

Hadrian Academy

Hadrian Avenue, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU5 4SR

Inspection dates

24–25 January 2018

| Overall effectiveness | Good |
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| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Good |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Good |
| Outcomes for pupils | Good |
| Early years provision | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Good |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The leadership team, including governors, has led improvements effectively throughout the school.
- Pupils behave well both in lessons and around the school. Pupils are attentive and enthusiastic learners. Pupils and their parents and carers are very positive about the school.
- The school provides a broad, engaging and stimulating curriculum. Pupils develop strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders and staff have created a focus on reading for pleasure throughout the school. As a result, pupils read voraciously and enthusiastically in all year groups.
- Leaders and staff continually review the support provided to meet the needs of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Pupils currently make good progress as a result of tailored support.
- Leaders regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the support provided to disadvantaged pupils, who, as a result, make good progress in many areas of the curriculum.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are particularly strong at key stage 1. Pupils develop important reading, writing and mathematics skills well.
- The early years foundation stage enables children to develop skills, knowledge and understanding critical for success in Year 1. Children thrive and enjoy coming to school.
- Pupils develop strong phonics skills and apply them to support their reading in all year groups. As a result, most pupils read well and are able to articulate their understanding of texts well.
- Middle prior attaining pupils at key stage 2 do not consistently develop strong understanding of how language is used to create meaning in texts. As a result, pupils do not make accelerated progress in reading at the end of key stage 2.
- Teachers do not consistently develop pupils' understanding of the different methods used for mathematics problems in key stage 2. Although many areas of middle leadership are strong, a minority of middle leaders are not as effective in driving their respective subjects.
- Attendance is improving but remains below the national average. Leaders have embedded a range of strategies to improve attendance.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, learning and assessment ensuring that:
 - middle prior attainers at key stage 2 develop critical understanding of how language in texts shapes meaning
 - pupils at key stage 2 develop strong understanding of the different methods they select to solve mathematical problems
 - leadership in all subject areas is outstanding.
- Continue to improve pupils' attendance so that all pupils have the opportunity to access the curriculum and achieve.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- In collaboration with her deputy headteacher, the headteacher has embedded her vision for whole-school improvement well. Drawing on evidence-based research, they have brought about improvements to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in many areas of the curriculum.
- Leaders accurately evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in all areas of the curriculum. Frequent monitoring and reviews enable leaders to commend good practice and provide support where required. Leaders use the information to inform the staff programme for continual professional development. Consequently, teachers and teaching assistants are reflective and focused on improving outcomes for pupils.
- The headteacher has improved the ways in which pupil data is used by teachers to inform the planning and teaching of lessons. As a result, teachers use data more accurately and effectively to provide pertinent support to pupils.
- Most middle leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths of their respective subject areas. Working in subject and thematic teams, leaders are able to draw on a breadth of expertise and support to ensure that pupils receive engaging and high-quality teaching and learning. Senior leaders provide middle leaders with time and opportunities to develop their areas. For example, middle leaders meet frequently with their teams to discuss issues and to plan improvements. For instance, through clear direction and collaboration, the teaching of physical education (PE) has improved. Middle leaders frequently lead staff meetings about areas of development in their subject areas and attend a range of internal and external moderation meetings to ensure that their assessments are accurate.
- Leaders have designed an engaging, stimulating and rich curriculum for all pupils. Pupils have a range of opportunities to develop skills, knowledge and understanding. For example, all pupils from Year 4 to Year 6 study a musical instrument of their choice, such as the trombone. Pupils learn French, computing, art, history and geography among a range of subjects.
- Leaders have developed a rich extra-curricular programme for pupils. As an examining centre for the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA), the school offers pupils in every year group chances to develop their music and drama skills. For example, the school choir has performed at festivals in Edinburgh and Paris. Each year group rehearses and sings the school song, accompanied by British sign language, for a national singing festival to raise awareness for a deaf health charity.
- Leaders use the pupil premium funding to support disadvantaged pupils effectively. Both leaders and governors regularly review the effect of the funding to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of pupils. Consequently, disadvantaged pupils make good progress throughout the curriculum. Additionally, the PE and sport premium funding is employed well to improve pupils' engagement and participation in sport. The school has developed a strong focus on orienteering, which pupils have welcomed with enthusiasm. The school has recently completed an all-weather track around the field

