

Hartshill School

Church Road, Hartshill, Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV10 0NA

Inspection dates

29–30 March 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- In 2016, too many pupils did not make the progress they should from their starting points. Disadvantaged pupils underachieved by the time they left the school. The gaps between the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils and those of their peers in their examination results widened.
- The quality of teaching in the school is improving, but continues to vary across subjects. Historically, teaching has not enabled pupils to make the progress of which they are capable in some subjects.
- Inconsistent implementation of the school's behaviour management policy by staff at all levels means that pupils' behaviour in some lessons, and their conduct around the school, are not as orderly as they might be.
- Leaders' evaluation of the school's overall performance is too generous because it focuses overly on the positive changes that have occurred since September 2016. Leaders do not focus enough on pupils' achievement and progress over time from individual starting points.
- Teachers do not consistently check pupils' understanding in lessons carefully so that they can give them extra support or move them on to more demanding work.
- Although the quality of middle leadership is improving, not all middle leaders are equally effective at improving teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Attendance is improving too slowly, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The school has the following strengths

- Since September, the newly appointed principal, supported by governors and a restructured and capable leadership team, has accelerated the pace of improvement considerably.
- Leaders have accurately identified weaker areas of the school's work and are acting decisively to tackle them.
- Pupils achieve well in English.
- Staff in the school know pupils well. As a result, the care for their personal development and well-being is good.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that all is as effective as the best in the school, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - plan and implement activities that are well matched to pupils' needs
 - check regularly on the progress of pupils in lessons and offer extra support or challenge as necessary
 - have consistently high expectations of the quality and quantity of work that pupils produce in lessons
 - consistently challenge the most able pupils.
- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management on pupils' outcomes by:
 - monitoring rigorously the effectiveness of strategies to promote the rapid progress, good attendance and good behaviour of disadvantaged pupils in order that these have the desired impact
 - continuing to develop the skills and expertise of subject leaders so that all are successful in securing good teaching and pupils' good progress in their areas of responsibility, particularly in mathematics, humanities and modern foreign languages
 - ensuring that evaluation of the school's work focuses on pupils' achievements
 - ensuring that systems and strategies for tracking pupils' progress are understood by all teachers and used effectively in order to inform teaching and to check that underachievement is addressed early to close quickly gaps between the outcomes of different groups of pupils.
- Improve attendance, especially that of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils by evaluating existing strategies used to improve attendance and identifying which are successful and which need to be amended or discarded.
- Improve behaviour around school by ensuring that:
 - all staff consistently apply the school's behaviour policy
 - pupils conduct themselves sensibly at breaktime and lunchtime and as they move around school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Previously, insufficient effective action has taken place to raise pupils' outcomes in some key areas, including modern foreign languages and some of the humanities subjects. As a result, too many pupils who left the school in Year 11 have underachieved. Important changes have taken place under the leadership of the current principal, but these have not been in place long enough to have had a sustained impact in some key areas.
- Leaders have reacted energetically to the poor GCSE results of 2016. The newly appointed principal, supported by an executive principal and an able leadership team, has acted swiftly to address the quality of teaching across the school. Parents have recognised the decisive actions that have been taken. The comment of one parent, that, 'The new principal has made changes in the running of the school this academic year that I feel have further promoted good behaviour and set in place excellent opportunities for successful learning. I am proud that I chose Hartshill for my children and feel that the great education they receive will allow them to achieve their potential in life,' reflected the views of many parents.
- The principal has restructured the leadership team and secured additional support from the multi-academy trust. Leaders' roles and responsibilities are well defined. The impact of these leaders is quickly becoming evident through the pace at which improvements are being implemented. This is demonstrating that current leaders have the necessary skills and abilities to bring about further improvements.
- Previously, the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils has not been used to good effect. It has been unsuccessful in closing the gaps between the achievement of these pupils and that of their peers. Current leaders have established a firmer grasp of this funding and are ensuring that it is used more purposefully. Additional support offered to boost pupils' performance in English and mathematics is having a beneficial impact on the progress of current cohorts. As a result, the progress of disadvantaged pupils is improving for current pupils on roll.
- Despite an over-generous self-evaluation, senior leaders are clear about what the areas for improvement are. They have taken prompt action to address shortcomings, for example in subject areas that did not perform well, and in improving staffing and the quality of teaching and learning. Measures have been put in place to improve the accuracy of assessment, including cross-moderation with other local schools and organisations.
- The new leadership team has established a strong culture of developing the skills of teachers and staff. Systems for managing the performance of staff are well organised. These systems ensure that all teachers are held to account for developing the quality of their teaching, and for making sure that the pupils they teach make good progress. In addition, these systems encourage teachers to benefit from opportunities to contribute to the development of new teaching practice by working collaboratively with other colleagues. Although these systems have not yet secured enough good teaching or secured pupils' good progress in all areas, there is clear evidence that teaching is

