

Lady Hawkins' High School

Park View, Kington HR5 3AR

Inspection dates

26–27 November 2015

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The most-able make good progress. Although 2015 GCSE results showed improvement, disadvantaged, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs only made expected progress.
- Teachers do not always use the information gathered on pupils' progress and attainment to adapt the work in lessons in line with their ability levels.
- Senior leaders' systems for monitoring teachers' performance are not sufficiently rigorous. Targets are not set to ensure that all groups of pupils make better than expected progress.
- The school development plan has not been updated recently and does not reflect the school's current priorities.
- Governors' monitoring and evaluation of the school's work is not sufficiently rigorous. They do not focus sharply enough on the most important weaknesses concerning leadership and management and pupils' outcomes.
- Checks are not carried out on the school website well enough to ensure that it is up to date and contains the required information.

The school has the following strengths

- The most able make good progress.
- Teaching is good because teachers have strong subject knowledge and set lively and exciting tasks that enable the majority of pupils to sustain their learning throughout all their lessons.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and that they behave extremely well throughout the school. Their attitudes to learning are good.
- Pupils' personal development as future citizens is good, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The sixth form is good. Learners achieve well because the good advice they receive enables them to pursue courses that suit them when they join the sixth form.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the attainment and progress of pupils across the school by ensuring that:
 - pupils, particularly pupil premium and disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress in Key Stages 3 and 4
 - work in lessons is adjusted where necessary for pupils of different abilities.

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the targets set for all teachers are sufficiently challenging and lead to good outcomes
 - planning focuses sharply on areas most in need of improvement and includes measurable criteria by which leaders, including governors, can accurately judge the success of any actions taken to improve the school
 - governors hold leaders fully to account by asking probing questions and carefully checking information provided
 - the school website provides the information needed by parents and meets statutory requirements.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders have not done enough to ensure that the progress different groups of pupils make across all subjects and age groups is consistently good.
- The policies and strategies introduced by the acting headteacher have not yet had sufficient time to have an impact on the attainment of all groups of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils eligible for pupil premium funding, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- The school improvement plan has not been updated recently. The plan provided during the inspection related to 2013 to 2016 and was not focused enough on areas most in need of improvement. Planning is not sharp enough to give a direct message about the underperformance of some groups of pupils, how that underperformance is being tackled and the success measures used to judge the process.
- Leaders do not always have an accurate view of the outcomes for some groups of pupils and therefore do not know enough about how well the school is doing. For example, pupil tracking information is not being used effectively enough to focus on the progress that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and disadvantaged pupils, are making in the school.
- More recently, the school's systems to manage teachers' performance have not been sufficiently rigorous. For example, in some instances targets are not challenging enough, there is an inappropriate focus on staff training needs and little supporting evidence to justify decisions concerning teachers' salary progression.
- The school's focus on improving the achievement of pupils supported by the pupil premium has resulted in the creation of smaller classes in English and mathematics. As a result, teachers provide pupils with more individualised support. However, this initiative is not effective because insufficient numbers of eligible pupils are making better than expected progress in English and mathematics.
- The school website is not checked well enough to make sure that it contains all the required information for parents, carers and others wanting to find out information about the school.
- Senior leaders' creation of three new faculty improvement partners is having a positive impact on raising standards and improving the school ethos. For example, the focus given by faculty improvement partners on raising teachers' motivation has led to improved teaching throughout the school.
- The curriculum is kept under review to make sure it meets pupils' needs. There is a wide range of activities that promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Planning of learning emphasises the key British values of democracy, liberty and respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Pupils from all heritages are prepared well for life in modern Britain. Pupils benefit from a wide range of after-school activities, sporting events and educational trips.
- Leadership and management in the sixth form are good. This is shown by the good achievement pupils have made and maintained during this academic year and evidenced in pupils' files seen during the inspection.
- The school makes sure that all pupils have the same opportunities to take part in all aspects of school life. Discrimination of any kind is tackled robustly.
- Good careers advice helps pupils to make informed decisions at different points in their education. Almost all pupils are successful in moving on to education or training at the end of Year 11. The advice about requirements of courses offered in the sixth form is accurate and helps students to make the right choices. As a result, the number of pupils who successfully complete their courses in Year 12 is high.
- Pupils attending alternative provision are regularly monitored in their progress, attendance and behaviour. This ensures that any issues that arise are quickly identified and dealt with.
- Staff are positive about the school and its leadership. Successful training is improving the quality of teaching and learning and is supporting teachers' development needs.
- The governance of the school:
 - is ambitious for the school to do well, but governors are unclear about the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors have not used information presented to them successfully to hold the school to account or had the knowledge and skills to do so. Governors compare the performance of the school with that locally and nationally but do not challenge leaders sufficiently about the school's performance. They do not challenge leaders to set exacting targets for the performance of staff or make sure that teachers' pay is closely linked to pupils' achievement.
 - does not manage the finances of the school as effectively as it should. For example, governors are not

