

# Heron Hall Academy

51 Nightingale Road, London, N9 8BF

**Inspection dates** 24–25 June 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b> <b>2</b>
Leadership and management	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The headteacher, ably supported by senior leaders, has a strong vision for excellence in caring for and enabling students to achieve highly.
- Governors are well trained. They know the school well and hold senior leaders to account for the school's performance. They keep a sharp focus on the arrangements to keep students safe.
- Good teaching helps students to progress well in their studies.
- Almost all students achieve well. They make good, and sometimes better than good, progress from all starting points and backgrounds.
- The school's safety arrangements are outstanding. They contribute to students' good learning.
- Governors and leaders have enabled students to develop enjoyment in learning and ambition for their futures.
- Students behave well in lessons and social time. They have a firm grasp of how to keep themselves safe. They look after their school and enjoy each other's company.
- The Cuckoo Hall Academies Trust Board provides effective support and challenge to underpin the school's and Trust's aims. It is ambitious for its students.
- Senior leaders have introduced rigorous systems to check how well students achieve.
- Leaders in English and mathematics are instrumental in improving students' basic skills, often from low starting points.
- Students are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They are developing a refined understanding of, and curiosity about, others' cultures and heritages.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some middle leaders are not using the school's systems to assess, track and improve students' progress consistently well.
- Some teachers do not always ensure that their plans to challenge all students are put into practice.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 26 lessons to check the quality of teaching and learning and how well students behave during lessons. Senior leaders accompanied inspectors on some visits to lessons and jointly observed four lessons.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders to find out how well the school is led. Inspectors checked how well the governing body holds the school to account, by talking with the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors also discussed the school’s performance with the Chief Executive of the sponsoring trust.
- Inspectors talked with students in meetings and informally during social time. Inspectors sought their views on learning and how well the school cares for them.
- Inspectors took into account the views of 26 parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View. The views of 100 parents expressed in another parental survey conducted by the school were also considered.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide sample of books and other work across subjects to find out how well students are achieving.
- Inspectors considered a wide range of documents from the school. These included the school’s self-evaluation and plans for development. They scrutinised information about how leaders check on the students’ progress and the quality of teaching.
- The majority of staff responded to the staff questionnaire and inspectors took their views into account.

## Inspection team

Chris Campbell, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Lynton Karmock-Golds

Her Majesty’s Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Heron Hall Academy, a free school, opened in September 2013. It provides education to boys and girls from 11 to 19. It serves predominantly its local community in Edmonton.
- The school is registered to admit up to 1680 students. Currently there are 174 students on roll, all in Years 7 and 8. It is too early to state whether the school meets the minimum national expected levels for attainment and progress at the end of Key Stage 4.
- No students are placed in an alternative provision.
- There are no students yet in the sixth form.
- The proportions of disadvantaged students and those who speak English as an additional language are much higher than the national average
- There are a smaller than average number of disabled students or students with special educational needs.
- A much higher than average proportion of students come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. The largest groups are of Turkish and Somalian heritages.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that every teacher uses information about students to provide challenge and support for all students and in all subjects.
- Ensure that all middle leaders apply fully the school's systems to check students' progress by:
  - sharing the best practice seen in mathematics and English
  - making sure that students respond to teachers' feedback.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and senior leaders share a common vision for the highest quality of education for all students. They seek the best for them whatever their background and starting points, in a safe and caring environment. The governing body and sponsoring trust support and pursue their vision with energy and drive. Staff understand these priorities and strive to realise them.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have introduced rigorous monitoring systems to check the quality of teaching. They analyse progress information to judge how effective it is. This helps students to enjoy their learning and make good progress. As a consequence, they are ambitious for their futures. High expectations support students to behave well and apply themselves in lessons.
- Not all middle leaders ensure teachers use all the information available to plan and deliver learning which consistently challenges all students to excel.
- The school has highly effective arrangements to ensure that students benefit from a wide range of learning opportunities. These include visits out of school and extra-curricular activities, to broaden and deepen their learning and knowledge of the world around them. This ensures that all students have equal opportunities to thrive and develop as young adults. It helps them develop socially and morally. They appreciate and celebrate diversity in their school as a consequence.
- Disadvantaged students eligible for pupil premium funding, called the pupil are supported well with targeted learning to accelerate their learning. Governors and leaders check carefully that these interventions are successful and bring about long-term improvement.
- Leaders make sure that the additional funding for students who enter the school with levels of attainment below the national expectations is used carefully. These students quickly catch up with their peers in English and mathematics. This secures their basic skills to help them access the full curriculum.
- The curriculum provides students with opportunities to develop skills and knowledge across a wide range of subjects. These ensure that they are ready to begin their next steps in education, as they move through the school. A well-planned series of lessons provides information, advice and guidance to help students make informed choices for the future and the world of work. A strong programme of assemblies and personal, social and health education (PSHE) helps students develop a keen awareness of the different lifestyles, cultures and beliefs.
- The school makes sure students understand about risks to their safety. They learn about how laws are made and how democracy works. Learning through subjects such as geography and religious studies helps students develop an understanding of different beliefs and cultures. This contributes well to their preparation for life in modern Britain. Students have a keen sense of right and wrong and fairness. They understand that discrimination is intolerable. This learning promotes fundamental British values. For example, students have made a very successful video for the BBC about young people's views on radicalisation.
- Leaders have put in place strong systems to ensure that attendance is well above the national average. This contributes to students' achievement and their safety. There have been a small number of exclusions. Leaders work tirelessly, involving a range of agencies as well as families, to secure good attendance and behaviour. This helps these students to remain included in the life of the school.
- Safeguarding arrangements go well beyond the minimum statutory requirements. Both teachers and students have a keen sense of risk and are knowledgeable about what to do if there are problems. Outstanding arrangements contribute to keeping students safe at school and help them know how to keep themselves safe outside of school too. Leaders make sure students know about bullying. Although it is very rare, students know there is always an adult to talk with, if they have worries. They are adamant that they will be listened to and that issues will be dealt with. Governors are well trained and arrangements to make sure only appropriate adults work with children are detailed and well established.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors take an active role in ensuring that their view of school performance is well informed. In addition to reports from the headteacher, governors secure additional information through engaging external consultants from both across the Academy Trust and externally. They supplement these monitoring and review exercises through careful records of their own visits to the school.
  - They use their good understanding of data and monitoring information to hold the headteacher and senior leaders to account for school performance. They have a detailed understanding of the quality of teaching and use this to monitor the effectiveness of performance management. They are careful to check that all students from different backgrounds and starting points have good opportunities to learn and develop. They check that additional funding is having a positive impact on their progress.

