

Inspection of Holte School

Wheeler Street, Lozells, Birmingham, West Midlands B19 2EP

Inspection dates: 1–2 October 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Sixth-form provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school that does many things very well indeed, but there are important areas where it needs to improve.

A small number of pupils study away from the school. Leaders remove some of those in Year 11 from the school's roll. They should not do this. This is the reason that leadership requires improvement.

Pupils enjoy school and almost all attend very regularly. They feel safe and happy in school. Staff provide excellent care and support for pupils. The school is a welcoming, harmonious, multicultural community.

Leaders and staff have high expectations of all pupils. They want all pupils to achieve the best possible academic results and to be ready for life after school. For example, almost all pupils study at least one foreign language.

The school places as high a priority on developing pupils as young citizens as it does on academic success. It provides an exemplary range of activities and opportunities for pupils. These help pupils to develop self-confidence and prepare them well for later life.

Pupils behave well in lessons and at other times of the day. Most are keen to do well. They are polite and courteous. Staff tackle bullying, and other problems, quickly and well.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders do not follow government advice about how pupils who study away from the school, at alternative provision, should be registered. Leaders could not give inspectors a clear reason why they remove these pupils from the school roll in Year 11. There is no evidence that this practice benefits the pupils. It means that information the government publishes about the school is not accurate. Ofsted refers to this practice as 'off-rolling'. It should not happen. However, these pupils are well cared for, achieve good examination results and move on to college courses when they leave. The alternative provision is successful in preparing them for life after school.

Governors are very committed to the school. They carry out many of their duties carefully and well. The governing body lacks expertise in some areas, including secondary education. Governors do not understand the data the government publishes about the school. They rely too much on what leaders tell them, so they cannot challenge leaders about standards in different subjects.

In almost all subjects, staff plan pupils' learning well. Teaching helps pupils remember what they have been taught. Most teachers know their subjects well. They explain new ideas clearly and they check that pupils understand what they are

learning. Most teachers are passionate about their subject. They are keen for pupils to become equally passionate.

Pupils achieve well in many subjects. These include English, history, geography and religious education. In recent years, pupils have achieved less well in mathematics. However, the department has worked hard on ensuring that pupils understand and remember their work. This is now proving successful and pupils are learning well.

Pupils' achievement in science at the end of Year 11 remains a concern. It has been weak in recent years. This is mainly because the school has struggled to appoint science teachers. It currently has two vacancies. Several teachers fill in, teaching a little science beside their main subject.

Staff provide excellent support for pupils who need extra help. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well by teachers and other staff. They thrive in school as a result. Approximately 80% of pupils speak English as an additional language. Staff provide just the right amount of support for them.

The school's work to encourage pupils' wider development as young people is first class. An excellent tutor programme helps pupils learn about the importance of democracy and how the law works. They learn about people with different beliefs and the importance of respecting them. Pupils enjoy many clubs and activities. Leaders check that no one misses out on these. There are many activities and visits that take pupils away from the school and broaden their horizons.

The sixth form shares the strengths of the rest of the school. It is well led. Students enjoy their studies and most achieve well. Teachers provide expert teaching and high-quality support. Students take part in many activities. These include well-planned work experience and opportunities to volunteer in the local community. Effective careers education ensures that students are well prepared to leave school. Many move on to university.

The school's staff form a dedicated team. They are committed to doing the best for pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and respectful throughout the school. Staff appreciate the guidance and support that leaders provide. Leaders and governors are considerate of staff well-being. For example, they have taken several steps to reduce teachers' workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff understand the challenges that many of their pupils face. They are determined to do all they can to keep them safe. Teaching pupils to keep themselves safe and healthy is at the heart of all the school does. Staff teach pupils how to protect themselves from the dangers they may face in the local community. These

include gang violence and knife crime. Pupils learn about the importance of healthy relationships and what to do when they are anxious.

Staff are alert to the signs that pupils might need extra help, because leaders have trained them very well. Staff pass on any concerns they have, and leaders deal with these effectively. Strong links with many outside agencies mean that leaders ensure that pupils get the help they need, when they need it.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Most pupils attending alternative provision are currently removed from the school roll in January of Year 11. This means that they are not included in information the government publishes about the school, for example about pupils' achievement and post-16 destinations. This practice constitutes 'off-rolling', by Ofsted's definition, because it is not done in the pupils' best interests. It is counter to the government's guidance about the registration of pupils attending alternative provision. Leaders and governors should comply with government guidance about alternative provision and ensure that all decisions about pupils' registration are taken in the best interests of the pupils.
- One of the three statutory functions of governing bodies is to hold leaders to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils. Governors lack the knowledge and expertise to do this as effectively as they should at the moment. For example, governors do not scrutinise published performance data well and they do not understand the questions it raises about the quality of education in some subjects. The governing body should ensure that it possesses sufficient knowledge and expertise to be able to carry out this statutory function effectively.
- Standards of achievement in science at the end of Year 11 have been weak for several years. The organisation and sequencing of learning is appropriate, but teaching is not consistently helping pupils to know more and remember more of what they have been taught. Difficulties in recruiting science teachers have contributed significantly to this issue. Leaders should ensure that teaching in science supports pupils' learning as well as it does in almost all other subjects.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	103509
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10058650
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,138
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	186
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Christine Hardy
Headteacher	Jaswinder Sohal
Website	www.holte.bham.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	26–27 September 2012

Information about this school

- The school makes use of two alternative providers for a small number of pupils. These are Titan St George's Academy and Titan Aston Academy.
- More than half of pupils are disadvantaged. This is well above average.
- Approximately four fifths of pupils speak English as an additional language.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

- We met with the headteacher, the four deputy headteachers, one of whom is the designated safeguarding lead, three assistant headteachers and three governors. The lead inspector spoke over the telephone to the executive headteacher of

Titan St George's and Titan Aston Academies and the chair of the panel that oversees alternative provision for the north-west of Birmingham.

- We talked to many pupils about their learning and their attitudes to, and opinions of, the school. We observed pupils at breaktime and lunchtime and as they moved around the school.
- We scrutinised several documents, including those relating to safeguarding and child protection. We checked that the single central record contained all required information.
- As part of this inspection, we paid particular attention to English, mathematics, science, history and languages. In these subjects, we met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, scrutinised pupils' work and spoke with teachers and pupils.

Inspection team

Alun Williams, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Andrew Madden

Ofsted Inspector

Gwen Onyon

Ofsted Inspector

Rob Steed

Ofsted Inspector

Julie Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

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 <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

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 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2019