

The Hundred of Hoo Academy

Main Road, Hoo, Rochester, Kent ME3 9HH

Inspection dates

4–5 July 2018

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

- Leaders' clear determination and unwaveringly high expectations ensure a culture of continual improvement. Staff and governors are highly committed to this cause. The mantra of 'no excuses' is evident throughout the school.
- Middle and senior leaders check standards in the school carefully. They act on what they learn, putting effective and appropriate staff training in place where necessary. This supports the constant and ongoing development of leadership and teaching across the school.
- Leaders adapt the curriculum skilfully over time, to ensure that it prepares pupils increasingly well for the future. The appropriately broad range of timetabled subjects is complemented creatively by extra-curricular opportunities, including in technology and the expressive arts.
- Teachers structure pupils' learning in a way that removes barriers and develops confidence. Well-established learning routines support teachers' high expectations for pupils' conduct and engagement with their learning.
- Leaders make very effective use of expertise in the secondary phase to support the quality of the wider curriculum in the primary phase. Consequently, key stage 1 pupils learn well across a range of subjects.
- Pupils typically make good progress over time because they know how to improve. They routinely act on feedback about their work, in line with the school's policy, which develops their knowledge, skills and understanding well.
- Leaders' use additional funding successfully to help close achievement gaps for key groups of pupils, such as the disadvantaged and those who have an education, health and care plan. However, there is further work to do.
- Safeguarding is effective. Staff promote pupils' personal development and welfare extremely well. Their determined work is supported appropriately by useful systems that ensure concerns are acted on promptly.
- Staff manage pupils' behaviour well, using clear and consistent routines. Exclusion rates are falling but remain high in Years 8 and 10. Work to develop pupils' independence in regulating their own behaviour is ongoing.
- Leaders have quickly established outstanding provision in early years. Children enjoy learning and are supported well to make good progress. They are prepared well for key stage 1.
- Students in the sixth form make increasingly good progress over time. High-quality guidance and support prepare them well for the future.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that current actions to improve pupils' outcomes in the secondary phase of the school are successful so that:
 - disadvantaged pupils make strong progress that enables them to catch up with other pupils nationally
 - all pupils achieve consistently well by the end of key stage 4, regardless of their starting point.
- Enable pupils to become more adept at managing their own behaviour and learning so that they meet teachers' high expectations as a matter of course.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The head of school leads her staff with unrelenting determination to provide the best learning experience for pupils. Staff throughout the school share this vision, which has been sustained as the school has expanded to include a primary phase. Staff and governors reflect proudly on how much they feel the school has improved since the last inspection in 2012, which is evident in standards in the school.
- Staff's high aspirations and expectations, for themselves as well as pupils, are clear. Adults' 'can do' attitudes motivate them to reflect on and develop their practice, so that standards in the school are maintained and improved as the school grows. Staff's resilience and persistence in sustaining this resolve, regardless of notable challenges and barriers, are commendable.
- Leaders typically use effective systems very well to check routinely on standards in the school. Middle leaders play an integral part in identifying where aspects could be even better, taking prompt and appropriate actions to address relative weaknesses. As a result, staff at all levels are held successfully to account for the difference their work makes to pupils. Consequently, standards are rising.
- Leaders invest in helpful training that notably strengthens the quality of teaching and leadership. They consider staff workload thoughtfully in this regard, to ensure that changes to teachers' practice are sustainable and have the greatest possible impact on pupils' achievements.
- Close and effective working relationships with colleagues from across the Williamson Trust contribute very well to the ongoing evolution of all three phases of the school. Newly qualified teachers are supported well to develop their craft, including through their work with lead practitioners in school and via the affiliated Medway Teaching School Alliance. Consequently, a shared understanding of the characteristics of effective teaching supports staff in meeting pupils' learning needs successfully.
- Leaders work creatively to ensure that the curriculum is suitably broad and balanced. They have successfully overcome temporary challenges around securing subject specialists in some areas of the secondary curriculum, such as music and design technology, by providing pupils with access to appropriate extra-curricular opportunities. Leaders have planned carefully to deepen curriculum provision, from September 2018, through staff recruitment that supports a more formal and regular approach to these subjects.
- The primary curriculum is enhanced effectively through secondary-phase experts supporting the teaching of subjects such as science and physical education (PE). Consequently, pupils benefit from a high-quality experience across a wide range of subjects beyond English and mathematics. Leaders use sport funding well to enhance pupils' experiences in PE and encourage healthy lifestyles, and they check the impact of this work carefully.
- Pupils benefit from a carefully coordinated approach to developing their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding, particularly across key stage 3. Leaders adapt assembly themes to focus on emerging local issues, such as cyberbullying and gang

