

Inspection of The Hinckley School

Butt Lane, Hinckley LE10 1LE

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 September 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	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Lisa Hickman. This school is part of The Futures Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the interim chief executive officer, Stephen Toor, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Anthony Fitzpatrick.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at The Hinckley School are polite and respectful. The vast majority of pupils say that they are happy here. There is a real sense of community in the school shared by pupils and staff.

The school has high aspirations for all pupils. Pupils in Year 7 are well supported in 'The Bridge' to help them make the transition from primary school. Strong pastoral guidance continues through the school. Students in the sixth form value the personalised support they get to help them realise their ambitions.

Most pupils behave well. Staff deal with behaviour fairly. Pupils learn about positive relationships and how to get along with one another. The school teaches pupils about risks they may face in the wider world. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe.

All pupils have access to a wide range of enrichment activities that they can attend at lunchtimes or after school. These include music, drama, computer programming and geology. The school ensures that disadvantaged pupils can benefit from these opportunities.

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

The school has worked hard to establish a culture of belonging based on strong relationships between staff and pupils. Leaders want all pupils to feel part of the school community. The school knows the pupils well and ensures that all pupils can benefit from the curriculum on offer. Leaders enjoy valuable support from The Futures Trust. Trustees and governors know the school well. They make sure that leaders continue to develop all aspects of the school's provision.

The school has planned a broad and ambitious curriculum for pupils' seven-year learning journey. Pupils in key stage 3 enjoy a wide range of subjects that include classics and Latin alongside more traditional subjects. Pupils in key stages 4 and 5 choose from a range of courses that meet their needs. The school plans to include more options for pupils in the future.

Curriculums are carefully sequenced so that pupils learn the right knowledge at the right time. Teachers work well together to create learning activities that interest pupils. They focus on vocabulary and communication so that pupils have confidence to talk about what they learn.

In most lessons, teachers provide pupils with clear explanations. They give pupils opportunities to discuss learning and to practise what they have learned. This is not the case in all lessons. Sometimes, teachers do not focus sharply enough on the important knowledge that they want pupils to learn. Lesson activities do not always help pupils to learn and remember important knowledge as well as they should.

In the majority of lessons, teachers check how well pupils can remember what they have learned before. They skilfully help pupils to make links between new knowledge and what they know already. Teachers routinely ask questions to check pupils' understanding. They address any gaps or misconceptions. In a minority of lessons, teachers do not check pupils' understanding well enough. When this happens, pupils struggle to make sense of new knowledge. They do not remember what they have learned.

The school plans support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to help them access the curriculum. Teachers have the information they need so that they can adapt lessons to meet pupils' needs.

Reading is a priority in this school. Staff quickly identify pupils who need extra help with reading. These pupils get the support they need to catch up quickly. Pupils benefit from a well-stocked library. They read together from well-chosen quality texts.

Most pupils attend school well. Some pupils, particularly pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, are absent too often. The school has begun to implement strategies to make sure all pupils attend school well.

There is a curriculum to support pupils' wider personal development so that they are ready for their next steps in education and their lives in modern Britain. Pupils understand British values, diversity and equality. Students in the sixth form are well prepared for higher education and their future careers. Many sixth-form students are involved in supporting younger pupils in the school and other projects in the wider community.

Staff work well together and value the support they get to develop their skills. The school supports staff to manage their workload and prioritises their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some lessons, teachers do not check that pupils have secured the prior knowledge they need to access new learning. Furthermore, some teachers do not systematically check that pupils understand new knowledge. This means that some pupils have gaps that are not identified. The school needs to make sure that staff check pupils' understanding routinely and address misconceptions so that pupils build their knowledge over time.
- In some lessons, teachers do not plan well enough how pupils will learn the important knowledge in the curriculum. Sometimes explanations are unclear. In

some lessons, the activities do not focus sharply enough on the important knowledge. The school should make sure that lesson activities help pupils learn and remember the important knowledge that is defined in the curriculum.

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	148417
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10288391
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	1,172
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	257
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Anthony Fitzpatrick
CEO of the trust	Stephen Toor (Interim CEO)
Headteacher	Lisa Hickman
Website	www.thehinckleyschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The Hinckley School converted to become an academy in December 2020. When its predecessor school, Hinckley Academy and John Cleveland Sixth Form Centre, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- The headteacher was appointed in February 2022.
- The school is part of The Futures Trust.
- The school uses three registered and nine unregistered alternative 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.

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 that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteachers, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and other school leaders.
- The lead inspector met with the CEO of The Futures Trust and with representatives of the board of trustees and the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, science, geography, physical education and music. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors visited a number of lessons in other subjects.
- 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 met with pupils from a range of year groups, including pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors met with a range of teaching and non-teaching staff.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

John Spragg, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Victoria Merrick	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Rhatigan	Ofsted Inspector
Janis Warren	Ofsted Inspector
Jamie Clarke	Ofsted Inspector

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