

# Hurstmere School

Hurst Road, Sidcup, Kent DA15 9AW

## Inspection dates

18–19 September 2018

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is too variable to secure good outcomes for all pupils.
- Leaders set targets for pupils which are not sufficiently aspirational. Therefore, some teachers pitch work at a level that does not challenge pupils.
- Many pupils do not make good progress from their starting points across a range of subjects.
- Overall, the most able and disadvantaged pupils achieve below other pupils, nationally.
- Leaders do not measure the impact of some aspects of their work with enough precision. They do not take action to address identified weaknesses with enough urgency. Consequently, improvements do not have enough impact on the progress pupils make.
- Where teaching is not challenging enough, pupils cause low-level disruption in lessons. This impacts negatively on the learning of others.
- Governors do not challenge leaders robustly about the progress of groups of learners.
- Leaders have not considered the design of the curriculum carefully enough. Consequently, it does not prepare pupils for key stage 4 study in some subjects.
- Leaders do not ensure that different cultures, beliefs and backgrounds are adequately promoted, understood and celebrated by pupils. Consequently, they are not prepared sufficiently for life in modern Britain.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leaders are committed to ensuring that pupils achieve well and enjoy school.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective. Pupils are well cared for.
- Staff meet the needs of vulnerable pupils, and links with professional agencies provide good support.
- Pupils are courteous, well-mannered and articulate.
- Overall, attendance is above the national average, and the attendance of disadvantaged pupils is improving.
- The school provides a wide range of enrichment opportunities.

## Full report

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

- Improve leadership and management by:
  - using baseline information to establish an accurate view of the progress pupils make from their different starting points
  - ensuring ambitious targets are set for pupils and rigorously evaluating how learners are making progress against their targets
  - establishing robust systems to check the impact of the school's actions, and acting swiftly when concerns are identified
  - sharpening the way in which governors hold leaders to account
  - evaluating the curriculum to ensure that pupils extend their knowledge and understanding across all key stages.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to improve outcomes for pupils by:
  - ensuring that teachers have high expectations of the standard of work pupils can reach, particularly the most able
  - giving teachers effective strategies to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the most able.
- Improve the behaviour of pupils by:
  - ensuring that teachers plan interesting activities that enable pupils to learn well and stay on task
  - raising the attendance of disadvantaged pupils, in line with the national average.
- Improve the personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils by:
  - providing increased opportunities to promote and celebrate different cultures, beliefs and backgrounds across the curriculum so that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain
  - ensuring that all staff are trained appropriately to deliver personal, social, health and economic education.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Leaders have been slow to address the areas for improvement from the last two inspections, which means the achievement of pupils has been limited.
- Leaders' expectations of the progress pupils make are not high enough. Consequently, the targets set for pupils are not ambitious enough. Teachers do not have a realistic view of what pupils can achieve. Therefore, pupils, especially the most able, do not make good progress from their starting points.
- Leaders are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. However, they do not monitor the impact of their work sharply enough to make timely and necessary improvements. As a result, some of the systems do not enable leaders to make necessary improvements for pupils because leaders do not have an accurate view of some aspects of the school's work.
- Over time, leaders have not ensured that disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their starting points. Their evaluation of how pupil premium funding has been spent is vague and imprecise. Leaders have not identified the specific barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils or ensured that pupil premium funding is used appropriately. Leaders do not check carefully that interventions for disadvantaged pupils have a positive impact on the progress they make. The headteacher recognises this and has recently appointed a leader to oversee pupil premium initiatives.
- Leaders have recently adapted the subject options available for pupils to study at key stage 4. More pupils study a modern foreign language than previously, and drama has been introduced. However, leaders do not evaluate the impact of the school curriculum sharply enough. They do not sufficiently review the way the curriculum is designed to prepare pupils for study from key stage 3 to key stage 4.
- Leaders check on the quality of teaching and learning. However, procedures for doing so are not systematic. Consequently, not all staff have had their teaching observed in the last school year. There are some professional development opportunities to improve teachers' classroom practice. However, leaders do not evaluate the impact of staff training on pupils' outcomes. As a result, teachers lack strategies to support pupils' progress, particularly the most able and disadvantaged pupils.
- Staff recruitment has been an issue for the school. The headteacher has made some recent appointments to middle leadership positions. These appointments are already helping to strengthen leadership capacity and support school and departmental improvements.
- Pupils participate in a range of enrichment activities, which enable pupils to deepen their knowledge and skills. These include music workshops with a neighbouring school, sports activities and visits to the theatre. However, leaders do not monitor whether all groups of pupils participate in these activities.