culture. Useful opportunities to consider topics thoughtfully, for example during tutor-time discussions, complement formal learning during personal, social, health and religious education (PSHRE) lessons well. Consequently, pupils are typically well prepared for life in modern Britain.

- Leaders use additional funding very well to coordinate extra help for particular groups of pupils, specifically the disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. They review the impact of teachers' actions regularly, changing plans when pupils' progress is not sufficiently rapid. As a result, attainment of potentially vulnerable groups of pupils, such as those who join Year 7 with below-average standards of literacy or numeracy, is improving quickly. Leaders recognise there is further work to do to ensure that pupils consistently achieve as well as they should.

Governance of the school

- The composition of the governing body, which is known as the local advisory committee (LAC), has altered notably since the last inspection, as roles within the trust have changed. Throughout this transition, the governing body has retained its rigorous determination to challenge and support the school so that it continues to grow and improve.
- Governors share leaders' vision and aspirations for the school. They have a clear understanding of the responsibilities delegated to them by the Williamson Trust. They have used the opportunity to recruit new governors constructively, strengthening specific aspects of their collective expertise. As a result, they are very well placed to continue to fulfil their role effectively.
- Governors are resolute that challenges and barriers will not distract the school from moving forward on its journey towards being judged to be outstanding. Minutes from regular LAC meetings and from governors' visits to the school demonstrate their persistent challenge to leaders about the difference their work is making to pupils. Governors' detailed and developmental feedback supports leaders effectively in rising to meet shared and high expectations for the impact of the school's work.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders and governors ensure that all their legal duties are met. Their checks on staff and visitors coming into school are carried out diligently and recorded carefully. This ensures that potential risk to pupils from adults on the school site is minimised. Governors' and trust colleagues' regular checks on policies and systems help to make sure that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose.
- Staff fulfil their safeguarding duties effectively and confidently because of the helpful and regular training that they receive. The safeguarding team promotes an ethos of high vigilance and rigorous reporting, which supports the successful transformation of policy into practice. Their work is refining systems further so that information can be shared even more efficiently than some records presently indicate.
- Staff act appropriately where concerns emerge about a pupil's welfare or safety. As

