

Halesbury School

Feldon Lane, Halesowen, B62 9DR

Inspection dates 22–23 April 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Halesbury School is an improving school. It has made good improvements since the last inspection. Leaders and governors have ensured that teaching and pupils' achievement are good.
- Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and in developing their communication and independence skills.
- Good teaching, particularly through the careful and consistent tracking of pupils' progress, enables pupils to achieve well. Staff provide good additional support, where needed, to help struggling pupils to make up lost ground.
- Regular scrutiny of pupils' work and checks on the quality of teaching by senior leaders have been key to the improvement of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Parents are passionate and proud of the school. They appreciate the very effective way the school works with them to help children further develop their skills, including communication and writing.
- The school is developing its expertise well in teaching children with autism and is pursuing national accreditation to validate its work.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are good. Pupils enjoy attending school. They are polite, welcoming and enthusiastic learners.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. This contributes to the positive learning and good levels of enjoyment experienced by pupils. This is brought about through effective leadership of senior leaders and governors.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The accommodation limits some aspects of pupils' achievements. The lack of specialist facilities for physical education does not enable pupils to develop their skills in an appropriate setting. Some classrooms are too small for the number, size and increasing complexities of pupils' needs.
- The school's website does not contain all the required information.
- Pupils do not have extensive enough opportunities to prepare for adult life through work experience, vocational courses and college placements.
- Inconsistencies in teaching have led to dips in pupils' progress in some year groups.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 11 part lessons. Most were jointly observed with senior leaders.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, teaching staff, pupils and members of the governing body.
- There were 16 responses from parents and carers to the online questionnaire, Parent View. The inspection team also considered the school's recent survey of parents' views.
- Responses from 31 staff to the Ofsted questionnaire were also taken into account.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school's information on pupils' progress, its self-evaluation, development plans and information relating to the safeguarding of pupils. Pupils' work was also examined.

Inspection team

Frank Price, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Carol Deakin

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This special school provides for pupils with a range of learning difficulties. The majority have moderate learning difficulties and nearly one quarter of the pupils have speech, language and communication difficulties. Others have autistic spectrum disorders.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- Pupils are predominantly from a White British background, but others are from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium is well above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The school was part of a Trust arrangement with another school, but this is now no longer the case.
- The school is in the process of recruiting a new headteacher for September 2015.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase pupils' achievement and progress by:
 - extending vocational courses and work-related opportunities
 - securing more consistent outstanding teaching across the school to accelerate pupils' progress
 - in conjunction with the local authority, improve the accommodation so that it meets the increased complexities of pupils' learning needs more effectively.
- Ensure the school's website contains all the statutory information.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leadership and management at all levels of the school are good. Leaders have established a culture of higher expectations for pupils and staff. This reflects improvements in teaching across the school, pupils' good behaviour and the standard and quality of work that pupils produce.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and supported by wide-ranging evidence. The school improvement plan provides an effective blueprint for further developments and continues to focus on improving pupils' progress in academic and vocational skills. Governors are actively involved and contribute positively to this process through developing a strategic vision for the next three years.
- The work of teachers and support staff is checked carefully. There are regular 'book trawls' to ensure that pupils are achieving as they should be and that teachers are consistent in their approaches. This has improved the standard and quality of pupils' work, established more consistent practice throughout the school and improved pupils' progress. The link between staff performance and salary progression is appropriate. Where there has been under performance by staff, this has been addressed.
- The range of subjects and experiences offered to pupils is under continual review. Staff are good at making adaptations to ensure that pupils receive the appropriate level of challenge, leading to improved progress in pupils' academic and personal development. Plans to better prepare students for the next stage in their education or training, through a wider range of onsite vocational activities, are in early stages of development. Older students receive suitable impartial careers guidance and advice.
- British values are strongly promoted and prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain. The school's own values and ethos sit well with these. The school is a tolerant and happy community. Democracy and the importance of participating in the process are taught in lessons, assemblies and through voting in youth, student council and mock elections. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well and positive relationships are evident across the school.
- The school fosters good relations and each pupil is treated as an individual, so that equality of opportunity is promoted. The warm and supportive ethos of the school helps to eliminate any form of discrimination.
- Middle leaders have become more confident to share their good practice throughout the school in order to improve teaching and pupils' progress. Senior leaders increasingly provide advice and support to other schools in the borough.
- Additional funding in the form of the pupil premium grant is used effectively to close the gap for disadvantaged pupils in numeracy and literacy.
- The primary physical education and sport premium is spent well to provide additional sporting opportunities for pupils. This has resulted in increased enjoyment of sporting activities by pupils and better levels of health and fitness.
- The school is working with other special schools in the local authority area to agree a preferred approach to assessment following the removal of national curriculum levels.
- The school has good capacity to make further improvement and since the last inspection it has improved well.
- The local authority has confidence in the school and views it as a good and improving school. Advice and support are provided on a light-touch basis. The local authority has provided help and support with the process for recruiting a new headteacher.
- The school's arrangements to ensure pupils are safe and protected meet statutory requirements, and are thoroughly implemented.