that has enabled pupils to walk and run regularly with their friends, staff and parents.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is supported throughout the curriculum. For example, pupils develop philanthropic attitudes through fundraising for a host of charities, such as the local Luton and Dunstable University Hospital and the NSPCC. Pupils also learn about other faiths and cultures through stories, the study of French, history and geography and visits to places of worship, such as local mosques and churches. Pupils regularly celebrate the festivals of other faiths to gain an understanding of other ways of living. For example, pupils eat apples and honey at the Jewish New Year, Rosh Hashanah.
- Leaders ensure that pupils develop critical citizenship skills through a range of roles and responsibilities, for example representing their class in councils, such as the library and mathematics councils.
- Leadership of special educational needs is effective. Pupils are assessed and provided with appropriate support. Teaching assistants are provided with effective training to enable them to support pupils.
- The leadership of some subject areas is not as strong as others. Although the team structure works well for many subject areas, and the senior leadership team provides time and support, a minority of subject areas do not develop as well as others in key stage 2. Consequently, pupils do not consistently make accelerated progress in these areas.

Governance

- Governance at Hadrian Academy is strong. Governors work hard to support the work of the new headteacher and the accompanying school improvement priorities.
- Governors share the headteacher's ambitions for the success of the school. Their plan has clearly identified strengths and areas for improvement. Governors visit the school frequently to gather critical information with which to gain an accurate understanding of pupils' experiences of school.
- Governors provide pertinent challenge to the school's leadership and hold them accountable for identified areas. Additionally, governors commend leaders for their successes.
- Governors ensure that the pupil premium funding and the PE and sport premium funding are spent effectively. Governors regularly evaluate the effect of additional funding on pupils' progress and their engagement in learning and sport. As a result of governors' heightened focus, the progress of disadvantaged pupils is a standing item on every agenda at governors' meetings.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The single central record of checks on staff and all adults who work at the school is compliant with statutory requirements. The safeguarding governor regularly reviews the record of checks. Staff files are well maintained.
- Safeguarding leads are vigilant in protecting pupils from harm. All concerns are

followed up with urgency and with reference to the appropriate agencies if necessary. All records are securely maintained and reviewed frequently to ensure that the best possible support is provided.

- All staff and adults who visit the school receive safeguarding training and updates. This is reviewed regularly.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers and staff across the key stages have very good relationships with pupils. Pupils feel well supported by teachers and staff.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge supports pupils' development well. Teachers in many areas of the curriculum extend pupils' understanding well. For example, an inspector observed pupils in a Year 4 class discussing with maturity and sophistication their interpretation of abstract art. Similarly, pupils in a Year 2 class explained their hypotheses regarding their science experiment involving the planting of seeds in different environments. Pupils' enthusiasm for learning is tangible and their ability to articulate abstract scientific concepts is well developed.
- The teaching of phonics is strong. Children develop early phonics skills well in Reception. In Year 1, teachers and teaching assistants build systematically on pupils' prior learning to extend their ability to read. As a result, pupils make very good progress in phonics.
- Teachers and teaching assistants develop pupils' love of reading very well. Reading for pleasure permeates the school. Pupils always have a reading book with them and delight in explaining the story, ideas and characters within. Pupils participate in a school-wide reading scheme and select their own books. Pupils visit the library regularly to change their books and to discuss what they are reading. Pupils also select class representatives for the school's library council, which is provided with a budget to purchase books chosen by pupils.
- Teachers use pupils' prior assessments to inform planning to meet the needs of pupils. This is particularly strong in key stage 1, where pupils are challenged to develop critical skills, understanding and knowledge in all areas of the curriculum. As a result, many pupils at key stage 1 make accelerated progress.
- Teaching assistants work well with pupils to improve their learning. They are very experienced in providing pertinent, tailored support to pupils. Many parents who spoke to inspectors and who completed the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, commented on the very good support offered to pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. As a result, pupils currently make good progress in all areas of the curriculum.
- Pupils develop strong grammar knowledge at both key stages, which informs the fluency and accuracy of their writing. As a result, pupils' writing develops well. Pupils edit their writing, demonstrating an awareness of themselves as writers. They consider their word choices and rearrange sentences to ensure that their writing matches the needs of their audience, purpose and text type.
- Pupils at key stage 1 develop strong mathematics skills. They develop an understanding of different methods and the effect on their calculations. As a result,

most pupils make good progress and many make accelerated progress. However, pupils in Years 5 and 6 do not consistently consider the effect of the methods used to solve mathematics problems. As a result, they do not always transfer skills and knowledge from one area of mathematics to another to be able to solve problems independently.