- Well-chosen areas for performance management targets contribute to the good and improving quality of teaching. They review and challenge recommendations for pay awards. The local governing body, alongside the trust board, takes effective actions when teaching does not meet its high standards.
- Governors have taken a strong lead in ensuring the safety of students and staff on the site. They make careful checks for themselves that the school meets requirements and regulations and logs safety checks properly.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good.
- Students and teachers enjoy positive relationships. This contributes to their good behaviour. They respond positively when given their tasks, applying themselves well. Similarly, they mix and chat freely with members of staff during social time in a pleasant and positive atmosphere. While they are well supervised, students very largely manage their own behaviours with aplomb.
- Students behave well in lessons and during social time. On rare occasions, there are examples of low-level disruption. These occur when activities in lessons do not challenge them well enough or when they need extra support. However, in the vast majority of cases, students listen carefully to teachers, and actively take part in lessons. They are keen to ask questions to help their learning and deepen their understanding.
- Students mix with each other well during break and lunchtimes. They chat or play ball games and enjoy the chance to socialise with friends. They show respect for the school building and outdoor areas. They make sensible use of the school's facilities. There is no evidence of large groups congregating, which might intimidate others.
- Students confirm that they know of very few instances of bullying. They are entirely confident that if they have concerns, they will be listened to by staff and action will be taken. They understand about different sorts of bullying and show a good knowledge about how to keep themselves safe. For example, they have detailed knowledge of the risks posed by different sorts of websites.
- They know about different types of discrimination, for example racism and sexual harassment. This helps them enjoy and celebrate the cultural diversity in the school. There have been no reported instances of racism.
- Students told inspectors that they like school and wear their uniform with pride. They feel safe and contribute to each other's behaviour by using their sense of right and wrong. Students demonstrate a remarkable awareness of risks and discrimination and this helps them flourish at school and prepares them for life outside.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding.
- Senior leaders and governors pay keen attention to ensure that all the required safety checks and arrangements to keep students safe are completed and recorded in detail. Logs of evacuation drills and equipment checks, for example the fire alarm system and portable appliance testing made by contractors, are detailed and dated. Governors make sure they confirm these reports by checking for themselves that any risks to safety are minimised.
- The site is kept secure. There is no litter and the site is tidy and clean, including the toilets. There is a well-equipped medical room for any student who is ill at school.
- All necessary checks have been carried out on staff before they begin work in the school. This focus on safeguarding students is complemented by appropriate training for the designated safeguarding officers.
- The school provides regular update training for all members of staff. Further training is provided throughout the year as new areas for consideration emerge through national guidance. For example, staff have been trained recently of how to look for indicators for students at risk from female genital mutilation and radicalisation. Such training has helped staff develop a keen sense of the risks facing students and how to deal with them appropriately.
- Leaders and staff show a keen awareness of risks, for example travel arrangements outside of school for school visits. They think through possible risks and note these on risk assessment forms. They take all practicable steps to minimise risk and maximise safety.
- Rigorous procedures for attendance and absence ensure that students are kept safe and any unexplained absence is checked quickly. Leaders make sure that vulnerable students are kept safe, by diligently recording all instances of concern and making referral to appropriate agencies. Records are detailed and

precise.

