

Lynch Hill Enterprise Academy

Stoke Road, Slough SL2 5AY

Inspection dates

20–21 June 2017

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
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	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- The trust has not ensured that pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils have very limited opportunities to make progress in aesthetic, creative and technological learning.
- Teaching is not consistently effective. As a result, pupils do not learn as well as they could or should.
- Pupils do not routinely tackle work of suitable challenge in line with their ability.
- Teachers' skills in helping pupils grasp learning are variable. At times, teachers' explanations are not precise or clear enough.
- Some teachers' techniques for checking pupils' understanding and use of questioning to help pupils deepen their thinking are underdeveloped.
- Pupils do not consistently have to hand the resources and support they need to learn well.
- There are limited opportunities to develop pupils' mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills.
- Pupils do not display consistently positive attitudes to learning. Low-level disruption in class is quite common. On occasion, the whole class becomes disengaged and loses valuable learning time.
- Pupils' conduct between lessons is not consistently good. Some pupils indulge in silly, thoughtless and, at times, boisterous behaviour.
- The trust has not ensured that it fulfils the requirements of the 2011 public sector equality duty. It has not made sure that the curriculum effectively promotes equality for some groups protected under the 2010 Equality Act.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders have worked effectively to reduce incidents of poor behaviour and improve attendance.
- Teaching is improving as a result of leaders' more effective monitoring, albeit in a narrow range of subjects.
- Arrangements to keep pupils safe are effective.
- Pupils typically develop a good understanding of democracy and the rule of law.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the curriculum is broad and balanced, enabling pupils to experience and make good progress in creative, aesthetic and technological learning at each key stage.
- Further develop teaching so that all groups of pupils make strong progress across a wide range of subjects, by:
 - ensuring that all teachers reinforce high expectations for pupils' conduct and effort so lessons flow consistently smoothly and pupils work hard
 - making sure that pupils routinely tackle work of a suitable degree of difficulty relative to their ability and previous learning
 - making sure that teachers explain tasks consistently clearly, checking pupils' understanding and adjusting the approach when needed
 - developing teachers' questioning skills so that they are adept at asking probing questions that help pupils to deepen their understanding
 - consistently providing lower-ability pupils with the support and resources they need to learn well in lessons
 - develop teaching of mathematical reasoning and problem-solving so that pupils deepen their understanding and become fluent mathematicians.
- Ensure that pupils conduct themselves consistently well between lessons, at break and lunchtime.
- Improve pupils' understanding of the importance of not using homophobic or other discriminatory language.
- Improve governance by ensuring that trust leaders and governors:
 - seek and obtain the information they need to hold school leaders tightly to account for all areas of the school's performance
 - set out a clear plan for how the school will meet its public sector equalities duties and make sure that the plan is implemented effectively.

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

Inadequate

- The trust has not ensured that pupils experience a broad curriculum. The range of subjects lacks breadth and balance. Pupils have very limited opportunities for creative, practical and technical learning. They do not study subjects such as art, music, or design and technology. As a result, the curriculum does not meet pupils' needs. Pupils are not prepared for studying such subjects at GCSE. Their cultural development is restricted.
- The school provides regular enrichment activities. This includes an optional art club and occasional engineering or creative media related projects. However, this is not enough to ensure that pupils gain useful experience and make at least reasonable progress in these subject areas. Leaders recognise this and have plans in place to offer a broader curriculum from September 2017. However, even if implemented effectively, this will not fully resolve the issue. Evidence shared with inspectors indicates that there is no plan to teach music, and art will only be taught at key stage 4.
- Leaders have made sure that pupils experience a range of opportunities to learn about life in modern British society. Assemblies, personal, social and health education lessons, citizenship lessons and tutor periods cover a wide range of topics. These range from respect and tolerance of those from different backgrounds and faiths, to the law and relationships. However, leaders have not made sure that pupils learn about the discriminatory nature of the language that some pupils use and the need to challenge it.
- The headteacher, with her leadership team, is taking effective action to improve teaching and pupils' achievement. Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching help them identify key aspects of teaching that need improvement. Leaders use this information to identify and provide suitable training and support which are helping staff sharpen their practice.
- In the last academic year, leaders have improved their approach to assessing and tracking pupils' progress. Leaders have defined a suitable set of expectations for pupils' achievement in each term and subject taught. Teachers typically make good use of this information to assess pupils' achievement.
- Leaders pull assessment information together into useful reports which enable them to see the extent of pupils' progress in the subjects studied. However, leaders do not analyse the progress of pupils with lower starting points as a distinct group. As a result, leaders have a limited understanding of the progress of these pupils. Also, although much improved, assessment information in some subjects is not consistently accurate.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) provides strong leadership. Since taking up post in the spring of 2016, she has taken effective action to rectify previous weaknesses in this provision. She has made sure that assessment is accurate. Improved consultation with parents, pupils and professionals helps to ensure accurate identification of pupils' specific support needs and intended results. Support strategies are suitably shared with teachers and support staff.
- The SENCo has set up a thorough approach to tracking the effectiveness of support

programmes to make sure that funding is spent well. It is too soon to know the exact impact that this support is having on pupils' progress.