holding leaders to account for the use of additional government funding, leading to inconsistency in the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. On the other hand, governors make sure that the school gets best value when purchasing goods and services.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The governing body makes sure that all statutory child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures meet current national requirements. The school works hard to ensure that it continually engages with parents and stakeholders in order that pupils remain safe at all times.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Senior leaders' focus on improving the quality of teaching in school and, in particular, that of faculty improvement partners has been successful. Pupils are now benefiting from consistently good or better teaching and their progress is now improving rapidly. Lessons are generally well planned to engage pupils in challenging activities. The school focus on improving teachers' questioning in order to encourage pupils' deeper thinking and understanding is evident in the vast majority of lessons.
- Teachers have high expectations and set challenging work that most pupils relish. This was particularly evident in a fast-paced Year 8 English lesson where pupils analysed key features of exciting stories. The tasks were challenging and stimulating, and pupils were engaged in discussions about how to carry out the analysis. The work for the most-able pupils was set at the higher levels, which allowed them to use quite sophisticated subject specific vocabulary with confidence. Pupils' commitment was evident throughout and the progress demonstrated was good.
- On occasion, teachers do not always adjust the work in lessons to suit the abilities of different pupils. For example, in a Year 11 physical education lesson the teacher did not give sufficient clear instructions to accommodate pupils' different badminton skills and, as a result, pupils were unclear what to focus on to improve.
- Teachers ensure high levels of co-operation from pupils. Their good subject knowledge and passion for their subject inspires pupils to aim high. For example, in a Year 9 mathematics lesson, pupils enthusiastically demonstrated their trust in their teacher and classmates when working on enlargement calculations. Pupils were not afraid to make errors and demonstrated a determination to persevere until it was right.
- Teachers set homework that extends learning and insist that it is completed and handed in on time. Pupils complete their homework to a good standard and this gives them a strong base for tackling work in the following lesson. Parents agree and are very supportive of the progress that homework helps their children to make.
- Marking of pupils' books is regular and teachers often provide focused feedback. Pupils are given opportunities to carry out the advice offered and many pupils commented on how useful this was in helping them to make good progress.
- The school has focused on good practice being shared across the school through meetings and observations. As a result, teaching and learning have improved significantly across most areas in the school. For example, in GCSE mathematics, history, geography and modern foreign languages.
- Pupils read in a wide variety of subjects, both for pleasure and studying purposes. The school library is well stocked and used regularly by many pupils across the school, supporting a culture of independent reading.
- Teachers regularly assess the progress pupils make within their classrooms. Teachers use seating plans annotated with pupils' specific needs and how to address those needs, but not all teachers use this information in their planning to ensure that all groups of pupils make better than expected progress.
- Leaders review progress with all teachers but do not always systematically review the progress of all groups of pupils. This is particularly the case in Key Stage 4, where disadvantaged and disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are not, in many instances, making better than expected progress.
- Teaching assistants work closely with teachers. However, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs in Key Stages 3 and 4 do not always make more than their expected progress. This is because work is not always set at the correct level of challenge. Younger pupils who have weaker literacy and numeracy skills benefit from the school's smaller English and mathematics class sizes.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupil's personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also important in this school. This small school emphasises social responsibility and supporting projects in the local community. For example, the school raises funds through the local community shop. Pupils throughout the year work hard to raise funds for the school, as well as their other charity work, including 'Children in Need'.
- Pupils feel safe and are aware of how to keep safe and secure. For example, they understand the potential dangers when using the internet. They also report, and records show, that on the rare occasions bullying occurs, staff deal with it effectively. Pupils say that any instances of homophobia or racism are not tolerated.
- The vast majority of pupils in the school are keen self-confident learners. For example, in a Year 10 physics lesson pupils were keen to push themselves towards a deeper understanding of the explosive properties of some metals through watching a video, discussing enthusiastically the topic in groups and clearly thinking deeply before answering correctly the teacher's probing questions.
- The majority of parents who expressed a view say that their children are kept safe and are well looked after.
- Attendance has remained above the national average and the school has worked hard to maintain this by frequently reminding pupils of the benefits of good attendance in helping them to make good progress.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are very polite, courteous and friendly, and there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere around the school.
- There is good behaviour around the school and low-level disruption in classes is rare. This is because of teachers' high expectations of standards of behaviour. Teachers manage behaviour consistently well and the vast majority of pupils cooperate fully.
- Behaviour records show that there are very few recorded incidents and when they do occur the school takes appropriate action.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They are prompt to lessons, bring the necessary equipment and settle down to work quickly. Relationships are very positive. Pupils work well together and respond positively to their teachers. School leaders' regular monitoring of the behaviour and welfare of pupils attending alternative provision also demonstrates it is good at all times.