well as putting appropriate support in place, they work with pupils and parents to promote messages about potential risks and how to avoid them, for example in relation to keeping safe online. A very small proportion of parents feel that the school's work to respond effectively to safeguarding issues around bullying is not as effective as it should be, but pupils did not typically support this view.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers' expectations for pupils' engagement and conduct are consistently high. The environment is typically purposeful and conducive to learning because working routines are well established. This is particularly evident in the primary phase of the school. Sometimes, pupils do not behave as well as they should, but teachers take prompt and effective action if this happens.
- Teachers' carefully structured planning enables pupils to access their learning successfully and removes barriers to their engagement. Work in lessons develops pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding over time. However, it does not always meet the needs of pupils, specifically the most able, as precisely as it could, which limits their rates of progress.
- In key stage 1, lessons build effectively on pupils' secure learning in the early years foundation stage. Pupils are well motivated and behave maturely, working with determination. They rapidly gain a secure understanding of phonics, which helps them to read and write well, and to access the wider curriculum successfully.
- Teachers use questioning well to check pupils' understanding and test their thinking. At times, they do not probe as deeply as they could to really deepen pupils' reasoning skills. Occasionally, learning moves on before some pupils have grasped the current concept securely.
- Pupils receive regular and constructive feedback, in line with the school policy. They respond to this as a matter of course, and value how it helps them to improve their work. Teachers use what they glean from pupils' work and from their responses in lessons to plan for pupils' future learning with increasing precision.
- Teaching in the St Werburgh Centre (SWC) meets pupils' needs effectively. Pupils learn across an appropriate range of subjects in a safe environment that develops their confidence alongside their understanding. They value the extra support that they receive and how well teachers understand what will help them to be successful. Consequently, they flourish and make good progress over time.
- Leaders evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment accurately. This enables them to direct future staff training carefully, using expertise from across the trust. Consequently, the proportion of teaching that leaders consider to be ineffective is very small and reducing over time.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Leaders plan carefully to promote pupils' personal development, adopting an immersive approach. Central to this, are shared expectations for pupils to achieve as well as they can and to take responsibility for their contribution to the school community.
- Pupils value opportunities to act as ambassadors and have their voices heard, such as through roles as prefects or school councillors. School council representatives described proudly how they have raised funds for a range of charities and how staff act on their suggestions for how the school might improve.
- Pupils understand about relevant issues in society, such as radicalisation, in an age-appropriate way. They have a well-developed understanding of values such as democracy, respect and tolerance.
- Almost all pupils feel safe and well cared for because their teachers know them well and listen to their concerns. While some bullying does occur, the vast majority of pupils and their parents feel that any issues are dealt with appropriately.
- Leaders have given careful thought to how the school can support those pupils in the school who are potentially the most vulnerable. Safe places in school, such as 'The Haven' are used well, and pupils know where to go for support if they feel worried or at risk. Pupils value the straightforward opportunities that they have to access independent counselling support, which guides them appropriately towards specialist help.
- A small group of pupils access alternative provision away from school for at least part of their learning experience. Leaders match these opportunities very carefully to pupils' specific needs. Consequently, pupils develop their social skills effectively. These skills, in turn, support pupils' academic learning well.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Around the school, pupils typically conduct themselves well, responding appropriately to clear and consistent routines. Standards of behaviour in the primary phase of the school are particularly high.
- Some pupils and parents report that behaviour is not always as good as it should be. A small number describe instances of derogatory language or bullying. However, the vast majority say that teachers deal with misbehaviour promptly and effectively when it happens.
- Exclusions are above the national average, but starting to decline. Leaders have had some initial success with using alternative strategies that encourage pupils to improve their behaviour, focusing on promoting and celebrating positive choices. Exclusions for pupils in Years 8 and 10 remain high, but leaders are persevering, and their actions are gradually making a difference.

- Leaders focus persistently on improving pupils' attendance, specifically for the disadvantaged. Attendance of primary pupils and sixth-form students is above average. Staff review attendance figures regularly, liaising closely with families where pupils do not come to school as often as they should. They work with local primary schools to promote the importance of good attendance.
- Pupils improve their attendance as a result of accessing an alternative provision. Consequently, the percentage of pupils who are persistently absent from school is reducing over time.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils in the primary phase attain very well. The above-average standards secured in the early years foundation stage are sustained through to the end of key stage 1. By the end of Year 2, the proportion of pupils achieving at least the expected standard is above the national average for reading, writing and, especially, mathematics. The percentage of pupils achieving a greater depth of learning is also above average.
- Almost all Year 1 pupils achieve the standard of the phonics check. Those who were not successful last year improved to meet the standard by the end of Year 2. Consequently, pupils have secure standards of literacy, which enable them to access the wider curriculum successfully.
- Pupils who are currently in the secondary phase joined the school with starting points which were typically below average. In 2017, those completing Year 11 made broadly average progress overall. Pupils' progress in science was well above average, although only just over two thirds of pupils were entered for sufficient qualifications to be considered as part of this measure.
- Leaders' performance information, supported by the quality of pupils' work, indicates that standards are rising for pupils currently in the school. The proportion of pupils set to reach GCSE at grade 4 or above in English by the end of Year 11 has improved notably this year, even though pupils' average starting points were lower. This reflects their good progress. Pupils' attainment in mathematics by the end of key stage 4 was broadly in line with the national average last year and remains at a similar standard. This shows that pupils leave the school with typically secure standards of literacy and numeracy.
- Across key stage 3, standards are rising, although progress is not consistently strong across all subjects. High prior-attaining pupils and the least able attain well and make better progress than in the past. Pupils' achievement in history and geography is not as good as in other subjects and is a current focus for leaders.
- Staff review pupils' current attainment and progress regularly, across all year groups. This enables them to identify promptly where pupils are not meeting their potential, and to work with pupils to address this. Pupils engage well with this process, which is supporting the rise in standards across the school.
- Leaders ensure that everyone is focused carefully on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. As a result, their attainment and progress are improving towards matching other pupils nationally by the end of key stage 4. Leaders remain determined to ensure that these pupils continue to close the attainment and progress gap with

their peers so that their educational disadvantage is removed. The impact of leaders' work is evident in the primary phase, where disadvantaged pupils achieve at least as well as others nationally.