improving. Newly qualified teachers value the support they are given.

- Leaders make regular checks on the quality of teaching. Additional support is given to those teachers who do not meet leaders' expectations. Staff at the school value the support they receive for their professional development.
- Staffing issues have had a negative impact on the performance of some subject areas such as humanities. Middle leaders are playing an increasingly prominent role in delivering improvements and are beginning to make systematic checks on pupils' progress and the quality of teaching in their teams. Consequently, faculty leaders have an increasingly clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their areas, and what needs to be done to improve.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils access a range of courses, academic and vocational, to meet their needs and aspirations. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum meets the needs of all learners. In addition, pupils benefit from a range of extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities in sports, performing arts, various pastimes and academic areas that enable them to indulge and develop their skills, talents and interests. The addition of land-based studies is a notable feature of the curriculum, as are the sheep, pigs, chickens and ferrets situated on site that bring learning to life. A small number of pupils are provided with bespoke, off-site provision that meet individual needs.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and understanding of life in modern Britain are promoted through the study of religious education, citizenship, the assembly programme, and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. These include a suitable focus on a range of issues, including tackling discrimination and promoting tolerant attitudes.
- Additional funding for pupils who enter the school with below-average attainment is now being used more effectively. These pupils benefit from a range of intervention opportunities to receive carefully targeted support. Older pupils also offer before- and after-school sessions to support reading with younger pupils.
- Leaders' strong focus on the care and support of all pupils strongly influences the values and the culture of the school. Positive relationships exist between pupils and staff at all levels.
- Careers guidance is proving effective for pupils in key stage 4. Pupils spoke positively about the support received during their options process. A range of visitors from universities and the world of work regularly promote opportunities in education, employment or training.

Governance of the school

- Governors did not act quickly or robustly enough to tackle the weaknesses that led to the school's weak performance in examination results in 2016.
- Governors have now responded to underperformance with a recognised need to gain a more secure understanding of the school's work and undertake aspects of their duties with greater rigour. The trust board has recruited effectively and brought in additional capacity at local governing body level with the relevant range of skills and knowledge to help secure further improvement.

