

# Inspection of a school judged Good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Heath Lane Academy

Heath Lane, Earl Shilton, Leicester, Leicestershire LE9 7PD

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Inspection dates:

25 and 26 February 2025

## Outcome

Heath Lane Academy has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Mark Trimmingham. This school is part of United Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Jon Coles, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Christian Brodie.

## What is it like to attend this school?

There has been much change for the better at this school recently. Pupils at Heath Lane Academy are happy and feel safe in school. They know that staff listen to them and act if they have any concerns. The school teaches pupils to treat each other with kindness and respect. Pupils describe the school as welcoming and inclusive.

The school has high expectations of all pupils, both in their learning and in how they conduct themselves. Pupils rise to these expectations, showing commitment to their studies. The curriculum is ambitious and designed to give every pupil the 'powerful knowledge' and skills they need for the future. Pupils engage well in lessons and talk confidently about what they have learned.

Pupils understand the school's clear rules and follow them well. Pupils have a strong sense of belonging in the school. They voted for the values of work hard, be kind, and show respect, and they try to live by these values every day.

Beyond the classroom, pupils take part in a wide range of personal development opportunities. They can join clubs and can contribute to the school community. These experiences help them develop confidence and ambition for their future.

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

The curriculum has undergone significant and necessary change to ensure that all pupils study a broad and balanced range of subjects. More pupils than ever before study languages, showing the school's commitment to increase the number of pupils studying the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects. The school has further improved the ordering of content in some subjects, so that pupils build secure knowledge over time. These ongoing improvements are a direct response to the school not performing well in the 2024 national tests.

Teachers use the schools 'teaching playbook' to ensure that new learning builds on what pupils already know. Teachers use effective modelling strategies to help pupils secure and apply new knowledge. Teachers use highly effective questioning to check that pupils deepen their understanding. On occasion, too much information is presented at once, meaning that some pupils do not engage as well as they could.

Teachers use 'pupil profiles' to understand and address barriers to learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school identifies pupils' needs swiftly and accurately.

The school focuses on reading and literacy so that pupils develop confidence and fluency. Pupils who need extra support get help through structured interventions. Teachers build subject-specific vocabulary into lessons across all subjects. Pupils regularly engage in reading activities during tutor time. This supports pupils to become better readers.

The school is taking clear steps to improve attendance, ensuring that pupils understand the importance of being in school every day. Most pupils attend well, and the school tracks absence carefully. Staff work closely with families, using targeted interventions to improve attendance further. However, persistent absence for some disadvantaged pupils is too high.

The school promotes positive behaviour and reinforces high expectations through a rewards system. Pupils value recognition for their efforts, with golden tickets and celebration assemblies motivating them to meet expectations. The 'principal's proud' award acknowledges pupils' best work, encouraging academic commitment.

Pupils benefit from careers education woven into the curriculum, with visits to universities, workplaces and careers fairs. Leadership roles, such as student council and peer mentoring, help pupils develop confidence and responsibility. The curriculum supports their understanding of healthy relationships, financial literacy and staying safe online. Pupils take part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, sports clubs, and creative arts opportunities. These experiences, alongside targeted careers guidance, help pupils aspire towards ambitious futures.

The school has benefited significantly from the trust's oversight, subject expertise, professional development offer and strategic investment, which have accelerated

improvement in the school. Trust leaders regularly evaluate the impact of key policies to check that strategies are working as intended.

Staff feel well supported by senior leaders at the school, who engage regularly and are responsive to feedback. They monitor staff workload and promote staff 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)**

- On occasion, too much information is presented at once, meaning that some pupils do not engage with learning. When this happens, pupils do not achieve as well as they should. The school must ensure that teaching is consistently effective by ensuring that teachers do not present too much information at once.
- Some disadvantaged pupils are absent too often. As a result, they do not benefit from the high quality of education provided by the school. The school must ensure that it embeds its strategies to improve attendance for this group of pupils.

## **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 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 July 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138327
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10347531
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	676
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Christian Brodie
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Jon Coles
<b>Principal</b>	Mark Trimmingham
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.heathlaneacademy.org.uk">www.heathlaneacademy.org.uk</a>
<b>Date(s) of previous inspection</b>	2 and 3 July 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- In December 2023, this school joined United Learning Trust.
- Since the last inspection there has been significant changes in leadership across the school. More recently there has been a change to leadership structure.
- The school uses three 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

- 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. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke to the principal and other senior leaders.
- The lead inspector spoke to regional directors and the national director of secondary education at United Learning Trust.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey and Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils and observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at social times.

### **Inspection team**

Rakesh Patel, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Keval Thakrar

Ofsted Inspector

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