

Inspection of Holte School

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

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 October 2023

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Sixth-form provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Holte School welcomes everyone. It is a calm and safe environment in which pupils learn well. Pupils treat each other and adults with evident respect. They are confident that staff will resolve any disagreements. Staff provide an exceptional quality of pastoral care.

The school sets high expectations for pupils' learning and conduct. The school has established a consistent approach to managing pupils' behaviour, and everyone understands it. This enables pupils to recognise the impact of what they do. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Attendance is above the national average, and has risen steadily.

The school pays great attention to developing pupils' character. Pupils learn about different cultures and about world events. Staff teach pupils how to manage setbacks, and offer them lots of opportunities to develop skills in leadership. Many pupils take part in clubs at lunchtime or after school.

Leaders have planned an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers know their subjects well. They make sure that work builds on what pupils already know and can do.

The inclusive sixth form offers a range of good opportunities. Students in the sixth form particularly like the personalised help they get with their work.

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

The school has planned an ambitious, broad curriculum. At key stage 3, pupils follow all the subjects in the national curriculum. The large majority go on to follow a course leading to GCSEs in English, mathematics, modern foreign languages, humanities and science. Leaders plan learning so that pupils add to what they already know. They ensure that the content pupils learn reflects pupils' varied cultures.

Leaders identify those who join the school with weaker reading skills. They provide these pupils with extra help, so that they catch up well. Teachers promote reading, and make sure that pupils across the school read widely in different subjects.

Teachers have a secure grasp of their subjects. Teachers pay good attention to the different knowledge and skills that make up each subject. They help pupils to remember what they have learned by testing, for example, their knowledge of previous learning at the start of the lesson. Teachers check on pupils' learning and, in general, help them to address any misconceptions. However, in the main school, there are inconsistencies in how effectively the curriculum is delivered, both within and between subjects. In some subjects, teachers do not make best use of assessment in order to determine what pupils need to learn next. Although pupils

achieve well, there are inconsistencies in pupils' academic success by the end of key stage 4.

Staff are ambitious for pupils with SEND. Leaders identify their additional needs accurately, and provide clear guidance for staff on how best to meet them. Pupils with SEND follow the same curriculum as their peers, and learn well.

Pupils behave very well in lessons because there is a clear understanding of what the school expects. Pupils concentrate hard, take pride in their work and listen carefully although, in some classrooms, they are reluctant to actively contribute to the learning. In the sixth form, students attend well and use their study time wisely.

Staff know pupils and their families very well. They provide high-quality support for those experiencing difficulties, expertly drawing on help from other agencies. Leaders have planned an impressive programme of personal development that teaches pupils about healthy relationships and how to stay safe. Pupils learn about the wider world and how to be good citizens. In particular, they come to respect themselves and others, and understand how to resolve conflict. The school has received national recognition for this visionary work.

The school delivers a programme of careers guidance that builds through the key stages. Staff provide individual pupils, and students in the sixth form, with impartial advice about education, employment and apprenticeships. However, the school does not ensure that pupils in all key stages get some information they need early enough. This means that their experience of the world of work is somewhat limited.

Leaders make sure that staff are well trained for the jobs that they do. Less-experienced staff receive effective support when they join the school. Staff say that leaders take their workload into consideration. Leaders understand what they need to do to improve the effectiveness with which the curriculum is delivered across the school. Nevertheless, there is a lack of clarity about how leaders intend to put their ideas into action.

Recent appointments to the board of governors have strengthened its capacity to hold leaders to account.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There is inconsistency in the effectiveness with which the curriculum is implemented within and across subjects. As a result, too much variation remains in classroom practice and in the impact of the curriculum on pupils' outcomes. The school should establish how it will use its monitoring and evaluation processes to identify the actions it needs to take in order to secure high-quality delivery of the curriculum across the school.
- The school's programme of careers education, information and guidance does not provide pupils and students in the sixth form with some information early enough. Their experience of the world of work has been restricted. The school should ensure that this guidance is provided at an appropriate time so students benefit fully from these experiences.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	103509
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10268342
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	1,168
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	128
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jane Humpherson
Headteacher	Simon Adams
Website	http://www.holte.bham.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	1 and 2 October 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school provides full-time and part-time alternative provision for seven pupils at four registered providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The headteacher joined the school in September 2023.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. Meetings were held with subject leaders and the special educational needs coordinator. Inspectors also met with a range of other staff, including early career teachers.
- The chair and two governors met with the lead inspector.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils at social times, and spoke with groups of pupils more formally.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including leaders' plans to improve the school, records of governance and the school's attendance and behaviour records.
- The inspection team took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's questionnaire for parents, including free-text comments. Inspectors also considered correspondence and responses to Ofsted's surveys for staff and for pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, history, modern foreign languages and science. In these subjects, inspectors considered the curriculum, visited lessons and scrutinised pupils' work. Inspectors also met with pupils and with teachers to discuss learning in these subjects. Inspectors also discussed with leaders the curriculum in some other subjects.
- An inspector spoke by telephone to a leader from the registered alternative provision used by school leaders.

Inspection team

Martin Spoor, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Liz Todd	Ofsted Inspector
Stewart Tait	Ofsted Inspector
Ed Leighton	Ofsted Inspector
Graeme Rudland	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 2023