- Governors are now asking more probing questions to ensure that the information presented to them is clear and accurate. Governors' scrutiny of the school's work this academic year is particularly thorough in the area of pupils' progress. For example, they scrutinise a wide range of progress data, asking challenging questions.
- The governing body fulfils its statutory duties, including those relating to safeguarding. Governors ensure that the relevant policies, checks and training are in place so that pupils are kept safe and demonstrate a good commitment to ensuring that pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. In the past, parents have had concerns about their child's safety and well-being at the school. The restructure of the leadership team has ensured that those responsible for safeguarding are knowledgeable and tenacious in pursuing actions in a timely and decisive manner that ensures that pupils are kept safe.
- Leaders and governors are committed to the safety and well-being of all. Employment checks made on staff, volunteers and governors are robust and well recorded. Safeguarding records are detailed, well organised and stored securely.
- Leaders take swift actions when safeguarding concerns arise. Regular training ensures that all staff have a strong understanding of the importance of safeguarding.
- Pupils are safe in school and pupils overwhelmingly say that they feel safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is variable. Some teaching fails to match work well to the level of pupils' ability and needs so that pupils lose interest and fail to make the progress of which they are capable. Where there is inconsistency, the new leadership team is acting decisively to bring about further improvements.
- Some teachers do not take pupils' prior knowledge, understanding, skills or abilities into sufficient account. This can result in the most able pupils not being stretched and challenged enough. This situation is sometimes compounded when teachers do not check carefully how well pupils are learning as work proceeds. Consequently, pupils' misconceptions persist or their understanding is not secured. This also results in some pupils not being moved on to more demanding work when they are ready, so that they do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Assessment is being supported by the increasing use of external moderation and verification. However, the school's own systems for tracking and the use of data are not yet universally understood by all teachers and therefore are not yet being used consistently to inform teaching.
- Some teachers use questioning skilfully to explore and extend pupils' understanding, getting them to think more deeply about their learning. However, in other instances, teachers accept limited, superficial responses and do not challenge pupils further.

- Most teachers have good subject knowledge. However, expectations about presentation in pupils' books are inconsistent. When poorly presented work is accepted, pupils' readiness to make a greater effort begins to slip.
- Leaders are ensuring that the very good practice in teaching is now being shared to encourage more rapid improvement in teaching overall.
- High-quality relationships between teachers and pupils foster good attitudes to learning that help pupils to try to do their best. This can, where most effective, result in pupils engaging keenly with tasks and activities.
- There is a growing focus on developing pupils' literacy skills in subjects outside English. Teachers increasingly check and correct pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar. They also share subject-specific terminology and help pupils to understand these words.
- Progress coaches provide good support for lower ability pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils value the support they are given and benefit from positive relationships.
- Teachers promote equality of opportunity well through their teaching, and most classrooms are highly inclusive environments that support learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Most pupils are confident young people. They show respect for others and have positive attitudes to school, their peers and staff.
- Independent careers advice, together with school guidance, enable pupils to make appropriate choices about the next steps in their education.
- PSHE lessons, citizenship and a programme of assemblies help pupils to understand how to stay safe and healthy. Inspectors saw how pupils engage thoughtfully and maturely during a house assembly promoting unity.
- The school's records show that when incidents of bullying do occur, these are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils support this. They say that they feel safe. The views of staff and parents confirm this.
- The special educational needs team has detailed knowledge of relevant pupils and employs progress coaches appropriately. There is timely involvement of outside agencies to support pupils when appropriate.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors. Most pupils conduct themselves well in lessons and around the school. Although staff regularly challenge any examples of behaviour that is less than good, for example in the corridors, some are passive in their

response, believing it is someone else's responsibility. In lessons where teaching is weaker, off-task and occasional minor disruptions occur.

