

Lea Manor High School Performing Arts College

Northwell Drive, Luton, Bedfordshire LU3 3TL

Inspection dates

21–22 February 2018

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

- Pupils do not make consistently strong progress across all year groups and subject areas.
- Pupils who join the school with attainment that is average or above average do not make the progress they should.
- Additional funding has not been targeted effectively enough to accelerate the progress of disadvantaged pupils with average or high attainment.
- Not all subject leaders have been trained sufficiently to drive forward improvements in their own departments.
- The leadership of provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is not strong enough.
- Some teachers set work that does not sufficiently challenge pupils with average or high prior attainment.
- Teachers do not routinely convert their detailed knowledge about the individual needs of pupils into practical approaches in the classroom.
- The school's policy on homework is not clear enough.
- Overall attendance is too low and persistent absence too high.
- Fixed-term exclusions are too high.
- There is too much low-level disruption in a minority of classes.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils who join the school with below-average attainment achieve well.
- Disadvantaged pupils with low prior attainment make sound progress.
- The school's unit for pupils who have social communication disorder (SCD), the Unity Centre, is an effective provision.
- The new headteacher and her senior team have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and they are effectively accelerating improvements to teaching.
- Pupils follow a broad and balanced curriculum which prepares them well for life in modern Britain.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes, so that achievement is at least in line with national averages in all subjects and for all pupil groups, by:
 - accelerating the progress made by middle- and high- prior-attaining pupils
 - improving the achievement of disadvantaged pupils throughout the school, particularly those who join with attainment that is average or high.
- Improve teaching to good or better, by:
 - ensuring that all teachers convert their thorough understanding of individual pupils' needs into practical classroom strategies that effectively accelerate progress
 - increasing the amount of challenge regularly experienced by middle- and high-prior-attaining pupils
 - developing a clear policy on homework.
- Improve personal development, behaviour and welfare, by:
 - ensuring that overall attendance and persistent absence improve to be in line with, or better, than national averages
 - reducing rates of exclusion so they are at least in line with national averages
 - eliminating low-level disruption in classes.
- Improve leadership and management, by:
 - strengthening the leadership of provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities throughout the school
 - enhancing the quality and consistency of subject leadership.

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.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Governors and leaders have not acted with sufficient urgency to address a decline in academic standards since the previous inspection. As a result, in 2017, the progress made by pupils overall, and that made by disadvantaged pupils, were well below the national average.
- School leaders have subsequently acted quickly to analyse the reasons for these disappointing 2017 results. They acknowledge that over time, insufficient focus has been placed on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and this has had a detrimental impact on the progress pupils have made as a result.
- During the last year, leaders have introduced a number of positive initiatives designed to enhance and strengthen teaching, including more rigorous quality assurance processes, a tailored training programme and opportunities to share effective practice. While teaching is now improving, there has not been sufficient time to evaluate fully the relative effectiveness of these developments.
- The new headteacher, who has been in position since January 2018, has acted with energy and determination to enhance and accelerate the existing plans that had already been put in place to secure improved outcomes for pupils. She has restructured her senior team to draw upon existing experience and expertise. This refocused vision for placing high-quality teaching and learning at the heart of the school's work has been well received by staff, pupils and parents and carers. However, the full impact of these plans is yet to be seen across all areas of the school.
- Over time, teachers in charge of subject areas have not received sufficient training to help them carry out their roles. As a result, inconsistencies in the quality of subject leadership have not been successfully eliminated.
- School leaders acknowledge that the impact of additional funding, including the pupil premium and funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, has not been as great as it should have been across the school. While it has successfully been used to support the progress of low prior-attaining pupils, it has not been deployed effectively to accelerate the progress of their most-able peers.
- The Unity Centre is a highly effective unit, and is very well led and managed. However, the wider leadership of SEN within the whole school is not as effective, and requires urgent review and revision to strengthen it.
- School leaders have recently undertaken a review of the curriculum and re-shaped it to ensure that pupils have sufficient time in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. They have done so while promoting a broad and balanced curriculum that allows all pupils to experience a wide range of subjects, including suitable vocational subjects. However, the successful delivery of this curriculum has been hampered by the considerable difficulty the school has faced in recruiting suitably qualified teachers in important subjects such as science and mathematics.
- The school currently uses a large number of alternative providers to deliver part-time or full-time educational placements for some pupils away from the school site. These

have been carefully chosen and leaders ensure that they maintain meticulous communication to monitor pupils' care, attendance, behaviour and progress. Leaders believe that the school is now in a position to meet the needs of a high proportion of these pupils better through enhanced provision, and is actively working to reduce the number of such external placements.

