

Shepshed High School

Forest Street, Shepshed, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE12 9DA

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| Inspection dates | 7–8 October 2015 |
| 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 |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Requires improvement |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The Principal and his team provide strong leadership. They have raised aspirations among pupils and staff and this has led to improvements in teaching and outcomes.
- Pupils learn in a supportive environment where their teachers know them well and have high expectations of what they can achieve. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning, teaching is effective and outcomes are improving.
- Pupils make good progress in relation to their starting points. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 9, pupils reach standards that are in line with expectations for their age.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress and are catching up with their classmates.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school is good. They show respect to one another and adults.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is effective. Pupils and parents agree.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain and their next stage of education.
- Pupils attending The Oak Centre are supported well and make good progress in their learning.
- The governing body provides strong leadership. They have a good understanding of the work within the school. Governors and leaders have worked well together to ensure the school is improving.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Results at the end of Year 6 are not high enough in reading and mathematics.
- Leaders are not quick enough to check that additional support given to pupils is helping them catch up.
- A few teachers do not explain the work to pupils clearly enough.
- Middle leaders are not yet effective in checking the work of teachers in their subject areas.
- Systems to ensure that pupils learn from their mistakes and improve their work are not well enough developed or implemented.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further raise standards across the school, especially in Year 6, by ensuring that:
 - all teachers clearly explain the work to pupils and regularly check that they understand it
 - pupils are helped to learn from their mistakes and improve their work.

- Further develop the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - all additional support and interventions for pupils who are falling behind are sharply focused and their impact on improving progress is rigorously evaluated
 - all middle leaders take responsibility for evaluating the effectiveness of their subject area and improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment within it.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Leadership and management are good because actions are improving the quality of teaching and improving outcomes for pupils. They have created a very positive ethos in the school in which all pupils are valued, behave well and are keen to learn.
- The principal provides strong and focused leadership with high aspirations for what the pupils can achieve. He has created an effective senior team and together they provide good challenge and support for staff. Almost all staff who responded to the questionnaire are very supportive of the work of the Principal and his team to bring about improvements. As one teacher puts it: 'They lead by example and make me want to give that bit extra for the pupils.' Many agree that the school has improved since the previous inspection.
- Systems to track pupils' progress have been greatly strengthened. Information is collected every half term and all staff use this to identify where and when pupils need additional help and support.
- The leadership of teaching and learning is good. There are clear expectations for high-quality teaching based on the new teaching and learning policy and the '5 non-negotiables', which are leaders' expectations for good practice in all teachers' work. Strong links with local teaching schools have provided opportunities for teachers to improve their skills and this has led to better teaching across the school.
- Newly qualified teachers and teachers who are early on in their career are supported well. Those spoken to were full of praise for the support they received.
- There are strong systems in place to check the quality of teaching through planned observations, scrutiny of work, analysis of information about pupils' progress and planned subject reviews.
- There are effective systems for managing teachers' performance. Leaders are ready to take action where necessary to improve teaching and they set staff challenging targets that are linked to improving pupils' progress and improving their own teaching skills.
- The school's self-evaluation of its effectiveness is open, honest and accurate. It clearly identifies strengths as well as what can be done to improve further. Plans for improvement are organised effectively and set out appropriate actions to address the areas for improvement. Leaders welcome visits from a representative of the local authority and the school's own adviser because they challenge them to make sure that their evaluation of the school's performance is rigorous.
- Leaders spend additional funds from the pupil premium wisely. This includes spending on additional reading and mathematics support programmes, homework club, an attendance officer, counselling for vulnerable pupils, and opportunities for pupils to raise their aspirations by making visits to universities. The spending is closing the gap between disadvantaged pupils and others.
- Middle leaders appreciate the training they have received from a local teaching school and say it has helped them understand their job better. They are becoming more skilled at using the information about pupils' progress to identify underperformance and put extra support in place but do not always do enough to check if the support is working well enough and improving progress. Consequently, some pupils are not moved on to new support programmes quickly enough. Middle leaders are beginning to do work to improve teaching and learning in their subject areas but this is at an early stage of development in some subjects.
- The school makes good use of its primary physical education and sport premium for Year 6 pupils to increase their physical skills and expand the experiences available to them. It has used some of the money to employ a member of staff to run after-school clubs and team competitions. As a result, pupils enjoy taking part in sporting competitions and tournaments with local schools.
- The range of subjects that the school offers is broad and balanced and promotes pupils' academic achievement and personal development well. It is enriched by a wide range of sporting and other activities such as cross-country running, gardening club, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) club and opportunities to take part in the school show. Theme days such as the recent Physics and Enterprise Day help pupils to apply their skills in new contexts.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good. A well-planned assembly and tutor programme provides opportunities for pupils to reflect and consider a broad range of topics. During the inspection, an assembly on autism prompted the pupils to reflect on how they treat others with disabilities. The recent 'international literature month' helped pupils learn about writers from a range of different cultures.