- Incidents of fixed-term exclusion rose last year as leaders used this as a strategy to reinforce their setting of high standards for pupils. Exclusions were particularly high for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Exclusions are now falling because pupils understand what is expected of them.
- Not all pupils are punctual to school and to lessons. Attendance overall is not improving quickly enough, although it is improving for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Attendance for pupils on alternative provision is good.
- Leaders have secure procedures in place to ensure that the small number of pupils who are educated for all or part of the week away from the school site are safe and attend their placements. This provision is used discerningly and leaders are able to show the beneficial impact of this on pupils' engagement in learning, their behaviour and their attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' achievements in their examination results in 2016 were weak. The progress made by different groups of pupils was variable and some key groups significantly underachieved. Leaders are now improving the progress and attainment of current pupils in the school, but they have not yet overcome these inconsistencies.
- Pupils enter the school with attainment that is broadly in line with national standards. In 2014 and 2016, they made progress that was well below average. In 2016, less than half of pupils secured A* to C GCSE grades in English and mathematics, and measures of average attainment across a range of subjects were lower than national norms. This is because pupils did not make good enough progress during their time at the school. Although attainment and progress did rise in 2015, these gains were not sustained.
- The progress made by pupils in mathematics on leaving school in Year 11 declined last year and was, overall, well below average. Most groups, including boys, higher ability pupils, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, did not make good progress. Pupils also underachieved in modern foreign languages, humanities and science.
- Pupils' progress in some humanities subjects and modern foreign languages, while showing some signs of improvement, continues to lag behind that of other subjects. Until these inconsistencies are overcome, outcomes will continue to require improvement.
- The progress of the most able pupils requires improvement. Although these pupils make good progress in English, too few pupils attain the highest grades. These inconsistencies are also evident in the achievements of current pupils. The school is not yet providing these pupils with the teaching that deepens their knowledge in all the subjects they study.
- The standards achieved by disadvantaged pupils on leaving Year 11 have been low for two out of the past three years. The attainment of this group declined significantly last academic year. However, a focus on boosting the achievement of these pupils and

more effective deployment of additional funding are quickening the progress of current pupils in this group. The school's records confirm that disadvantaged pupils are now making adequate progress and that gaps are closing in school. Inspection evidence saw this at its strongest in mathematics, where strong leadership and additional support from the trust are having a positive impact on pupils' progress.

- The strongest progress is made by lower ability pupils. They are given good support to reach the targets they have been set and they respond well to this help.
- The robust actions leaders have taken since September 2016 to secure better outcomes for pupils and improvements in the quality of teaching are accelerating the progress of pupils currently in the school. Achievement in mathematics is gathering momentum. The mathematics curriculum now has a stronger focus on helping pupils to secure their understanding of key mathematical concepts. Targeted teaching for specific groups of pupils is helping pupils to address the deficits in their skills and knowledge. Achievement in English remains positive.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well, although their progress in 2016 was below average. They made their slowest progress in mathematics. Support and intervention, coupled with closer checking of their progress to inform additional support, are furthering the progress of this group of pupils.
- The small number of pupils who attend courses away from the school site benefit from provision that is matched to their needs. Most are successful in securing a range of qualifications.

School details

Unique reference number	138644
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10025328

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,032
Appropriate authority	The Midlands Academies Trust
Chair	Tim Render
Principal	Michelle Oliphant
Telephone number	0247 6392237
Website	www.hartshill.warwickshire.sch.uk
Email address	admin5402@we-learn.com
Date of previous inspection	24–25 April 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish
- Hartshill School is an average-sized secondary converter academy.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is higher than average and increasing.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum

expectations for pupils' progress.

- A total of 13 pupils are educated off site: eight attend North Warwickshire and Hinckley College, which is also part of The Midlands Academies Trust.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in lessons and some of these observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their learning and their attitudes to and opinions about their school, including teaching, behaviour and safety. They met with three focus groups of pupils. Inspectors observed pupils at breaktimes and lunchtime and as they moved around the school.
- Inspectors considered 113 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 66 free-text responses from parents. Inspectors also considered 69 responses to an online staff questionnaire. Inspectors also received one letter from a parent and considered information received in two telephone calls.
- Meetings were held with the principal, executive principal, senior leaders, other leaders and newly qualified teachers. The lead inspector met with representatives from the school's governing body and the chair of the trust board.
- Inspectors scrutinised several documents, including the school's self-evaluation, minutes of governing body meetings and the school's records about pupils' behaviour, attendance and progress.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's policies and procedures related to safeguarding and pupil support and welfare, including child protection records and risk assessments.

Inspection team

Richard Gill, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Jacqueline Newsome	Ofsted Inspector
David Hermitt	Ofsted Inspector
Huw Bishop	Ofsted Inspector
Andrea Quigley	Ofsted Inspector
Nicola Walters	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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