Outcomes for pupils require improvement

- In 2015, the proportion of pupils who attained five GCSEs at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, rose from the previous year. However, significant numbers of pupils in other year groups in the school did not achieve more than expected progress.
- Although achievement is rising, and increasing numbers of pupils make good progress in many subjects, including modern foreign languages, history and geography, there are still some groups of pupils who do not make consistently good progress across subjects, including English and mathematics.
- The progress made by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs across the school in English and mathematics has not been consistently good. Achievement varies within the school and these pupils at Key Stage 4 are not making the same progress as pupils nationally. The school's information indicates that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs in Key Stage 3 are making no better than expected progress.
- In 2015, stronger teaching benefited the most-able pupils throughout the school. The majority of the most-able pupils made better than expected progress.
- School tracking data shows that many disadvantaged pupils are not making better than expected progress in both Key Stages 3 and 4. Although work seen in pupils' books during the inspection indicates an improving picture, with many disadvantaged pupils now beginning to make better than expected progress at Key Stage 4.

- Pupils across the school enjoy reading, and use the library as a good source for fiction books and reference material. Funding for Year 7 catch-up pupils is used well. These pupils are making good progress in reading.
- The very small number of pupils on alternative provision make at least expected progress, often from low starting points.
- The school's information indicates that nearly all pupils progress into education, employment or training after leaving school. Pupils are well supported by leaders in raising aspirations for lifelong learning.

16 to 19 study programmes

are good

- The 16 to 19 study programmes are good because the school has developed a wide range of courses to meet the needs of learners. Teaching and learning are good and standards are improving.
- The school has a clear understanding of information on learners' progress to ensure that teachers plan and set work at the right level. This leads to a focus on challenge, particularly in academic subjects. Results in 2015 show above-average attainment in A and AS level. Attainment in work-related courses was also above average. The proportion of learners staying on into Year 13 is above national average.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good. Teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge and repeatedly ask probing questions, which deepens learners' understanding and inspires them to 'dig deeper' into their knowledge. Teachers set tasks which are clearly tailored to learners' prior learning and learners know in detail what they need to do to improve their work further.
- Behaviour in the sixth form is good. Learners take an active role in the life of the school and the community. In discussion with inspectors, learners spoke warmly of the support they receive from the school. They feel entirely safe and value the wider opportunities, including work experience, which are provided by the school. They are aware of the dangers of extremism and radicalisation and, as the school provides each sixth form learner with an ipad, the school offers advice on how to stay safe when using the internet.
- Leadership in the sixth form is good because leaders have taken key decisions which have markedly improved the study programmes since the previous inspection. For example, a greater emphasis has been placed on improving teaching in the sixth form, monitoring learners' books and the appropriateness of staff comments to help learners make good progress.
- Learners in the sixth form provide excellent role models for younger learners. They get on well together and support the school's activities, including listening to Key Stage 3 pupils read, mentoring pupils in Year 7, participating in anti-bullying clinics for younger pupils and acting as ambassadors at various school events.
- The sixth form meets the current national 16 to 19 interim minimum standards.
- Learners are very positive about the quality of careers information and guidance that they receive. Many go on to study at university; others opt to take up apprenticeships.

School details

Unique reference number	137608
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	10002507

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	330
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	46
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steven Grist
Headteacher	Jeff Kay
Telephone number	01544 230441
Website	www.lhs.hereford.sch.uk
Email address	enquiries@lhs.hereford.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24–25 September 2013

Information about this school

- Lady Hawkins' High School is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- A below average proportion of pupils are eligible for additional government funding, known as the pupil premium. This funding is used to support pupils who are eligible for free school meals, and children who are looked after.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards for secondary schools, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There have been changes to the staffing recently, with the appointment of an acting headteacher and part-time executive headteacher in September 2015.
- The school makes use of alternative off-site provision for a very small number of pupils in Years 10 and 11 who attend Hereford College of Technology and the Hair Academy, studying work-related courses, including motor-vehicle maintenance and hair and beauty.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 25 lessons, including several shared observations with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors listened to pupils read and looked at samples of their recent work.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, teachers and members of the governing body. Discussions took place with groups of pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised a variety of school documents, including: the school's self-evaluation; its development plan; behaviour records; governing body documents; and documents relating to the management of teachers' performance.
- The views of the 23 parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into account, along with letters from parents. Inspectors also considered the views expressed in the 23 questionnaires returned by school staff.

Inspection team

Steven Cartlidge, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gwen Onyon	Ofsted Inspector
Christine Bray	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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