## Governance of the school

- The governing body has not addressed the areas for improvement from the previous two inspections with enough urgency, which means pupils' achievement has been limited.
- Governors have been too accepting of information that leaders have provided. As a result, they have not challenged leaders sufficiently to ensure that pupils make strong progress.
- Governors' knowledge of the effectiveness of the school in some crucial areas is limited. For example, governors are not clear on how pupil premium funding is used to raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils.
- The governing body is aware of the importance of safeguarding and ensures that arrangements meet statutory requirements. Governors receive regular training to enable them to carry out their duties effectively. They work closely with leaders to check that the school's procedures for keeping pupils safe are effective.
- Governors are committed to the school and its pupils. They are supportive of senior and other school leaders, and are involved in the life of the school.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The single central record meets requirements. Leaders carry out the statutory checks before they employ staff in school. Governors regularly review this process.
- Staff receive regular training on safeguarding matters, and are aware of how to spot and report concerns about pupils' safety.
- Pupils said they feel safe in school and understand how to keep themselves safe, for example, when working online. The majority of pupils said bullying is rare and, if reported, it is dealt with. The vast majority of parents who replied to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, feel their child is safe in school.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent within and across subjects. Teaching is not strong enough to ensure that pupils, particularly the most able and disadvantaged pupils, make good progress from their starting points.
- Information on pupils' prior attainment is not used to set challenging targets. Teachers do not build on pupils' prior knowledge. Consequently, tasks are often pitched too low and do not enable pupils to deepen their knowledge, understanding or skills.
- The work of the most able lacks a depth of knowledge across a range of subjects. The quality of pupils' written work often hinders their ability to demonstrate what they understand. Key stage 4 pupils are not working at a high enough standard to enable them to achieve the highest GCSE grades.
- Teachers and leaders monitor and track pupils' progress. However, the information that teachers put into the assessment system is not always accurate. Therefore, leaders

cannot check that appropriate support for pupils occurs in a timely manner when pupils fall behind with their work.

- Leaders' expectations about marking for literacy are clear and have been communicated to staff. Samples of pupils' work show that plans are monitored and implemented. There are increasing opportunities for extended writing. However, the accuracy of pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar is not yet routinely addressed across subjects.
- There is some stronger teaching in the school, for example in English. This is because some teachers have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve and use skilful questioning techniques. This enables pupils to develop their ideas and think more deeply about their learning.
- The quality of guidance that teachers give to pupils to improve their work is varied. Where teachers follow the school's policy on feedback consistently, pupils receive effective guidance on improving their work, have opportunities to correct mistakes and use it to develop their understanding. However, sometimes pupils are not given enough opportunities or specific guidance on how to improve their work.
- The school provides regular reports to parents. The majority of parents said that they are happy with the information that the school provides on their children's progress.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Requires improvement