- Students' wider learning through the assembly and the PHSE programme has provides them with good levels of knowledge about the risks of bullying, discrimination, extremism and e-safety. The school's work to develop students' respect for each other includes appropriate learning about sexual harassment. What stands out is the way in which they have made sense of this learning and know how to apply it for themselves and their friends.
- Students' behaviour and use of the school premises contribute to their safety, because the routines and rules are accepted as the norm.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Students enjoy and participate in their lessons readily, because teachers use good subject knowledge to plan interesting activities. However, on a small number of occasions, some students are not sufficiently well challenged or supported. This prevents them making the best progress possible during some lessons.
- Teachers have high expectations of their students and generate a sense that achievement and success are within everybody's grasp. Teachers encourage students to ask questions. This contributes to a positive learning atmosphere.
- When teachers plan for different levels of work and activities that match learners' needs closely, lessons come to life. As a result, students make good and sometimes better progress, increasing their knowledge and developing their understanding quickly. For example, in two English lessons on Shakespeare's '*A Midsummer Night's Dream*', carefully targeted questions quickly deepened students' understanding of the scene being studied. This enabled them to interpret meaning for themselves and relate it to their own feelings.
- Marking and feedback are regular. The system requiring students to respond to marking has been introduced quite recently. It is not used consistently by all teachers. When it is used well, high quality teacher commentary and advice elicit thoughtful, extended responses from students which deepen their learning. This helps them make faster progress. For example, the rigorous checking of students' work in mathematics is leading to steady incremental improvement in their knowledge and understanding of concepts.
- Scrutiny of students' work shows that students normally make good progress across the range of subjects in the curriculum. Some students make outstanding progress but this is less often the case in foundation subjects than it is in English and mathematics.
- Teachers have detailed knowledge of the prior learning and needs of students in their classes. This helps them plan progression in learning over time. They use rigorous target setting alongside good subject knowledge to plan series of lessons.
- The interventions put in place to accelerate the learning of disadvantaged students are well planned. Significant focus is given to improving their literacy skills, so that their learning across the curriculum is enhanced. Focused additional sessions in mathematics are carefully tailored by teachers to address particular weaknesses and gaps in learning. As a consequence, these students rapidly catch up with their peers.
- The planned support for targeted intervention for students who speak English as an additional language is well thought through. Class teachers use information about their needs to provide additional support during lessons. They focus, in particular, on developing confidence in responding orally and cultivating a wider range of subject-specific vocabulary. This approach successfully supplements the targeted support they receive.
- Leaders in mathematics and English work collaboratively to ensure that literacy and numeracy skills develop quickly. A good example of how numeracy skills can be secured and developed was seen in the collaborative work on the use of coordinates in geography and mathematics. However, on occasion, teachers in other subjects do not expect enough of the same students' written work as do teachers in English. In other instances, teachers model high quality language that leads students to improve the quality of their work. Strong modelling and teaching in drama helped students to use voice, tone, pace and volume to bring their performance to life.
- Teachers actively promote students' reading during school hours and at home. Students say they enjoy reading. Inspectors listened to a small sample reading with confidence, fluency and intonation that revealed good levels of understanding and the skills to pronounce unknown words.

**The achievement of pupils is good**

- Students' work over time shows that almost all make expected progress from their starting points. There is very little difference in the progress made by boys and girls.
- Progress in English and mathematics is particularly strong. Progress in other subjects is good but there is greater variation, for example, in humanities.
- The progress made over time by disadvantaged students in mathematics and English is at least as good and in some cases slightly better than the progress made by others in the school. In both English and mathematics, the rates of progress are above national expectations. The proportion of disadvantaged students and other students in the school who are making better than expected progress is also above the national average.
- A high proportion of students are currently on a secure course to make expected progress by the end of Key Stage 4. A higher than average proportion are on course to make more than expected progress in English and mathematics. Current progress rates project high levels of attainment at five or more GCSE grades at A\*-C including English and mathematics. However, at the moment, no students have sat external examinations.
- The progress made by the largest ethnic groups, those of Turkish or Somali heritage, is very similar to that made by other students. This is because of the effective early work done to raise achievement and tackle gaps in language learning. It has brought about higher levels of achievement.
- Teachers shape learning with skill for disabled students and those with special educational needs. Supported by well-planned interventions, these students make at least good progress in almost all instances. When this is not the case, the special education needs coordinator works with teachers to help the students overcome their barriers to learning.
- Students entering the school with levels of attainment below national expectations enjoy a programme to accelerate their learning, especially in English and mathematics. Teachers tailor this programme to address specific areas for improvement through the analysis of students' skills and understanding. This personalised approach to meeting learners' needs is working very effectively. These students catch up with their peers quickly and continue to make good and better progress through Year 8.
- The wider curriculum, supported through external visits and the assembly and PSHE programme, is enabling students to develop self-confidence and raises students' aspirations. They contribute to their overall progress, as does the work done in developing communication skills and self-confidence for example in drama and physical education.

## What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its students' needs. This ensures that students are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	139599
<b>Local authority</b>	Enfield
<b>Inspection number</b>	450217

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy free school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	N/A
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	174
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	N/A
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Phill Sowter
<b>Headteacher</b>	Matthew Laban
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
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