- Pupils at key stage 1 develop a clear understanding of how language and images shape the meaning an author intends to convey. However, at key stage 2, middle ability pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding of how to articulate the meaning embedded in texts is not developed as explicitly. As a result, many pupils do not make accelerated progress in reading.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to support pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are articulate and confident. They support each other's learning well.
- Pupils told the inspectors how much they enjoyed the school and how appreciative they were of the opportunities afforded to them in subjects such as music, art, drama and PE.
- Pupils are happy and feel safe, protected and supported in their learning. Pupils are taught how to keep safe, both in school and beyond. For example, pupils explained how the school taught them strategies to ensure that they were safe on the internet.
- Pupils have many opportunities to develop their understanding of the world around them. For example, pupils take on a range of responsibilities and roles, such as members of the school's various pupil councils: arts, mathematics and library. Pupils engage in democracy through voting and applying for these roles. They also explore the concept of free speech when discussing issues in their respective councils. Pupils develop the critical concept of tolerance for the views of others in preparation for life in modern Britain.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils have good attitudes towards learning. They are attentive and enthusiastic to learn.
- Pupils demonstrate pride in their work, ensuring that their work is neat and presentable.
- Pupils behave well, both in class and around the school. They are courteous, welcoming and polite to their friends, staff and visitors.
- Pupils can define bullying accurately. Pupils learn about bullying and how to deal with it effectively. Pupils are confident that if bullying occurs, staff resolve it promptly and appropriately.
- Although pupils' attendance has improved, it continues to be below the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2017, pupils' achievements in key stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics were above those found nationally. In 2016, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected level was significantly above the national average in reading and writing. Similarly, the proportion of pupils in key stage 1 who attained greater depth was above the national average in reading and writing in 2017 and 2016.
- From 2014 to 2017, the proportion of children in the early years achieving a good level of development has increased to above the national average. Children are well prepared for study at key stage 1.
- The most able pupils in 2016 and 2017 in key stage 2 achieved significantly above the national average in writing. In 2017, most pupils achieved above the national average in writing. Pupils develop critical understanding of the role of grammar and this informs their writing.
- Pupils make good progress in music. All pupils from Year 4 to Year 6 learn a musical instrument. They perform publically and make good progress.
- Pupils make good progress in science at both key stages. Science leadership has addressed the importance of developing pupils' scientific skills alongside coverage of the curriculum.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average and these pupils achieve consistently above the national average in most areas of the curriculum.
- Middle prior attaining pupils at key stage 2 underachieved in 2016 and 2017 in reading and mathematics. The headteacher has transformed the use of assessment to ensure that teachers plan lessons to meet the needs of all pupils at key stage 2. Additionally, leaders have provided training to key stage 2 teachers to ensure that all pupils' needs are met. As a consequence, middle prior attaining pupils are currently making better progress.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership of the early years is strong. Clear relationships with feeder nurseries ensure that leaders have a breadth of information with which to inform baseline assessments. Leaders meet regularly with other providers, and internally, to moderate assessments to ensure that they are accurate.
- Children are very enthusiastic and engage well with the range of indoor and outdoor activities skilfully constructed by staff. Children maintain their attention and do not flit from one activity to the other.
- Children's critical motor skills develop well through the range of well-considered activities. As a result, children make swift progress and are well prepared for Year 1. Leaders have recently introduced a heightened focus on early reading, writing and mathematics, which has been seamlessly embedded in the curriculum. As a result, many children are able to decode simple words and write well-rounded letters and words.

- Disadvantaged children develop well and receive additional focus to ensure that they make at least the same progress as other children.
- The introduction of an electronic, online assessment tool is very recent but parents have adopted it quickly. As a result, leaders and staff have effective communication with parents and carers.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 137778 |
| Local authority | Central Bedfordshire |
| Inspection number | 10041807 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy sponsor-led |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 347 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair | Angela Roberts |
| Headteacher | Hannah Bennett |
| Telephone number | 01582 618400 |
| Website | www.hadrianacademy.co.uk |
| Email address | hadrianacademy@cbc.beds.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 18–19 March 2014 |

Information about this school

- Hadrian Academy is larger than the average-sized primary school. It converted to become an academy school on 1 January 2012. The school became a primary school on 1 October 2012.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and supported by the pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who come from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of education, health and care plans is above the national average.
- In 2017, the school met the government's published floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons, many jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors also made short visits to lessons and looked at pupils' books.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of pupils from various year groups. Discussions were held with school staff, including senior leaders, middle leaders and four governors.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of school documents, including the school's self-evaluation, information on pupils' outcomes, and records relating to monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment, and behaviour and safeguarding of pupils.
- Inspectors took account of 57 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, alongside 54 text responses.

Inspection team

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Susan Aykin, lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Mark Jones | Ofsted Inspector |
| Vicky Parsey | Ofsted Inspector |

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