- School leaders ensure that all pupils receive appropriate levels of care, guidance and support. The school's pastoral leaders, or 'deans', are developing increasingly coherent strategies for encouraging pupils' positive attitudes to their learning and for raising pupils' own aspirations about what they can achieve.
- Opportunities for developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural knowledge and understanding are successfully threaded throughout the curriculum. These are found in assemblies, tutorial periods and subject lessons across the curriculum. Pupils gain a good preparation for life in modern Britain, and the school is a highly tolerant and inclusive community as a result. The school site vibrantly displays the breadth of cultures and faiths of pupils at the school.
- The successful transition of pupils to the next stage of their education or employment is well supported by effective, impartial advice and guidance throughout the school.
- The school has benefited from a range of partnerships with other schools and strong support and challenge from the local authority.

Governance of the school

- Over time, the governing body has not provided sufficient challenge to school leaders. Governors have been too quick to accept information presented to them at face value. As a result, they were taken by surprise by the recent poor results. Governors had not acted urgently enough to provide a clear strategic direction for the improvement of the school.
- The governing body has been successfully strengthened in the last year. An external review of governance undertaken in the summer term of 2017 identified a number of crucial areas for improvement, which have now been acted upon. A new chair of the governing body has been in place since September 2017 and several other new members have brought important additional experience and expertise. Processes for monitoring the quality of governance have been adopted and governors have attended a range of relevant training courses.
- Governors now have a much clearer understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching. Governors have significantly sharpened their focus on holding leaders to account for the use of the additional funding available to the school. They fulfil all their duties, such as ensuring that safeguarding procedures, including those concerned with dealing with the threat of extremism and radicalisation, are rigorous and thorough.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school ensures a thorough approach to safer recruitment, maintaining central records and risk assessments. Leaders, including governors, have a relentless focus upon ensuring the safety and

well-being of pupils, in particular those who are vulnerable or at risk, and this has contributed to a transparent and robust culture of safeguarding. The school has undertaken considerable improvements to the school site, including constructing additional external fencing, to improve security and safety.

- All staff are aware of their role in ensuring pupils' safety and welfare. They have had relevant safeguarding training that is regularly updated, including about issues appropriate to the school's local context. Child protection policies are clear and understood by staff. Pupils are taught effectively how to keep themselves safe and deal with risk. Any concerns or complaints that do arise are appropriately referred to the relevant authorities. Communication with parents and carers in these cases is clear, and working relationships with other agencies to keep children safe are effective. The school successfully coordinates the care and welfare of children looked after who attend the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching has not been of a sufficiently high standard over time to ensure that all pupils make the progress they should.
- Teachers plan carefully to ensure that pupils with low prior attainment do not get left behind. They do not always have high enough expectations of what middle- and high-prior-attaining pupils can achieve in lessons, and as a result, these pupils do not receive enough work that challenges them. They are also not given sufficient opportunity to write at length. This limits the progress they make.
- Teachers have detailed knowledge about the individual needs of the pupils in their classes, for example with regard to disadvantaged pupils or those who have SEN and/or disabilities. They do not routinely convert this information into practical approaches for improving learning in the classroom. As a result, some teaching does not take account of pupils' specific needs, which would accelerate progress further.
- Overall, the quality of teaching is now improving. Pupils often experience highly effective teaching in a number of subjects. Teaching in mathematics is strong and it is improving rapidly in English. The progress pupils make is accelerating as a result. In modern foreign languages, design, and technology and art, teachers use high-quality questioning in lessons and this promotes rapid learning.
- Pupils based in the Unity Centre are taught well within the unit, and are well supported when they are learning in mainstream lessons.
- There is no clear homework policy in the school. As a result, teachers, pupils and parents are unclear about the role of learning at home and pupils do not develop the skills and habits they need to study successfully outside school. This hinders the progress they make.
- There is a purposeful and productive atmosphere in many lessons. Over time, teachers create overwhelmingly positive relationships. Pupils feel comfortable and valued. They usually listen attentively to teachers' explanations and feel safe to ask and answer questions about their learning. Pupils often do not work so industriously when they are not taught by their usual teachers.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Leaders are currently promoting a range of strategies to encourage among pupils positive attitudes to their learning and high aspirations about what they can achieve. These include developing the school's rewards system, the personal development curriculum and pupil leadership roles. Leaders acknowledge that these developments need to be coordinated more coherently in order to increase their impact.
- The school develops the physical and emotional well-being of pupils through a range of subjects across the curriculum, including drama, physical education and religious education. Some pupils benefit from the extra-curricular activities that are available, including sport, music and the arts, but this programme has been reduced in recent years, and pupils said that they would like to have more opportunities in these areas.
- Pupils receive effective, impartial advice and guidance. As a result, the proportion of pupils who are well prepared for, and move successfully on to, the next stage of their education or employment, is increasing.
- Pupils said that they feel safe and are well looked after. They are confident that staff will help and support them should they experience any problems, for example if there were any bullying. They appreciate high levels of effective peer support through prefects and anti-bullying ambassadors. They know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, for example when using technology and the internet. Pupils believe that there is always an adult at the school who will listen to them and give them advice.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- In a small number of lessons, weaknesses in teaching mean that some pupils lose focus on their learning too quickly and engage in low-level disruption. The school has recently introduced a new 'consequences' behaviour policy to empower all teachers to deal with poor behaviour before it escalates. This is because school leaders appreciate that a minority of teachers are not being consistent in how they deal with disruptive behaviour.
- Pupils usually move around the school in a measured, calm and purposeful fashion. They look after the modern, well-maintained school site well and are usually polite and courteous to adults and each other. They normally get to their lessons punctually. There are very high levels of adult supervision around the site at all times.
- The proportion of pupils who are excluded from school is declining, but remains too high and is above the national average. Detailed records show that the number of other behaviour-related sanctions has also started to decline.
- Attendance is improving and persistent absence is falling because the school is

