

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Heron Hall Academy

Queensway, Ponders End, Enfield, Middlesex EN3 4SA

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 October 2024

Outcome

Heron Hall Academy has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Arthur Barzey. This school is part of North Star Community Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Marino Charalambous, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Donald Graham.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils value the diversity celebrated at Heron Hall. All pupils, and students in the sixth form, are welcomed to this highly inclusive community, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils are safe and know that they can speak with staff about any worries they may have. Well-trained staff ensure that pupils get the help they need. Pupils are encouraged to support those in their local community. This includes serving breakfasts to nearby elderly residents and working towards the 'Diana award'.

Pupils follow a carefully considered curriculum, including in the sixth form. They are well supported to build up their knowledge and skills over time. This is because lessons are typically purposeful. Pupils produce work of good quality and achieve well, including in national examinations. Pupils behave well in the majority of lessons and understand the rules and behaviour systems in place. They appreciate the work the school does to promote positive behaviour around the school. Incidents of bullying are rare.

Pupils, including students in the sixth form, take part in an ambitious range of additional activities to further enhance their learning. These include robotics club, book club and talks with a criminal barrister. Pupils enjoy regular visits beyond their local area, for example to Kew Gardens and the Houses of Parliament.

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

The curriculum matches the ambition and scope of what is expected nationally. A recent review of the curriculum has ensured that each subject is carefully sequenced. Teachers regularly use activities to recall previous learning. As a result, most pupils are developing a sound body of knowledge that builds on their prior learning. In English, for example, pupils use their prior understanding of language structures, techniques and context to analyse increasingly complex texts. Most lessons are designed to follow the ambitious planned curriculum. Leaders have rightly identified that in a small number of subjects, teaching does not consistently focus on the most important ideas. As a result, some pupils do not build the knowledge and understanding that they need in these subjects to tackle more challenging ideas.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge and present knowledge clearly. Teachers routinely check pupils' understanding. This ensures that, in most cases, any misconceptions are swiftly identified and corrected.

Systems are in place to identify pupils with additional needs. This includes pupils with SEND and those who may be at the earliest stages of learning English. Leaders ensure that appropriate information and strategies are shared with staff. This helps pupils to access the same curriculum as their peers. As a result, pupils with SEND are typically well supported to build up their knowledge over time. Systems are in place to identify those who may need more help with their reading. These pupils receive additional support, and this ensures that most read with increasing accuracy, fluency and confidence. The gap between those who are disadvantaged and those who are not is closing and smaller than the gap nationally.

Leaders have high expectations of behaviour and attendance. As a result, they have made considerable changes to the behaviour system. Pupils have benefited from these improvements, which continue to embed. Comprehensive tracking ensures that staff identify any patterns in behaviour. Most instances of low-level disruption in lessons are managed swiftly. When pupils do not meet the school's high expectations of behaviour, a package of support is swiftly put in place. At times, including when pupils move between lessons, behaviour around the school is less well managed. The school is aware of this, and steps have been taken to ensure that all staff reinforce the same expectations of pupils' behaviour.

Subject specialists deliver a well-planned personal, social, health and economic education curriculum. For example, pupils learn about healthy and respectful relationships. Pupils, and students in the sixth form, have multiple opportunities to prepare for their next stage of education, employment or training. They are supported to learn about and engage positively with a range of employers and further education providers, for example during work experience placements and the annual careers fair.

School and trust leaders work together with the highly knowledgeable governors and trustees to review the school's effectiveness. As a result, they have an accurate

understanding of what is working well and have identified appropriate priorities for further development.

Staff, including those at the start of their careers, enjoy working at the school and know that their voices are heard. They appreciate their opportunities for professional development. Staff are positive about the efforts made by leaders to manage workload and well-being effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- At times, the agreed behaviour policy is not consistently reinforced when pupils are moving around the building. As a result, behaviour at these times does not match leaders' high expectations. The school should ensure that all staff consistently apply the school's behaviour policy.
- Some subjects are at an earlier stage of design. In these areas, teaching does not consistently support pupils to learn and remember more. The school should ensure that the taught curriculum matches leaders' ambition for all pupils, including those who are vulnerable.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in June 2015.

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 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	139599
Local authority	Enfield
Inspection number	10345958
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,243
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	115
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Donald Graham
CEO of the trust	Marino Charalambous
Headteacher	Arthur Barzey
Website	www.heronhallacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	29 January 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The sixth form opened in September 2023.
- The school uses two registered alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The inspectors met with members of the trustees, governing body and a representative from the North Star Community Trust.
- The inspectors focused inspection activity on the following groups of subjects: science, mathematics and social sciences, and modern foreign languages, English and business studies. For each group of subjects, the inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.
- 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 gathered the views of pupils, parents and carers, and staff through both discussions and responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

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