- Leaders are making increasingly effective use of pupil premium and catch-up funding. A range of support is helping disadvantaged pupils to attend well, cope with school and keep pace with learning. This includes helpful individual and group support sessions, to help those who need it to learn more effectively. Leaders keep a close eye on the progress of disadvantaged pupils to check that it is improving.

Governance of the school

- Until this year, arrangements for governance have been insufficient. The trust had limited capacity to hold school leaders to account. Lines of accountability between the trust and school leaders were unclear.
- The trust has taken suitable action to improve the situation. A chair of the trust and a chair of the local governing body were appointed. The new local governing body is providing more challenge and support for leaders than was previously the case. Nevertheless, the extent to which the trust and governors are holding leaders to account for all aspects of the school's performance remains limited.
- The trust has not paid enough attention to the effect the narrowness of the curriculum has on pupils' learning and development. Its actions to improve the curriculum have been too slow.
- Trustees and governors have not made sure that the school's publications and website are accurate. The prospectus for 2016, still on the website during the inspection, is misleading. It reports that pupils will study the national curriculum, including art and music, yet pupils do not study either of these subjects. The prospectus also states that the schools' specialism is, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), yet study of technology and engineering plays a very limited part in the curriculum. Some parents and pupils, rightly, feel misled.
- The trust has not ensured that the school meets its public sector equalities duties. Trust leaders have not identified how they will secure equality of opportunity for people protected under the Equality Act 2010, other than for those who have disabilities.
- Although governors check information about disadvantaged pupils' progress, they have not made sure a suitable strategy for using pupil premium funding is in place or what the impact of the spending should be. As a result, they cannot hold leaders to account tightly enough for spending the funding effectively.
- Trust governors are making good use of improved assessment information to gain an understanding of pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science. Governing body minutes demonstrate that governors are now accessing information about progress in other subjects.
- Governors carry out their safeguarding duties appropriately.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective, rigorous and thorough. Leaders make sure that records are detailed and of high quality. Checks on the suitability of staff are comprehensive. The leaders responsible for safeguarding work with staff to ensure that any concern reported about a pupil is recorded clearly and accurately. Leaders make sure that they pass on concerns to social services when needed, ensuring that there is a timely response. The headteacher checks the progress of all cases each week to ensure that nothing 'slips through the net'.
- Staff receive suitable training, so that they stay up to date with the latest requirements. Leaders have placed a high focus on ensuring that both staff and pupils gain a firm understanding of the risks of extremism and what to do if they think someone is at risk.
- Pupils learn how to stay safe and typically feel safe at school. They report that bullying is rare.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching does not engage pupils' interest consistently well. Teachers' expectations for pupils' conduct and effort in lessons are not routinely high enough. As a result, it is quite common for pupils to drift off task, chat and disturb others. On occasion, the whole class becomes disengaged, learning stops and valuable time is lost.
- Teachers' explanations are not consistently clear. At times, pupils become confused about what the teacher expects them to do. Some teachers' techniques for checking that all pupils understand the task and are making good progress are ineffectual.
- Teachers' questioning skills are often quite superficial. Pupils have limited opportunities to engage in discussion that helps them to deepen their thinking.
- Teachers typically try to provide work of suitable challenge for pupils of different abilities. However, the extent to which this is successful is variable. Teachers' skills in identifying the next steps pupils should take to deepen their learning are not consistently well developed. Quite often, the whole class spends considerable time working at the same depth of challenge regardless of their ability. Lower-ability pupils do not routinely receive the extra guidance and support needed to make good progress. The time the most able spend engaging in suitably challenging learning becomes limited.
- Teaching in mathematics does not provide pupils with enough opportunities to develop and apply their reasoning skills to solve problems and deepen their understanding of mathematics.
- Teachers typically display good subject knowledge in the subjects taught. Where teaching is stronger, this is combined with effective teaching techniques and pupils make strong progress. In such cases, teaching captures pupils' interest. Assessment information is used well to plan learning suited to the needs of pupils of varying abilities. Useful resources and support help pupils engage in the learning activities. Teachers provide helpful guidance which helps pupils to improve their work.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. Pupils have not developed consistently positive attitudes to learning. The extent to which pupils make a good effort in class varies considerably depending on the quality of teaching.
- Pupils' understanding of the importance of not using prejudicial language is not consistently well developed. Although pupils know they should respect people regardless of differences, some make casual use of words such as 'gay' as a 'joke'. These pupils do not see why this use of language might lead others to feel uncomfortable or marginalised. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors said they had never had the opportunity to discuss the issue.
- Pupils have useful opportunities to find out about careers and the world of work. However, opportunities for pupils to discover if they have the interest or aptitude to take up careers in the creative and engineering work sectors have been very limited.
- Pupils spend a considerable period of time each week studying citizenship and personal and social education. They have developed a good understanding of democracy, the workings of Parliament, and the law. Pupils spoke with interest about the recent general election.
- Pupils learn how to keep safe when using the internet and social media. They know about risks that they might face in the 'real world', such as from drugs, alcohol and people who may cause them harm. Pupils told inspectors that they felt safe and that bullying was rare.
- Leaders make sure that pupils who attend alternative provision are safe, well cared for and attend well.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Low-level disruption in some classes is quite common. Pupils report that this is particularly the case in the lower sets.
- Some pupils' conduct as they move between classes is silly and inconsiderate. This includes jostling on stairways and 'larking about' in the corridor. Staff had mixed views about the extent to which leaders manage this behaviour well. Several expressed concern that leaders do not deal with poorer behaviour consistently enough.
- At break and lunchtime, although most pupils behave well, some pupils tend to indulge in thoughtless behaviour.
- Behaviour is improving. Incidents of challenging behaviour have reduced notably. Incidents of fixed-term exclusions were extremely high last school year. Although still high, the proportions of pupils receiving a fixed-term exclusion and those with more than one exclusion have reduced markedly this year.
- Some pupils spoke appreciatively of the support they had received to improve their behaviour. They felt it had transformed them.

