

Heathcote School and Science College

Normanton Park, Chingford, London E4 6ES

Inspection dates

26–27 September 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and other senior leaders are ambitious for their pupils and provide strong strategic leadership.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and the areas that still need development. They challenge and support leaders effectively to drive the shared vision.
- Pupils report that they feel safe in school, bullying is rare and they have confidence that staff will deal with any concerns they may have.
- The quality of teaching is good. However, there is still a degree of inconsistency across the school and weaker practice in some subject areas.
- Pupils of all abilities have opportunities to develop their personal and social skills through a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- Leaders and teachers check pupils' progress regularly. Pupils identified as at risk of falling behind receive additional support and catch up quickly.
- Typically, pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are courteous and respectful.
- Overall, pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities make good progress. The progress of disadvantaged pupils is in line with their peers.
- The sixth form is good. Sixth-form students attend regularly. Generally, students make good progress in both academic and vocational courses, although progress dipped in the 2018 public examinations.
- Generally, most-able pupils do not make as strong progress as other pupils because the teaching they receive is not tailored closely enough to their needs.
- Pupils' attendance, although improving, is below the national average.
- Leaders have introduced several new management systems in this school year. They need to regularly review their impact to ensure that they continue to improve pupil outcomes.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching across all key stages is of a consistently high standard to challenge all pupils, including the most able, to make at least good progress from their starting points.
- Ensure that the new systems in place, including those to improve the quality of teaching and learning and behaviour, are regularly reviewed at all levels to ensure the highest possible outcomes for pupils.
- Raise pupils' attendance to be at least in line with the national average.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has successfully developed a culture in which staff and pupils have high expectations of themselves and others. This is clearly embraced by the new senior and middle leaders.
- Areas for improvement from the last inspection are being robustly tackled.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and areas that still need to improve further. They recognise that provisional GCSE outcomes in 2018 have improved from 2017 but are still not good enough in some areas, such as the progress of the most able pupils. Effective action is already being taken by leaders to address these weaker areas.
- Middle leaders clearly understand the school's priorities. They are confident and have the necessary skills to drive forward improvements in their areas of responsibility.
- Teachers speak highly of the many opportunities they are given to develop their practice. Staff who are new to the profession feel valued, supported and enjoy their work.
- Pupil premium funding and the Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up funding are used well. Year 7 pupils who join the school behind their peers in reading and writing are making clear progress. Pupils who are disadvantaged are making strong progress.
- The curriculum provides a wide range of courses, including work-related subjects. Recent changes to the programmes of study at key stage 4 have enabled pupils to have a wider choice of subjects, which more adequately support their learning needs. Leaders are reviewing the impact of the curriculum, to ensure that it contributes successfully to pupils' progress, behaviour, personal development and welfare.
- British values are strongly promoted through assemblies and tutor-time activities. Pupils learn about other faiths, cultures and equal opportunities. Pupils spoke about the inclusive nature of the school and how diversity is welcomed.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is evident throughout the school. Pupils participate in a wide range of artistic, musical and sporting activities. An assembly and tutorial programme helps prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders have embarked upon many new initiatives this year. Leaders need to review the impact of the initiatives to ensure that they are sustainable and appropriate.

Governance of the school

- Current governors are determined to ensure that all pupils achieve the best they can. They are professional, knowledgeable and bring a range of useful skills to the governing body. They have embraced their roles enthusiastically and are focused on driving forward improvement.
- They are clear about their statutory responsibilities. They already provide a strong level of challenge and support to senior leaders.

- Governors understand their responsibility in relation to safeguarding pupils and have received appropriate training. They audit the school's safeguarding processes by checking records, visiting the school regularly and reviewing practice.
- Governors are mindful of the health and well-being of the school community.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective and meet statutory requirements.
- Leaders ensure that there is a strong safeguarding culture in the school and that all staff know and understand their responsibilities in relation to keeping pupils safe. Staff receive appropriate safeguarding training, including the 'Prevent' duty and how to identify pupils who may be at risk from exploitation.
- Working relationships between staff who have specific safeguarding responsibilities and outside agencies are strong in order to safeguard pupils' welfare. Staff work effectively with parents, carers and external agencies when pupils need support.
- Pupils said that they feel safe and are sure that any concerns they raise will be dealt with swiftly. They spoke with confidence about the many ways they are taught to keep safe, for example when finding themselves in difficult situations.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders' recent actions to improve the quality of teaching and learning are having a positive impact across a wide range of subjects.
- Most teachers are well organised and support pupils to make good progress over time. Teachers are aware of disadvantaged pupils who may need extra support or intervention, and this is provided.
- Pupils engage well with activities where teachers plan and provide tasks that meet their individual learning needs. This is particularly evident in English, mathematics and geography.
- Teachers have a secure subject knowledge and use questioning skilfully, which helps to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. However, a few teachers do not challenge the most able pupils as much as they could. This leads to some not making the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers' feedback to pupils on how to improve their work follows the school's policy. As a result, most teachers provide pupils with useful guidance, which enables pupils to correct their mistakes and develop their learning further.
- Pupils' homework is used well to engage pupils and extend their learning beyond the classroom.
- The school has a clear assessment policy and pupils are assessed several times throughout the school year. Those pupils who fall behind are given additional support to make improved progress.

- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are taught well because teachers are aware of their individual learning needs. Teaching assistants are well deployed and support pupils' learning sensitively and effectively.
- Pupils read well, the majority with accuracy and fluency. Written work is well developed because opportunities for extended writing are in place across the curriculum.
- There are still a few areas of weaker teaching within subject areas, for example in science and creative arts. This teaching does not enable pupils to deepen their understanding, which limits their progress. Leaders are providing support to these teachers, which is beginning to have a positive impact upon the quality of provision.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school prepares pupils for life in modern Britain, and includes using assemblies and the curriculum. For example, pupils learn about the British values of democracy and the rule of law through discussions in history.
- Pupils receive effective and impartial careers advice and guidance, which supports them when they make important decisions about their futures. Pupils value the individual careers interviews and work experience opportunities in Year 10.
- Pupils have numerous opportunities to develop leadership skills and contribute to school life as members of the school council, prefects and anti-bullying ambassadors. Pupils develop a strong sense of individual and community responsibility through these roles.
- All pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school and know how to keep safe, for example online. They are clear that staff in school would help them if they have any problems. There are very few instances of bullying and pupils said that if it does happen, it is dealt with effectively.
- The response to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, was very positive about the school. One parent typically said: 'Heathcote is just what I want in a school. Strong teaching and management, fantastic facilities, clear behaviour policy and a nurturing environment. Very happy indeed.'

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders have put new systems in place to help teachers manage the behaviour of pupils effectively. The vast majority of pupils feel that behaviour, both in and out of lessons, has improved significantly this year. Pupils are clear about the school's expectations of their conduct when in school. Leaders are mindful that the behaviour strategy will need to evolve to enable pupils to self-regulate their behaviour.

- Pupils are very well mannered, courteous and respectful when speaking to staff and visitors to the school. This contributes strongly to the calm and orderly environment in the school.
- The school has recently introduced an internal inclusion unit to reduce the number of exclusions. Effective pastoral systems are in place, which are supporting pupils to manage their behaviour effectively. As a result, the number of pupils who are excluded from school is rapidly decreasing, although the number of exclusions remains above the national average.
- Whole-school attendance is below the national average but is improving well. Strategies to secure good attendance are having a positive impact because the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school is reducing. However, the school recognises that there is still more to be done to ensure good attendance and improve punctuality to school in the morning.
- Pupils who attend alternative provision attend regularly and their progress is closely monitored.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2018, GCSE public examinations indications are that pupils' attainment remains in line with national averages and that pupil progress has improved from the previous year.
- Results in 2018 show that overall progress for disadvantaged pupils has improved considerably and is in line with their peers. In addition, results in 2018 show that overall progress for pupils with lower ability is above national averages.
- In 2018 GCSE examinations, the progress of pupils in mathematics has dipped after being a strength of the school. Leaders have taken action to address this dip in performance, and the school's assessment information shows that, overall, current pupils are making good progress.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make similarly good progress compared with their peers, regardless of their starting points.
- The progress of the most able pupils in Year 11 in 2017 was below the national averages for other pupils. Results in 2018 show that overall progress for most-able pupils has improved. The school's current assessment information suggests the difference between the progress of most-able and other pupils is diminishing, but the progress of the most able group remains a key priority for improvement.
- Information provided by the school shows that pupils' progress in key stage 4 continues to improve. There is evidence in pupils' work that outcomes are improving, particularly in science, mathematics, humanities and PE.
- In key stage 3, in most subjects, most pupils are reaching or exceeding their targets.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- The leadership of the sixth form is good. Leaders have an accurate understanding of its strengths and areas that need improving.
- The quality of teaching in the sixth form is good. Most teachers plan effectively for the needs of the students. Across a range of subjects, the majority of students are confident in their learning. The high quality of students' written work reflects their commitment to their studies.
- Feedback provided to students is detailed and in line with school policy. In the sixth-form study areas visited during the inspection, students were demonstrating maturity in their study habits.
- Students enjoy the sixth form, attend well and are positive about the high level of support they receive from staff.
- In 2018, student outcomes are not as strong as in 2017. In 2017, students' progress on A-level courses was above the national average. Progress on vocational courses was well above the national average. Leaders are aware that the progress students were making was not checked effectively, which led to some individuals underperforming.
- There are many different courses available in the sixth-form curriculum. However, leaders are in the process of reviewing the curriculum to ensure that the programmes of study available meet the needs of all students effectively.
- Safeguarding is effective in the sixth form and students feel safe. Staff and external agencies provide students with information and support them to become independent young adults. However, some students would welcome more specific guidance and support about managing risks they face in their local community.
- Sixth form students take part in a wide range of enrichment activities that enable them to develop their interests and skills, including those of leadership. These include sports, volunteering and performing arts events.
- Students receive helpful careers information about university applications, apprenticeships and employment opportunities. More students than the national average go on to higher education or apprenticeships when they leave school.

School details

Unique reference number	103097
Local authority	London Borough of Waltham Forest
Inspection number	10052844

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,121
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	342
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Amanda Roper
Headteacher	Emma Hillman
Telephone number	020 8498 5110
Website	www.heathcoteschool.com
Email address	heathcote.school@heathcote.waltham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	January 2018

Information about this school

- Heathcote is a maintained, non-selective school in the London Borough of Waltham Forest.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is in line with the national average.
- The school uses three alternative providers: Burnside, Hawkswood and Waltham Forest College. There are currently 10 pupils at alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in a range of subjects throughout the school. Inspectors also reviewed pupils' work. They observed pupils' behaviour during break and lunchtimes, at lesson changeover times, in assembly and during registration.
- Documentation, policies and the school's practice were scrutinised, with particular regard to behaviour, bullying, safeguarding, welfare, and health and safety.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the governors and several members of the school staff.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally and formally, including during visits to classrooms.
- The inspection considered the views of 34 parents who replied to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey.
- Inspectors considered the views of 67 staff and 27 pupils who completed Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Sarah Parker, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Rhona Povey	Ofsted Inspector
Vicky Linsley	Ofsted Inspector
Bruce Goddard	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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