- Pupils supported by the SWC make good progress academically during their time at the school. Overall, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make increasingly strong progress over time, although this trend is reversed for pupils currently in Year 10. Those who have an education, health and care (EHC) plan to meet their special educational need make more rapid progress than those who do not.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- In the three years since it opened, leaders have established high-quality provision in the early years foundation stage. The head of primary supports the early years leader extremely well to ensure that children have the best possible start to their formal education. Collectively, they have clear ambitions to continue evolving the early years setting. They identify accurately what could make it even better.
- Children are supported very well to make a highly effective transition into the early years foundation stage. They form very positive relationships with each other and the adults that care for them. Well-rehearsed routines enable them to develop behaviour that helps them to learn successfully. Staff engage parents successfully in supporting their children's learning journey.
- During their time in the early years, children enjoy learning within this stimulating environment. Adults support them appropriately to access a range of activities, both inside and beyond the classroom. Children cooperate with, and are respectful of, each other. They rapidly develop their independence.
- Adults ensure that children have rich opportunities to develop swiftly across all aspects of the early years curriculum. Their learning journals show clear evidence of the strong progress that they make in this regard. Leaders use expertise from across the trust to check carefully that the quality of the curriculum and their judgements about pupils' outcomes are accurate. This helps them to identify astutely the next steps for development, both for children and for the provision as a whole.
- Children achieve very well by the end of the early years foundation stage. From broadly average starting points, they make strong progress over time. By the end of early years, the proportion of children who achieve a good level of development is consistently above the national average. This enables them to be very well prepared for learning in key stage 1.
- In the past, disadvantaged children in the early years made less progress than other children nationally and in school. Leaders have made very effective use of additional funding to put extra help in place for children at risk of underachieving. As a result, disadvantaged children in early years now make very good progress and achieve at least as well as their non-disadvantaged peers.
- Children develop their reading skills very well. They practise using their phonics skills to decipher unfamiliar words, interacting thoughtfully with fiction and non-fiction books. Children typically read fluently for their age and with appropriate comprehension. Some are very strong readers.

- Adults ensure that children have regular opportunities to support their personal development and welfare. Children are encouraged to make healthy choices at snack times. They learn about values such as kindness and consideration through assemblies, as well as in their learning in class, and demonstrate these characteristics in their daily interactions with each other. Adults know children well, taking prompt and appropriate action when needed to ensure that they are safe.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Students who attend the sixth form benefit from a high-quality experience that meets their needs appropriately. This prepares them well for the future, both academically and holistically.
- The head of sixth form took up her post in January 2018. Her accurate evaluation is helping to identify and address aspects of provision that were less successful in the past. Leaders check carefully to make sure that improvements to the sixth form, such as those linked to the curriculum, have a positive impact on students' academic outcomes.
- Leaders routinely monitor the quality of teaching in the sixth form. Their records show that teaching is consistently effective, with improvements in areas where there were concerns previously. Students' work supports these judgements, showing that students make secure progress over time across the range of academic and vocational subjects on offer. Their learning is enhanced notably by staff's incisive use of the school's feedback policy to explain to students how to improve their work.
- In 2017, students completing applied general and technical qualifications made good progress from their above-average starting points. In comparison, those following A-level and AS-level qualifications had lower starting points and made less progress over the course of their studies. Students currently in the sixth form are making more consistently secure progress, regardless of their type of course and the qualification they are working towards. Progress is more rapid for students currently in Year 12 than it is for those who are just completing Year 13.
- Leaders have developed the quality of careers information and guidance that students receive to support their post-16 study choices. This has helped to ensure that students are admitted on to courses that are suitably aspirational and meet their learning and development needs. As a result, the number of students who are joining the sixth form and staying to complete their courses is increasing over time.
- Students who need to improve their English and mathematics are supported very well and make good progress. In 2017, students resitting their GCSE mathematics qualification improved on average by more than half a grade, which is well above the progress seen nationally. A similar pattern was seen for those students who resit their English qualification. Students currently in the sixth form are making similarly strong progress.
- Students are highly positive about their post-16 experience. They value how well staff understand their learning and pastoral needs. This makes them feel safe and very well supported, which is reflected in their high levels of attendance. They reflect proudly on the school and how they have seen it improve since the last inspection.

