

Inspection of a good school: Hayesfield Girls School

Upper Oldfield Park, Bath, Somerset BA2 3LA

Inspection dates:

15 and 16 November 2022

Outcome

Hayesfield Girls School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's motto of 'achieving ambitions' is evident throughout the curriculum and through the wider experiences of the pupils. Leaders have high ambitions for pupils. Pupils learn about powerful female role models. They identify the qualities and achievements of those individuals. A culture of high aspiration and expectation for all encourages pupils to succeed.

Pupils work hard. In lessons, they focus and take pride in their learning. Between lessons, pupils commute between the two sites in a calm and purposeful way. Pupils say that bullying is rare and leaders resolve it when it occurs. Leaders promote anti-bullying. For example, sixth-form photography students run a photo booth for pupils to take positive images of friendship.

Pupils are proud of their school. They enjoy making use of the space across the two sites, such as reading in the 'book eyrie' or putting on a showcase in the theatre. Pupils say they have lots of opportunities. There are approximately 90 extracurricular activities and clubs. All pupils from Year 7 to Year 13 attend at least one, with many attending several. For example, pupils ran a conference to voice their concerns about climate change. A wide range of trips and visiting speakers for all year groups support the curriculum.

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

Leaders have designed a well-sequenced and ambitious curriculum for all pupils. Pupils follow the 'golden threads' of learning mapped across five years. In some parts of the curriculum, this is embedded. Teachers are explicit about the knowledge they want pupils to learn. As a result, pupils build and increase their knowledge over time. They have frequent opportunities to reflect on what they have learned and apply that to new learning.

There is a cycle of assessment and feedback that pupils use to improve their work. As a result, pupils know what it is they need to do to get better.

From key stage 4, pupils study a broad range of subjects, including Latin, sociology and a wide range of vocational courses. A very high number of pupils achieve the English Baccalaureate subjects. The wide range of subjects continue into the sixth form and many pupils choose to continue their key stage 5 studies at the school.

Literacy is at the heart of the curriculum. The 'Achievement First curriculum' supports pupils with additional literacy teaching. Leaders prioritise reading for all pupils. Pupils understand the expectation to read frequently and how it benefits their learning. They read daily and share their reading choices with teachers and other pupils. Pupils who are in the early stages of learning to read receive support. A phonics programme helps pupils to secure their reading.

Leaders provide staff with guidance and training about pupils' needs. Most pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive the support they need. However, sometimes, teachers do not provide intervention in a timely way. This means that support for pupils in lessons is sometimes not as effective as it could otherwise be.

The wider curriculum provides an exceptionally broad range of opportunities and experiences for all pupils. There is a detailed careers programme for all pupils. Each year group has its own careers day. Pupils hear from guest speakers and employers. Sixth-form students visit universities as well as learning about apprenticeship courses. Pupils in all year groups take on many leadership roles, such as the school council, ambassadors or 'library fledglings'. Students in the sixth form play an active role in the rest of the school and in the community. Students who join the school in the sixth form say they chose it for the broad experience it provides. There is a well-planned personal, social and health education curriculum for all year groups. Pupils learn about respect, tolerance and difference. Leaders prioritise mental health and provide support and guidance to pupils.

As a result of joining the trust, staff have further opportunities for professional development and career progression. Teachers in the early stages of their career receive high-quality training and support. Some staff have concerns about their workload. Staff say leaders listen to their concerns. Governors have a strong knowledge of the school's priorities. This enables them to provide appropriate challenge and support to leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The safeguarding team is extensive. They have a high level of training and expertise. Staff receive updated training and are confident in identifying and reporting concerns. Leaders ensure that all necessary checks are in place when recruiting new staff.

Leaders have a strong understanding of local concerns. They access a wide range of external agencies to support vulnerable pupils and their families. Safeguarding and pastoral care support are visible and accessible to pupils across both sites. As a result, pupils say they are confident to speak with a trusted adult or seek support with ease.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers' understanding of the revised curriculum is not yet fully established from Year 7 to Year 13. As a result, pupils do not always learn the curriculum consistently well. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum becomes fully established across all year groups.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2017.

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.

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

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| Unique reference number | 136966 |
| Local authority | Bath and North East Somerset Council |
| Inspection number | 10227169 |
| Type of school | Secondary Comprehensive |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 18 |
| Gender of pupils | Girls |
| Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 1446 |
| Of which, number on roll in the sixth form | 310 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Stuart Warrener |
| Headteacher | Philip White |
| Website | www.hayesfield.com |
| Date of previous inspection | 8 and 9 March 2017 |

Information about this school

- The school joined the Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership in 2021. There are 10 secondary schools, one special school and 17 primary schools within the trust.
- The school uses no alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 11 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- 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 met with the headteacher, members of the trust, members of the governing body, the special educational needs coordinator and other senior leaders, teachers and pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English, mathematics, and design and technology. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader, examined school records and discussed safeguarding policies and processes.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors also viewed the responses to the pupil survey and the responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Rachel Hesketh, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Will Morgan

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