learning to life. They visit museums and go on residential. Pupils meet interesting people to inspire them in setting goals for their future. They appreciate opportunities to develop their wider interests in music and sport. They care about the environment and learn about equality, to become considerate citizens.

The school sets high expectations. Pupils rise to these and take pride in their school. They behave well in lessons and around school. They want to do their best for themselves and their school team. They relish receiving awards. Older pupils set positive examples as pupil councillors, as members of the sports crew and as reading ambassadors.

The vast majority of parents and carers appreciate their children are happy and safe at this school. They say that the school is responsive to any concerns.

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

The school has worked closely with the trust to complete important work to review and improve subject guidance for teachers. In all subjects, the school has identified the most important knowledge that pupils need to know. This is broken down into smaller steps that pupils learn in a logical order. These improvements that the school has made have helped to ensure that pupils know and remember more over time.

There have been a number of changes to staffing recently. This has meant that, in a small number of subjects, monitoring does not identify precise strengths and areas for improvement. Where this is the case, staff do not get all the support and information they need to teach the curriculum consistently well.

Reading is always a priority. In Nursery, teachers ensure that pupils listen carefully to rhymes, songs and stories. This helps them to be ready to learn phonics right from the start of the Reception year. Pupils read books that match their reading abilities. Most become fluent and confident readers. Support is in place to help pupils catch up if they fall behind. The school ensures that in all classes, pupils experience a wide range of texts, including poetry books, stories and non-fiction titles. Pupils read texts linked to other subjects to help build their knowledge further. Staff read to pupils every day. Pupils can talk about the books they have listened to. Pupils develop a love of reading.

In mathematics, the school provides an ambitious and well-sequenced curriculum. From the early years, children build important number knowledge. Teachers use regular checks to spot pupils' errors or misconceptions quickly. They identify any mathematical knowledge that pupils need to revisit. Staff use resources well to help pupils demonstrate their knowledge and to solve problems. Most pupils develop secure knowledge of mathematics.

The school ensures that the vocabulary pupils learn is carefully chosen, from Nursery to Year 6. Pupils learn increasingly sophisticated vocabulary across all subjects. This helps all pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, to grow in confidence in how they think about and explain their learning.

The school has improved the identification of the barriers for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and their gaps in knowledge. Sensitive and careful support helps pupils with SEND to learn alongside their peers. Any pupils who may be at risk of falling behind also receive support. However, checks do not yet take place to ensure that this extra help matches the precise support that any of these pupils, including those with SEND, may need. As a result, a small number of pupils with SEND and pupils at risk of falling behind do not make the progress that they should.

Children in the early years make a strong start to their schooling. They quickly settle in well and learn appropriate routines. They are prepared well for Year 1 and beyond.

Pupils' mental health and physical well-being are prioritised. Pupils learn about different beliefs and family structures. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of relationships education. They are being prepared well for life in modern Britain.

Staff are proud to work at Hazel Leys Academy. New staff value thorough training and induction procedures. They appreciate that they quickly become part of the supportive team. Staff have supported much recent change because they say it has been in the best interests of the pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, monitoring does not yet identify precisely what is going well and what needs to improve. As a result, staff do not always get the help they need to improve their teaching of the curriculum. The school should ensure that there is a precise understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in these subjects, and that staff receive the support they need to know how best to teach the subjects' curriculums.
- Some pupils with SEND and some pupils who are at risk of falling behind do not always receive the precise adaptations and support they need to access their learning consistently well in all subjects. They do not make as much progress as they could. The school should ensure that those pupils who require it receive precise additional support to enable them to achieve as highly as they can.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2018.

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	141982
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10298504
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	238
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Michael Hamlin
Principal	Beverley Trotman
Website	www.hazelleysacademy.org
Dates of previous inspection	5 and 6 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has been part of the Greenwood Academies Trust since 1 September 2015.
- There have been many staff changes within the last two years. The principal has been in post since summer 2022. The other senior leaders in the school have been appointed after this date.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school runs a before-school breakfast club.

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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the principal, the deputy principal, and other leaders. She also held meetings with the chief executive officer, the chief education officer, and a number

of other senior executive personnel from the multi-academy trust. The inspector spoke with a representative of the board of trustees.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector 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.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and geography. This included meeting with subject leaders, visiting lessons and speaking with teachers and pupils. The inspector listened to pupils reading to adults, considered leaders' curriculum plans and scrutinised samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also met with other subject leaders and looked at curriculum documentation and samples of pupils' work for some other subjects.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school. She considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. The inspector met with groups of staff and pupils and considered responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Mandy Wilding, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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