

Inspection of a good school: Hazelwick School

Hazelwick School Close, Three Bridges, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 1SX

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 June 2022

Outcome

Hazelwick School continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a section 5 inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a section 5 inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Hazelwick is a very successful academy. It is both welcoming and ambitious. Leaders value community and encourage high-quality learning. As a result, pupils from diverse backgrounds work extremely well together to achieve very high standards. Many go on to top universities and high-profile careers.

The school motto, 'effort achieves', pervades all aspects of school life. As one sixth former explained, 'If you make the effort, the staff will support you every step of the way.'

This is a kind and caring school. Relationships are remarkably strong between staff and pupils. A visitor can see and feel the shared values of respect and responsibility in and out of lessons. Pupils respond well and their behaviour is excellent. Bullying is extremely rare and challenged robustly if it happens. School leaders have ensured that this is a very safe and inspiring place to learn.

There is a remarkable sense of community. Staff encourage pupils to join in all sorts of clubs and visits. Although interrupted by the pandemic, extra-curricular activities have quickly started up again. Older students take a lead in fundraising for local charities. The school is buzzing with different activities throughout the day.

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

Pupils follow a very ambitious and demanding curriculum. School leaders ensure a good spread of subjects for all. Pupils get a very wide choice of examination courses in key stage 4 and in the sixth form. Expectations are set very high. Subject leaders design their courses expertly. They select the most useful topics to study, in the best order, so that pupils gain very solid foundations for later learning.

Teachers are real specialists. They have exceptionally strong subject knowledge and use teaching methods expertly to bring subjects to life. Learning is skilfully crafted so pupils remember the facts they need more easily. Teachers check very carefully what pupils know and how well they understand the work. Misconceptions or gaps are identified and corrected.

Pupils are confident learners. They focus especially hard in lessons and use the time extremely well. This means that learning is business-like and very rarely disrupted by off-task behaviour. Pupils remember facts and ideas with ease. They construct intelligent, independent ideas. Sixth form students, in particular, recognise how this has prepared them very well for more advanced study and adult life.

The quality of pupils' and students' work is enhanced by the depth of their understanding. Key stage 3 pupils quickly caught up ground lost due to the pandemic. Key stage 4 pupils explore topics that go above and beyond their examination courses at GCSE. Sixth-form work frequently includes university-level topics that deepen students' understanding.

School leaders ensure that reading has a very high profile. They run many successful programmes to encourage reading for all and carefully check on pupils whose reading is falling behind. Pupils see reading as very important. For example, pupil reading ambassadors can be heard talking about the book of the month in the playground during their lunch break. Sixth-form students buddy with younger pupils to get them reading. Pupils at an early stage of reading benefit from highly skilled, specialist support. These pupils make swift progress to read more fluently. Many of them can describe how they are now reading for pleasure.

Pupils have extensive opportunities outside the classroom. School leaders check who takes part to make sure that all groups of pupils are included. They encourage pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to participate. Leaders provide extra funds so that school visits are open to disadvantaged pupils. Sixth-form students take a prominent role in extra-curricular activities, leading sessions for younger pupils. Former students return to school to share their experiences of the adult world or of higher education. These visits have been inspirational to younger pupils. Assemblies, tutor programmes and many lessons successfully raise pupils' awareness of social, moral and religious issues.

Pupils with SEND are very well supported. Teachers diligently flag up any concerns and leaders are quick to follow them up. The quality of help is extremely strong. Staff in the specialist provision ably support pupils who have a hearing impairment. Pupils with SEND gain knowledge and skills alongside their peers.

Governors and school leaders champion staff well-being. Staff at all levels speak very highly of the support and professional development they receive. They love working in this school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of keeping pupils safe in the school. A large, well-trained safeguarding team is extremely well led. Outside agencies provide extra help if it is needed. The school enjoys a justified reputation in the local area for high-quality care of its pupils.

Safeguarding checks are thorough and timely. Governors and school leaders are scrupulous when recruiting staff.

The school makes its pupils aware of potential safety risks. The curriculum keeps them well informed. Pupils value the help they get from the pastoral team. As one pupil said, 'they are always there for us'.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2012.

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	137263
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10203117
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
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	1868
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	351
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mrs R. Bowron
Headteacher	Ms Ann Fearon
Website	www.hazelwick.org
Date of previous inspection	10 May 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a specially resourced provision that accommodates four pupils with a hearing impairment.
- The school uses two registered alternative providers for a very small number of pupils.

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 and senior leaders. The lead inspector also met governors and trustees.

- The lead inspector spoke by telephone with senior representatives of the alternative providers used by the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, science, Spanish, history and design 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 also spoke to curriculum leaders in some other subjects.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils and sixth-form students drawn from across the school.
- The lead inspector scrutinised safeguarding arrangements, including the school's central record of employment checks. Inspectors spoke to a variety of staff to check how well safeguarding referrals and systems work.
- Inspectors observed pupils around the school site during lunchtimes and at break. They visited tutor times and the school library.
- The inspection team considered the views given by parents, staff and pupils through Ofsted surveys.
- The lead inspector took into account school documents and other published information from the school's website.

Inspection team

Keith Pailthorpe, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Beverley Murtagh	Ofsted Inspector
Patrick Harty	Ofsted Inspector

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