- The school prepares pupils for life in modern Britain well. Leaders foster good relations and tackle discrimination by ensuring that pupils learn about the different beliefs and lifestyles of others and the need to respect them. In Year 6, pupils visit a variety of religious buildings in Leicester and this raises awareness of different faiths. Current work on Black History Month is helping pupils understand about the heritage of others.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governance has improved. After the previous inspection, governors had a review of their work led by a national leader of governance and produced an action plan to improve their effectiveness. Governors regularly check their progress against the actions they have planned.
 - Governors have attended numerous training events which have helped them to improve their skills and they now provide a good level of challenge and support for the school’s leaders.
 - They are committed to the school, have a clear vision for its future development and are fully involved in the strategic planning around the proposals to merge with Hind Leys College.
 - Governors know the school well. They rigorously monitor the work of the school by visiting lessons, scrutinising progress, attendance and behaviour data and meeting with parents at parents’ evenings. They join leaders on subject reviews and talk to pupils about their learning. These activities enable them to have an accurate view of the strengths and areas for improvement in the school.
 - Governors are well informed about the quality of teaching and ensure that decisions about teachers’ pay are appropriately linked to their performance and responsibilities. They are not afraid to challenge recommendations for pay rises if teachers have not met their targets. They know what is being done to tackle underperformance.
 - Governors track finances well and support leaders in deciding how additional funding such as pupil premium funding should be spent.
 - Governors ensure that the school’s statutory requirements are fulfilled with regard to safeguarding.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders create a safe environment where pupils feel supported and safe. Parents and carers are well informed, through the school website, about arrangements for safeguarding. Staff training is kept up to date and staff members know the actions they should take when concerned about a pupil’s welfare. Detailed records are suitably maintained and show when information is passed to another agency. The school’s arrangements for completing risk assessments are thorough.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **is good**

- Teaching is improving quickly as a result of the strong drive by leaders to ensure that all teaching is at least good. The regular monitoring of the quality of learning within lessons means that good teaching is evident across the subjects taught in the school. As a result of improvements in teaching, pupils are making better progress and standards are rising.
- Classrooms are attractive and organised effectively. Teachers use vibrant displays imaginatively both in classrooms and around the school to stimulate pupils’ learning.
- Teachers know the pupils thoroughly and have positive relationships with them. They have high expectations of their classes and are committed to raising pupils’ aspirations so that they can achieve their best. As a result, pupils usually work hard and take a pride in their work.
- Teachers are well informed about what their classes already know, understand and can do. They plan their lessons carefully and include activities to stretch and challenge the different ability groups in the class so that all move on in their learning. In a German lesson, the very effective planning of learning and clear explanation of the different tasks led to all pupils being able to write simple sentences while the more able were successfully challenged to write more complex sentences by adding adverbs.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge and use it to plan creative and imaginative activities that engage and interest pupils. In science, an atmosphere of great excitement and curiosity was created by a demonstration of what happens when forces are applied to an elastic band. As a result, pupils were able to use their experience to predict what would happen to other objects when forces are applied.
- Teachers place strong emphasis on developing pupils’ reading and writing skills in a wide range of subjects. Pupils are encouraged to read frequently, especially during tutor time. In English, pupils benefit from the weekly reading session in the library which encourages them to read a wider range of texts. Additional small-group sessions before school help the weaker readers to practise and improve their

reading skills. Teachers increasingly provide opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills. In an effective humanities lesson, pupils were helped to improve their writing skills when they were asked to write about the views people of different faiths hold about the death penalty.

