

Inspection of Healing Science Academy

Low Road, Healing, Grimsby, Lincolnshire DN41 7QD

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 April 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Ofsted has not previously inspected Healing Science Academy as an academy school under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Most pupils are happy at Healing Science Academy. They feel well cared for. The trust's vision of 'success and happiness for every child' threads through the school. However, the expectations of what pupils can achieve vary between teachers. This impacts on the quality of education that pupils receive. Where expectations are high, pupils are highly engaged and achieve well. Where expectations are lower, pupils do not make consistently strong progress through the curriculum.

Pupils are polite and friendly. Most pupils behave well in lessons and around school. Pupils enjoy socialising with their friends. Bullying does happen, but it is rare. Where it happens, leaders deal with it effectively. Pupils feel safe. They are confident that staff would help them if they had any concerns.

Pupils discuss a range of issues as part of a planned tutor programme. This helps them to develop an understanding of the wider world. However, many pupils do not have a strong knowledge of different religions. Some older pupils are concerned that their peers may be unaware of different protected characteristics, including different faiths.

Pupils appreciate the modern buildings and the resources they can use. As restrictions due to COVID-19 have eased, there are increasing numbers of extra-curricular clubs available to pupils once again. Pupils enjoy showing senior school leaders their work on 'praise Friday'. Pupils choose which work they would like to showcase. At the time of inspection, a group of pupils proudly presented their poetry recital which had formed part of an English competition entry.

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

Until very recently, leaders, including those responsible for governance, had not recognised that standards at the school had been declining for several years. Leaders and governors had an overly positive picture of the school. Leaders did not address key weaknesses. For example, many subject leaders did not have the guidance or support needed to develop and monitor the curriculum in their subjects. Recently appointed trust leaders identified these weaknesses and have strengthened senior leadership. Together with the new interim executive board (IEB), senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the steps needed to improve the school. They are taking the right steps to bring about much-needed change. Much of this work is new. Even so, the impact of recent actions is increasingly apparent.

In most subjects, curriculum planning is logical and thorough. The important knowledge that leaders want pupils to know and understand is clearly identified. Careful thought is given to common misconceptions that pupils can have. This helps teachers to address these in the classroom.

Some teachers do not have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve. There is a sense of complacency in many lessons. Many pupils are reluctant to answer questions and do not fully take part in class discussions. A significant number of pupils are capable of achieving more.

Pupils at the earliest stages of learning to read are quickly identified on entry to the school. They are well supported by trained staff through carefully planned interventions. As a result, pupils quickly learn to read. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported in lessons by teaching assistants who work hard to help pupils with SEND to access the curriculum alongside their peers. However, some of the pupil support plans used by staff are not up to date. Some of the information is not sufficient to help teachers ensure that all pupils' needs are met.

In personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, pupils' knowledge of some aspects of the curriculum is not sufficiently strong. Many pupils do not have a strong understanding of different faiths and cultures. Older pupils, including those with SEND, benefit from the support they receive from a careers adviser. There is a clear timetable that sets out different opportunities for all pupils to learn about the world of work across the year. However, younger pupils do not learn how individual subjects are relevant to different careers. As a result, some pupils find it difficult to choose their GCSE options.

The majority of pupils behave well. Leaders analyse behaviour records carefully. This enables them to help those few pupils who need additional support to behave well. Leaders are implementing a new behaviour policy. Staff welcome this. Pupils say that 'it is much stricter in school now'. They appreciate the calmness that leaders are bringing about.

Trust leaders took the decision to disband the previous local governing body. A new IEB has been formed which is responsible for governance. Members of the IEB support and challenge school leaders effectively. The IEB checks carefully that decisions taken by leaders are the right ones, and in the best interests of the pupils. Some parents remain concerned about the drop in standards that they have witnessed. They have not always been kept well informed about changes that have happened. This has increased the sense of frustration that some feel. Leaders know that there is work to do to address these concerns.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive appropriate, timely and relevant information about local safeguarding concerns. Staff know the signs that suggest a child may be at risk of harm. They know how to report any concerns and do so promptly. Leaders regularly check that staff's safeguarding knowledge is up to date. Vulnerable pupils and those who may be at risk of harm are carefully monitored. Pupils are kept safe.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, including online. They understand how to keep themselves physically healthy and the importance of mental well-being.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve vary across the school. Some teachers do not expect enough of pupils. As a result, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that all adults in school have a clear understanding of leaders' high ambitions for pupils and that these are realised through the teaching of the curriculum.
- The design of the PSHE curriculum does not support pupils to remember important knowledge over time. Pupils do not regularly revisit key concepts. As a result, many pupils do not remember what they have been taught about different faiths and cultures. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is designed so that pupils learn and remember the important information that leaders have identified.
- The support for a minority of pupils with SEND is variable. This is because staff do not always get sufficient information and guidance on strategies to help them to meet pupils' needs. Leaders should ensure that all staff have up-to-date information about pupils with SEND so that they can accurately and consistently meet the needs of all pupils.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 are the school and you are 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	136277
Local authority	North East Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10229058
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	976
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jonathan Lovelle
Principal	Donna Fitzgerald
Website	www.healing-school.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Healing Science Academy is part of Harbour Learning Trust. This is the first section 5 inspection since the school became an academy in September 2010.
- A new principal took up post in April 2022.
- The board of trustees delegate some monitoring functions to a local governing board. The local governing board was disbanded in January 2022 and a new IEB was formed.
- A small number of pupils attend registered alternative provision at Sevenhills Academy.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the principal, senior leaders and curriculum leaders. The lead inspector met with the chair of the IEB, the chair of the trust and the trust's chief executive officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, science, history and physical education. Inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons and scrutinised pupils' books. Inspectors held meetings with staff and spoke to pupils about their work. Curriculum plans for religious education, PSHE, drama and music were reviewed.
- Inspectors met with pupils both formally and informally. Inspectors observed social times, including lunchtime, and discussed with pupils their experience of school.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including safeguarding records, and reviewed the systems for keeping pupils safe.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents through the 144 responses to Ofsted's parental survey, Ofsted Parent View, and through telephone conversations held with five parents.
- The views of staff were considered from meetings held with staff and from the responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Eleanor Belfield, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
David Pridding	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Fletcher	Ofsted Inspector
Gordon Watts	Ofsted Inspector

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