

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Hagley Catholic High School

Brake Lane, Hagley, Worcestershire DY8 2XL

Inspection dates:

4 and 5 March 2025

Outcome

Hagley Catholic High School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The principal of this school is James Hodgson. This school is part of Emmaus Catholic Multi Academy Company which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Suzanne Horan, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Joanna Griffin.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's warm, caring ethos underpins all aspects of school life. The school very effectively balances support for pupils' personal development, with their academic success.

The school has high expectations of all pupils. Teachers deliver lessons that support pupils in securely building their skills and knowledge. Pupils achieve well.

Pupils enjoy school. They attend regularly. Pupils, including students in the sixth form, receive excellent support from their teachers. Younger pupils value the warm welcome they receive on arrival to school and lessons. Almost all pupils participate in an extensive range of lunchtime clubs that range from competitive sports activities to crochet.

There is a calm, purposeful and orderly environment in the school. Pupils are well behaved, respectful and courteous. They listen carefully to their teachers and their peers. They are welcoming to guests and keen to talk about their school. They feel safe and well-supported. Pupils know how to report bullying and are confident that it will be dealt with by adults at the school.

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

Trust and school leaders work closely together to ensure the school is continually

improving. The curriculum, including in the sixth form, is broad and carefully sequenced to build pupils' knowledge and skills over time.

Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to ensure pupils have a precise understanding of key concepts. Teachers carefully explain new learning, using several different approaches. For example, many teachers model an answer before asking pupils to try for themselves. In English lessons pupils look in detail at a monologue before trying to write their own.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. Teachers understand their needs and adapt the learning activities and resources to meet them. They have strong relationships with their teachers and peers and enjoy their learning. They have access to the full curriculum. Staff effectively support pupils to become more independent in their learning.

Pupils, including those with SEND and disadvantaged pupils produce high quality work. Work in books demonstrates how well pupils have built up their knowledge and skills over time. Teachers have very high expectations of the work pupils produce in lessons. Pupils confidently talk about their learning and discuss ideas with their peers. Pupils and students attain well in external examinations, both at the end of Year 11 and in the sixth form.

Teachers frequently question pupils to check their understanding. When individual misconceptions are evident, they are quickly picked up and addressed. However, teachers do not consistently gather information about how well the class is learning the planned work and use it to adapt the learning activities. As a result, at times pupils struggle with activities that are too hard.

The school has recently introduced a more strategic approach to developing reading. Weaker readers receive additional help to improve their reading fluency. Teachers regularly read to pupils during form time. Sixth-form students listen to younger pupils read. Some pupils enjoy reading and read widely outside of school. However, the school does not yet have the processes in place to check if their reading strategies are making a difference.

All pupils have a regular 'character, culture and formation' lesson. This ensures pupils experience a wealth of important content. For example, they learn about looking after their mental well-being and staying safe. Pupils have significant opportunities to reflect on their own values and their role in the wider world. They also enjoy many opportunities for trips to enhance their academic curriculum. These include theatre trips, visits to museums and opportunities for visits abroad. The school works hard to ensure that disadvantaged pupils have the same opportunities as their peers.

In the sixth form, there is a comprehensive planned programme of tutorial time and enrichment activities. Students have many opportunities for student leadership and to participate in charitable activities. This helps them build the qualities and skills that will support them in their transition to university, training or work.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not consistently use the information about how well pupils are progressing in lessons to adapt the learning activities. As a result, in some lessons pupils struggle with activities that are too hard. The school should support staff to make more consistent use of assessment information to adapt learning.
- The school does not know if their recently introduced reading strategies are effective in building reading fluency and supporting pupils' enjoyment in reading. As a result, the school is not confident that pupils read widely and often, with fluency and comprehension appropriate to their age. The school should evaluate the strategies currently used to support reading and use this information to further develop the programme of support for weaker readers and increase opportunities for wider reading.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in 15 and 16 October 2019.

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	141414
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10344043
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
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	1122
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	182
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Joanna Griffin
CEO of the trust	Suzanne Horan
Principal	James Hodgson
Website	www.hagleyc.worcs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	15 and 16 October 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a member of the Emmaus Catholic Multi Academy Company.
- The school uses three registered alternative providers and two unregistered 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

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 principal, and other senior staff. An inspector met the chair of the trustees, the chair of the local governing board, the CEO and a representative from the diocese.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke with several groups of pupils and observed their behaviour at break and lunch time and considered the views expressed through the pupil survey.
- Inspectors met with groups of staff and considered the views expressed through the staff survey.
- Inspectors took account of parents' views through Ofsted Parent View.
- 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.

Inspection team

Deborah James, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Richard Winzor	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Bailie	Ofsted Inspector

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