- Beyond their academic learning, students relish the rich opportunities that support their personal development and prepare them well for life beyond the sixth form. They talk enthusiastically about how visits to universities have raised their aspirations and helped them to consider their next steps. They play an active role in the life of the wider school. During the inspection, several students were contributing effectively to teaching and learning in other parts of the school, through work experience specifically linked to their aspirations to pursue careers in childcare or teaching.

School details

Unique reference number	137119
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10049032

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

Type of school	All-through
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1378
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	106
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Keith Morrison
Headteacher	Emma Elwin
Telephone number	01634 251 443
Website	www.hundredofhooacademy.co.uk
Email address	office@hohschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 December 2012

Information about this school

- The Hundred of Hoo is a large school for pupils aged four to 19. The secondary and sixth-form parts of the school were opened in September 2011, when the previous school became an academy sponsored by the Williamson Multi-academy Trust. The primary phase of the school opened in September 2015 and currently has pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.
- A broadly average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. A very small percentage is believed to speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who receive support for a special educational need and/or disability is below the national average.

- The school has a specialist resource base called the SWC, which caters for 64 pupils who have autistic spectrum disorder. All of the pupils in SWC have an EHC plan and are referred by the local authority. As a result, the overall percentage of pupils in the school who have an EHC plan is above average. The centre is currently oversubscribed and the school is working with the local authority to increase its capacity.
- The Williamson Trust delegates responsibility for governance to a local academy council. There is currently an interim chief executive officer in place at the trust.
- The school works closely with other schools in the Williamson trust to develop the quality of teaching, moderate teachers' judgements about the standard of pupils' work and monitor standards across the trust. Leaders make effective use of expertise from the Medway Teaching School Alliance, which forms part of the trust, to develop the quality of teaching.
- There is a nursery and kids club based on the school site, which is registered and run independently of the main school. Children from the nursery are escorted across to the school canteen each day to have their lunch, while secondary school pupils are in their lessons.
- When appropriate, the school makes use of alternative provision to support a small number of pupils in the secondary school. Currently, there are pupils placed at Aesthetics Academy, the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, Octopus Opportunities and Squirrels Riding School.
- The school meets the current government floor standards for what pupils are expected to achieve by the end of Year 11 and the minimum standards that students are expected to achieve by the end of Year 13.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes in the primary phase and 34 lessons across a range of subjects in the secondary phase. Some of these visits were carried out alongside school leaders. They also carried out learning walks in PE, health and social care and the SWC. While in classrooms, inspectors observed learning, talked to pupils and looked at their work. Inspectors also attended two assemblies, visited four tutor sessions and observed start of day routines in both phases of the school. Additionally, inspectors worked with leaders to scrutinise a sample of work from pupils in Years 8 and 10.
- During this inspection, there were no lessons taking place in the sixth form, as Year 13 students had completed their studies and Year 12 students were on work experience. Inspectors, therefore, used a wide range of other evidence to make judgements about the effectiveness of the 16 to 19 study programmes. This included meeting with leaders, talking to a group of Year 12 students, and reviewing relevant documentation about the curriculum, as well as monitoring of the quality of teaching, and students' performance and attendance. Two inspectors also worked with school leaders to carry out a detailed scrutiny of students' work across a range of subjects.
- Inspectors also met with senior leaders, other staff, and with groups of pupils, including representatives of the student leadership council. The lead inspector met with representatives from the Williamson Trust and spoke to the chair of governors on the telephone. A wide range of other evidence was taken into account, including documents on the school's website, and extensive records provided by school leaders.
- The inspection team took into account 71 survey responses from pupils, who mostly represented Years 7 to 10. They also considered 112 responses to the staff survey, and 53 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, along with 50 free-text responses. Inspectors also considered staff and parents' responses to the school's own surveys and spoke to some primary-phase parents at the start of the second day of the inspection.

Inspection team

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