

Inspection of Hamstead Hall Academy

Craythorne Avenue, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham, West Midlands B20 1HL

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 April 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Carla Tranter. This school is part of Hamstead Hall Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Jonathan Mortimer, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Rob Smith.

What is it like to attend this school?

Hamstead Hall Academy is an inclusive school. The school motto: 'Success for all through hard work and harmony' permeates everything that happens in this school. High ambitions for every pupil, including disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL), are commonplace. All staff want pupils to flourish and achieve well. These aims are consistently realised, especially for pupils with SEND.

Pupils at this school are welcoming, friendly and polite. They enjoy learning and attending school. Respectful relationships between staff and pupils are evident across all year groups. Pupils say that teachers are the best thing about their school. Pupils are confident that staff will deal with any issues quickly, fairly and effectively.

Pupils benefit from a carefully constructed curriculum to enhance their personal development. For example, there are holiday clubs for all pupils throughout the year, a range of extra-curricular activities and off-site trips. Pupils receive advice about possible career paths and next steps in education. The wider curriculum promotes equality of opportunity and diversity effectively. As a result, pupils understand, appreciate and respect differences in the world and its people. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

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

In a short space of time, new leaders have made many improvements to the school and, consequently, raised standards. The curriculum is broad and ambitious for all pupils. This includes pupils with SEND, pupils who speak EAL and disadvantaged pupils. All pupils achieve well. This is reflected in the positive results pupils achieve by the time they leave the school.

The provision for pupils with SEND is exceptional. The school quickly identifies any pupil who may need additional help. Pupils receive support that is tailored to their needs and challenges. Some pupils receive support from the school's resource base, where staff provide excellent support to help them overcome any barriers to learning. The school has introduced a range of strategies that they call 'vulnerable first'. These are designed to ensure that teachers meet the needs of all pupils in lessons. Staff know their pupils very well and additional adults provide excellent support in lessons. As a result, pupils know more and produce high-quality work.

Teachers use assessment very well to check on what pupils can do and what gaps exist. They adapt their teaching to address these gaps effectively and provide support where needed. Most of the time, pupils receive appropriate work that is well matched to their needs. However, occasionally, some teachers do not move pupils' learning on when they are ready to learn new things, especially those who are more able.

The school supports pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read very well. The literacy curriculum is very effective. Pupils receive individualised intervention to help them to become proficient readers. As a result of this work, the vast majority of pupils read at least at a level appropriate for their age.

Students in the sixth form benefit from a good quality of education. They receive support and feedback to improve their learning. They speak highly of their school. Students get impartial advice about possible future career pathways. As a result, almost all students go on to appropriate destinations. In the recent past, some students studied qualifications that were not always well matched to their needs. Consequently, some students did not achieve as well as they could. However, leaders have ensured that current students are now on the right courses.

Pupils' behaviour is good. They understand and generally meet leaders' very high expectations of conduct. Positive relationships further promote positive behaviour. The school provides tailored support for pupils who need additional help to behave well or to get the most out of school life. The pastoral care for pupils is very strong and effective.

The school supports pupils' personal development well. This is reinforced by the school's values and the strong relationships between staff and pupils. The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum ensures that pupils learn about personal safety, healthy relationships and online safety. The PSHE curriculum also emphasises respect for different races, faiths and cultures. Pupils say that everyone is equal and should be respected for who they are. All pupils are encouraged to participate in activities to extend their learning beyond the classroom. All of this prepares them well for later life.

Senior leaders and trust executives have a highly detailed, accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Senior leaders work very well with trust leaders to continuously improve the school and strive for excellence. Staff speak highly of the support they receive from senior leaders, including well-being and workload support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teachers do not consistently adapt their teaching to extend the learning of pupils who are ready to learn new content. This can slow the learning of some pupils. The school should ensure that staff consistently adapt their teaching to meet the needs of all pupils.

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	139746
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10322852
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,187
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	196
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Rob Smith
CEO of the trust	Jonathan Mortimer
Headteacher	Carla Tranter
Website	www.hamsteadhall.com
Date of previous inspection	8 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized secondary school. It is part of the Hamstead Hall Academy Trust.
- The headteacher commenced her role in September 2022. Most of the senior leaders have been appointed since then.
- The school uses two registered alternative providers for a small number of its pupils.
- 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

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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 met with the headteacher, the assistant headteachers and other senior leaders. The lead inspector held a meeting with the local governing body, including the chair. Meetings were held with representatives from the multi-academy trust, including the chair of the board and the chief executive officer. The lead inspector held a telephone meeting with the school's improvement adviser. Inspectors met with curriculum leaders, early career teachers and the special educational needs coordinators.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, science, geography, business studies and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors visited the sixth form for each of the deep dives.
- Inspectors visited the school's SEND resource base and pastoral room, called 'The Junction'.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour and interactions during lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes, and spoke to many pupils during the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 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

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