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- The school uses a range of approaches, including assemblies and citizenship lessons, to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. The programme covers many relevant aspects relating to sex and relationships, health and British values. However, leaders do not check carefully enough that these units are delivered effectively and that all staff are sufficiently trained to discuss sensitive issues and challenge stereotypes. Leaders do not ensure that pupils are given enough opportunities to understand and celebrate different cultures, faiths and backgrounds.
- Pupils are given opportunities to develop their self-confidence and self-awareness. For example, in an interactive Year 7 assembly, pupils were given time to reflect about individuals who had shown perseverance and resilience.
- There are several opportunities for pupils to develop leadership skills, including the school council, peer mentors, house captains and supporting younger pupils in the classroom. Pupils spoke very enthusiastically about the fundraising and community projects undertaken as part of a school visit to Zambia.
- Leaders engage with external agencies to provide support for the most vulnerable pupils. There are effective arrangements in place to provide mental health support, including an in-house counsellor and mental health nurse. Pupils value this provision.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and manage risk outside of school. This was confirmed by discussions with pupils who showed sensible awareness about road

safety, 'gang culture' and drug abuse. A small number of pupils spoken to during the inspection reported that some name-calling around race and homophobia does exist. The school records incidents but does not always fully record the action taken.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Where teachers do not match the learning to pupils' needs, some pupils engage in low-level disruption. Where teaching is good, pupils are keen to work hard and focus on their learning.
- Some pupils said that the poor behaviour of pupils in some of their lessons has a negative impact on their learning. Despite clear systems to manage behaviour, pupils said that some teachers do not apply the behaviour policy consistently.
- Pupils' behaviour is good outside of lessons. Pupils are polite and well mannered. They are punctual to lessons and move around the site in a calm and orderly manner. Pupils wear their uniform with pride.
- Attendance is above the national average. Attendance for disadvantaged pupils, although improving, remains below the national average.
- The school has introduced an internal inclusion unit, which is reducing the number of external exclusions.
- A few pupils have started attending alternative provision this term. The school regularly checks the attendance and progress of pupils.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- In the 2017 GCSE external examinations, pupils' attainment was in line with the national average. Pupils' progress was below the national average.
- Progress for higher-ability pupils from their starting points was significantly below the national average for their peers. Progress for disadvantaged pupils was significantly below other pupils, nationally.
- Attainment in GCSE English, mathematics, and languages was above the national average, but attainment in science and humanities was below the national average.
- Provisional data provided by the school for 2018 examination results suggests that pupils' achievements are similar to last year. Many pupils do not achieve the outcomes which they are capable of. This is particularly true of the most able and disadvantaged pupils.
- In books, the quality of work is variable. Work is sometimes of a good quality, well presented and shows good or better progress where expectations are high, but this is inconsistent. Work in some books is not of a high enough quality.
- The school provides pupils with impartial careers advice and guidance. All year 10 pupils complete a work experience programme. As a result, the proportion of pupils who find places in education, training or employment when they leave Hurstmere is above the national average.

- Information provided by the school shows that current pupils' progress is variable against their targets.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make progress in line with their peers.

## School details

Unique reference number	137368
Local authority	Bexley
Inspection number	10053272

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

Type of school	Modern (non-selective)
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,051
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Eleanor Allen
Headteacher	George Stollery
Telephone number	020 8300 5665
Website	<a href="http://www.hurstmere.org.uk/">www.hurstmere.org.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@hurstmere.org.uk">info@hurstmere.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	February 2018

## Information about this school

- Hurstmere is an academy convertor, a non-selective school in the London Borough of Bexley.
- The proportion of high-attaining pupils on entry is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The school uses three alternative providers, New Horizons, Safe School and Right Choice. There are currently five pupils at alternative provision.



## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in a range of subjects throughout the school. Inspectors reviewed pupils' work. They observed pupils' behaviour during breaktimes and lunchtimes, at lesson changeover times, and during registration.
- Documentation, policies and the school's practice were considered, with particular regard given to behaviour, bullying, safeguarding, welfare, and notes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, several members of the school staff and representatives of the governing body.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally and formally, including during visits to classrooms. Inspectors considered the views of 20 pupils who completed Ofsted's online survey.
- The inspection considered the views of 99 parents who replied to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey.
- Inspectors considered the views of 60 staff who completed Ofsted's online surveys.

## Inspection team

Sarah Parker, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Anne Murray-Hudson	Ofsted Inspector
Brenda Watson	Ofsted Inspector
Helen Matthews	Her Majesty's Inspector
Kim McWilliam	Ofsted Inspector

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