- Pupils' attendance, including that of disadvantaged pupils, has improved considerably over time. The proportion of pupils with poor attendance has dropped to well below figures previously seen nationally. Tailored support for pupils and their families and a heightened focus on rewarding good attendance have contributed well to this.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils have not had the opportunity to make good progress across a wide range of subjects. Pupils' development of knowledge and skills in music, art and technology-related subjects has been too limited.
- Pupils are not prepared well for several of the subjects on offer in the school's new key stage 4 curriculum, which starts in September. This includes design and technology, food preparation and nutrition, and art. Pupils choosing these subjects will need to catch up considerably if they are to make progress at least in line with that seen nationally by the end of Year 11.
- Pupils' achievement in the subjects they currently study has improved notably this year. However, pupils are not consistently tackling work of suitable challenge and with the support needed to make strong progress across these subjects. This is particularly the case for pupils with low starting points.
- Almost half of pupils currently in Years 8 and 9 joined the school with high levels of achievement at the end of primary school. Because of improved teaching, these most-able pupils have made better progress this year than previously. However, most are not yet working at the standard they should be considering their high starting points.
- Pupils' development of reasoning and problem-solving skills in mathematics is limited. They spend a sizeable part of the week studying mathematics. However, they have not had enough opportunities to deepen their mathematical understanding. They are not well prepared to reach high standards at GCSE.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make the same varied progress as other pupils.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are typically making better progress than in previous years. Better teaching, combined with a suitable programme of support outside lessons, is making a notable difference.

School details

Unique reference number	140156
Local authority	Slough
Inspection number	10032497

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	239
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Kevin Morris
Headteacher	Jane Everton
Telephone number	01753 691583
Website	www.lhea.org.uk
Email address	office@lhea.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish about the curriculum, pupil premium, special educational needs and/or disabilities, or equalities objectives.
- The school opened in September 2014. Currently the school has pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9. The number of pupils on roll is much lower than the national average for secondary schools. It is planned that by 2020 the school will provide 1,140 places and include a sixth form.
- The proportion of boys is much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is higher than the national figure.
- A high proportion of pupils are from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. One third

of pupils are of Pakistani origin.

- Three out of every five pupils speak English as an additional language.
- A higher-than-average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The school was set up as an academy free school by the leaders of Lynch Hill Primary School. They established the Learning Alliance Academy Trust which both schools are part of.
- The school had, until recently, been located in temporary accommodation. The school moved fully into its newly built permanent accommodation in April 2017.
- The headteacher joined the school in June 2015. In the previous term no headteacher or senior team was in place. A senior leadership team was subsequently appointed and started work in the spring of 2016.
- The school makes occasional use of alternative provision at Haybrook College, a local pupil referral unit, to provide pupils who need it with a period of intensive support to manage their behaviour.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 19 lessons, some jointly with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work from a range of subjects, including English and mathematics. An inspector also made short visits to several lessons to look at pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors held discussions with senior leaders and middle leaders. Discussions were also held with the chief executive of the trust and the chair of the local governing body. The lead inspector also met with the chair of the trust. Inspectors also spoke with teachers, support staff and pupils.
- Inspectors reviewed documents including safeguarding policies, behaviour and attendance records, self-evaluation and planning documents, and the school's records on performance management and teaching and learning.
- Account was taken of 29 staff survey responses and 10 responses by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. In addition, inspectors considered six parents' responses by free-text. There were no replies to Ofsted's online pupil survey.

Inspection team

Diana Choulerton, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Anne Turner

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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