pursuing effective strategies to engage successfully with parents. However, overall levels of both absence and persistent absence remain above the national average.

- The school effectively monitors the behaviour and well-being of pupils who are taught in off-site provision. The impact of educating some pupils in this way is positive in terms of improving their attitudes and attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In 2017, at key stage 4, pupils made progress overall that was well below the national average. The progress made by disadvantaged pupils was also significantly below that of other pupils nationally. The progress made by pupils who joined the school with average or above-average attainment was particularly weak.
- The proportions of pupils who joined the school with below-average attainment who achieved the important attainment thresholds of grade 4 in both English and mathematics, and grade 5 in both English and mathematics, were in line with the national average. Disadvantaged pupils who joined the school with attainment below the national average also made sound progress.
- In 2017, the progress made by pupils in mathematics was above the national average. Progress in modern foreign languages was also in line with the national average. However, the progress made by pupils in English, science and humanities was well below the national average.
- The school's current performance information indicates that standards of attainment and progress are generally improving across the school. Evidence from this inspection supports this picture of improving outcomes. However, overall achievement is still hampered by the slow progress made by disadvantaged pupils who join the school with average or high attainment, along with inconsistent progress between different subject departments.
- Pupils who join the school in Year 7 needing to catch up in literacy and numeracy make sound progress in their first year. This is because the additional funding received for this purpose is used effectively, and the school also targets other pupil premium funding it receives to promote achievement in English and mathematics for low-attaining pupils.
- The school closely monitors the progress of pupils who are educated away from the school site through programmes of alternative provision. The school ensures that they attend regularly and are following appropriate courses. Consequently, these pupils make better progress than they did before they started these placements.

School details

Unique reference number	109709
Local authority	Luton
Inspection number	10041780

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,093
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Terry Davis
Headteacher	Gwyneth Gibson
Telephone number	01582 652600
Website	www.leamanorhighschool.org.uk
Email address	learning@leamanor.luton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 December 2013 and 23 March 2014

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is larger than average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is well above average.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11.
- Some pupils are taught away from the school site at the following different alternative providers: ACE, Luton; Active Support, Luton; Apollo Education, Luton; Eden Therapeutic, Luton; Evolve Learning, Luton; Reach Education, Luton; DJ Academy,

Luton; and McIntyre, Milton Keynes.

- The school runs a resourced provision, called the Unity Centre, for up to eight pupils who have social communication disorder.
- The headteacher was appointed in January 2018.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 55 lessons in order to contribute to their evaluation of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Some of these observations were conducted jointly with members of the school's leadership team. Inspectors also observed tutorial periods and an assembly.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, school leaders, teachers, governors, a representative of the local authority and various groups of pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of school documentation, including policies, the minutes of governing body meetings, the school's self-evaluation, the school's improvement plan and information about pupils' achievement, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors considered the views expressed in 26 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including 25 free-text responses; 31 questionnaires returned by pupils and 78 questionnaires returned by staff.
- An inspector held telephone conversations with representatives from two alternative providers used by the school to educate some of its pupils.

Inspection team

Paul Lawrence, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
John Constable	Ofsted Inspector
John Craig	Ofsted Inspector
Carole Herman	Ofsted Inspector
Helen Loughran	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2018