- Targeted support by teaching assistants often helps disabled pupils and those with special educational needs to concentrate as well as to make progress. For example, with close support from teaching assistants who have an in-depth knowledge of their learning needs, pupils from The Oak Centre make good progress in the mainstream classes they attend.
- The school runs a wide range of additional support sessions to help pupils who have fallen behind to catch up. Sometimes they are repeated several times before their impact is checked. This means that some pupils do not catch up as quickly as they could.
- In a small number of lessons, teachers do not always explain carefully what pupils have to do and, as a result, some pupils become distracted and this slows down the progress they make.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and follow the school policy. They praise the pupils for what they have achieved and give useful guidance about what they need to work on next to make faster progress. Where pupils are given additional challenges and targets to work on, teachers do not always ensure they give them enough time in lessons to make improvements or check that everyone has acted on the advice.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They have positive attitudes to learning and this has a positive impact on their progress. Pupils are prompt to lessons, bring the necessary equipment and settle down to work quickly. They work well together, taking turns to make contributions to discussions.
- Pupils told inspectors they feel safe. They trust their teachers and know that if they have any worries or want help with their work they can always talk to them.
- The school has rigorous arrangements in place for ensuring that safeguarding checks on all staff are carried out thoroughly. Visitors to school are suitably checked and records of any safeguarding incidents are maintained thoroughly.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. Their understanding of the risks associated with using social networks and the internet is good. Pupils have a good awareness of the different types of bullying, such as cyber-bullying, racist bullying, homophobic bullying and the use of derogatory language, and say that it is very rare in the school. They are confident that, if it did happen, it would stop if they told an adult. Their views are supported by school records.
- Parents overwhelmingly agree that their children are kept safe and are well looked after.
- Younger, more vulnerable pupils in Year 6 benefit from the good support they receive in the transition groups which involve pupils spending most of their time in their classroom with their own teacher. As a result, they develop their self-confidence so that they are able to cope well when they move up to Year 7.
- Older pupils appreciate the guidance they receive from the school about choosing the subjects they will study when they move to Hind Leys College. They say that the opportunities to go to the college and take part in 'taster sessions' for new subjects are very helpful in enabling them to make the right choices.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are courteous and respectful towards one another and adults and they treat the building with respect. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere around the school.
- Pupils behave well around the school and move between lessons in an orderly manner. At break and lunchtimes they queue sensibly for their food and pupils of all ages mix well and get on well with each other.
- The behaviour of pupils who attend The Oaks is good. The pupils work well both within the resource provision and in mainstream lessons. They mix well with other pupils at lunchtimes because they feel safe and supported well by the teachers and helpers who work with them.
- In the vast majority of lessons, pupils are well behaved. They understand the school's expectations for good behaviour and respond quickly to instructions from staff, allowing lessons to flow smoothly and without interruption. Occasionally, when they do not understand what they are expected to do, a few

pupils find it difficult to concentrate and become distracted. In these instances, the pupils do not get on with their work as well as they should.

- The school provides good support for pupils who can display challenging behaviour. Good links with external agencies, together with strong support from community leaders working closely with form tutors, result in clear, workable support plans that lead to improvement in behaviour. As a result, there have been no permanent exclusions for the past three years and the number of short-term exclusions has reduced sharply.
- Pupils enjoy coming to the school. Attendance has risen and is now in line with the national average for similar schools. The school carefully monitors the attendance of all groups of pupils and promptly follows up absence. As a result, the number of pupils who are frequently absent has reduced sharply.
- The school closely monitors the attendance, behaviour and safety of the small number of pupils educated off-site. Records show that any concerns are followed up promptly so that outcomes for individual pupils are similar to their peers.

Outcomes for pupils are good

- Pupils join the school at the start of Year 6 with attainment in reading, writing and mathematics that is below expected for their age. They take their national Year 6 tests after they have been in the school for just over two terms.
- Outcomes are good because pupils make good progress from their low starting points and by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 9, they reach standards that are in line with those expected for their age. They are prepared well for the next stage of their education.
- In 2014, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 was below the national average. Results improved in 2015 and in writing and English grammar, punctuation and spelling, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard rose to be in line with the national average. Despite a small improvement in 2015, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading and mathematics remained below average. Similarly, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher standards was in line with national averages in writing and English, grammar, punctuation and spelling but below national averages in reading and mathematics.
- School information shows that results in 2015 represent good progress for pupils from their low starting points at the beginning of Year 6. Pupils currently in Year 6 are making good progress and this was confirmed during lesson observations and through looking at the work they have already done since they started at the school.
- School information shared with inspectors shows that pupils' progress accelerates during Years 7 to 9. The vast majority of pupils make good progress and have the knowledge, skills and understanding expected for their age in English, mathematics, science and a range of other subjects such as history, geography and German. Information provided by the school, scrutiny of work and lesson observations undertaken during the inspection show that pupils currently in the school are on track to make similar progress this year and reach the standards expected for their age.
- The gap between the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and other pupils at the school narrows as they progress through the school. In 2014, disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 were just over a year behind their classmates in reading, just over two terms behind in English grammar, punctuation and spelling, two terms behind in mathematics, and a term and a half behind in writing. Compared with pupils nationally, disadvantaged pupils were a year and a term behind in mathematics and reading, a year behind in English grammar, punctuation and spelling and two and a half terms behind in writing. School information shows that, by the time they reach the end of Year 9, disadvantaged pupils almost catch up with their classmates and have made good progress from their starting points.
- Most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make good progress during their time in the school and by the end of Year 9 many reach the higher levels expected for this age group.
- Pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs receive targeted support. As a result, they make similar progress to other pupils in the school. The small number of pupils educated off-site make good progress in their studies.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 120257 |
| Local authority | Leicestershire |
| Inspection number | 10001834 |

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

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| Type of school | Middle deemed secondary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 10–14 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 533 |
| Appropriate authority | Local authority |
| Chair | Alison Riggall |
| Principal | Matthew Parrott |
| Telephone number | 01509 502112 |
| Website | www.shepshed-high.leics.sch.uk |
| Email address | office@shepshed-high.leics.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 12–13 September 2013 |

Information about this school

- This middle deemed secondary school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The school is federated with Hind Leys College, a 14–19 school on the same site. The Principal, who joined Shepshed High School in September 2013, leads both schools.
- There are proposals for Shepshed High School to merge with Hind Leys College and become a single 11–19 academy.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is below average. This funding is for pupils looked after by the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- The school has The Oak Centre on site. This is a 16-place enhanced resource provision for pupils aged 10–19 with autism. Pupils are placed in the provision by the local authority. Pupils aged 10–14 attend some lessons at Shepshed High School.
- Five pupils currently receive education off-site. They follow a programme of learning provided by the Loughborough Inclusion Partnership or Autism Outreach Services.
- The school is receiving support from the Thomas Estley Learning Alliance and Teaching School and the Spencer Academies Trust and Teaching School.
- A national leader of education from Abington High School provides support for the school.
- The school meets the 2015 government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 19 lessons across all year groups. Three observations were made jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors reviewed the work in pupils' books, talked to them about their work and checked on their progress over time. An inspector heard some pupils in Year 6 read.
- Inspectors attended an assembly and a tutor period. Inspectors also visited small-group 'catch-up' sessions held at the beginning of the day.
- The inspection team observed the behaviour of pupils in lessons, during lesson changeovers and at break and lunchtimes.
- Visits were made to The Oak Centre.
- Discussions were held with staff, governors, the Principal and other school leaders, including heads of subject and community leaders. A telephone discussion took place with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors met formally with three groups of pupils of different ages and abilities. They also had a number of informal discussions with pupils around the school at break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors took account of the 28 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and a recent survey of parental opinion conducted by the school. They also took account of the 30 responses to staff questionnaires.
- The inspection team looked at a number of documents, including test results and the school's own records of pupils' progress. They scrutinised the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding and child protection. Inspectors examined records of pupils' attendance and behaviour, the school's plans for improvement, and documents used by leaders to check the quality of the work of staff at the school.

Inspection team

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Frances Le Pla, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Philip Drabble | Ofsted Inspector |
| Linda Lyn-Cook | Ofsted Inspector |

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