- The school's website does not contain all the required information. For example, there are omissions with regard to pupils' progress and achievements at Key Stage 2, and how Year 7 catch-up money is used and the impact of this funding.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body is effective in carrying out its role and working in close partnership with the school. Governors visit the school regularly and have a good understanding of strengths and areas for improvement. They challenge the headteacher constructively. For example, they have asked for simpler assessment information to enable them to understand the progress that pupils make and identify any emerging trends.
- They provide good strategic direction and have supported the school, along with the headteacher, through some difficult times, so that the school is now in a better place and becoming much more confident in the work that it does.
- The governing body ensures that staff actively promote British values through the curriculum. They know how additional sources of funding are spent and the positive impact this has had on pupils' academic and personal development. They have been involved in addressing weaker teaching, ensuring the work of teachers is closely checked and that good teaching is appropriately rewarded.
- Governors receive ample training, such as safeguarding, effective governance and understanding data. They ensure the school is on a financially sound footing and have identified the improvements in accommodation as a key focus for future development.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They have positive attitudes to learning and pupils spoken to said how much they enjoyed and liked school.
- Pupils are keen and enthusiastic learners and this impacts strongly on their rate of progress. Pupils take pride in their school and show respect to people and property. Their neatly presented workbooks reflect this pride.
- Pupils value rewards for working well and earn merits to spend in the school reward shop. Behaviour around the school is good. There have been no racist incidents to record or any fixed-term or permanent exclusions.
- School records show that over time pupils make good improvements in their behaviour. The school cites a number of cases of pupils joining the school not engaging in learning but now able to participate in lessons much more constructively.
- Pupils' attendance overall is just below average, although the latest figures show an improvement so that currently attendance is average.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted through sport, music and performing arts. They enjoy assemblies, which deal with topical issues. Pupils learn about their own and other cultures, and learn to be respectful of differences.
- When teaching does not engage pupils effectively, some pupils lose focus and are less eager to complete their work.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils are greeted off transport in the morning and safely escorted into school. Visitors to school are checked in electronically.

- Pupils spoken to say they feel safe in school and that bullying is not an issue for them. This is also reflected in parental surveys, confirming that their children are safe and happy in school.
- The school has a comprehensive programme to teach pupils online skills to stay safe.
- Safeguarding procedures are comprehensive and up to date. Staff understand and follow the procedures and undertake relevant training.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers have improved the way literacy and reading are taught. They have adopted a systematic approach to teaching pupils how to tackle words and provide regular opportunities for them to read widely and regularly. Similarly, they teach mathematics effectively and pitch work at individual levels for pupils, so that each receives the right amount of challenge.
- Pupils' progress is carefully tracked and the traffic light system the school uses allows easy and quick identification of when pupils are not making expected progress. The marking of pupils' work is consistent across the school and pupils have clear targets in the front of their books for them to achieve.
- Learning is often enjoyable and active. For example, in an English lesson, after watching a video clip of a Harry Potter scene, pupils wrote their ideas on sticky notes and discussed in pairs to develop their use of descriptive words.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils in terms of behaviour and standards of work. Lessons are usually busy and productive, with pupils highly focused on their work. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning contribute to the good progress they make.
- Teaching assistants support pupils' learning well and encourage their independence effectively.
- Questioning is used effectively to test pupils' understanding and extend their thinking and ideas. Through skilled questioning by the teacher in a lesson about democracy related to the general election, pupils were able to identify the main features of political party manifestos.
- Teachers receive good training to keep their knowledge and skills current. They have developed good expertise in teaching pupils with autism and are in the process of having this working nationally accredited.
- Over time, some unevenness in the quality of teaching has led to dips in pupils' progress in some year groups.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children in the early years settle well into school routines and make good progress from low starting points as they have significant delays in their learning. They are prepared well for moving into the main part of the school where this good work is sustained.
- The family outreach team makes an effective contribution to pupils' achievements, providing help and advice to families on areas such as communication, writing and behaviour. This helps to improve pupils' learning.
- Published data suggest that some vulnerable pupils appear not to achieve as well as other pupils in the school. However, inspection findings do not support this view. Those pupils who are supported by the pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding achieve equally well compared with other pupils. This is because their needs are quickly identified and effective additional support for numeracy and literacy helps them make up lost ground.

- The presentation of pupils' work in books is of a high standard. They take care in their written work. A concerted effort to raise expectations across the school has paid dividends.
- In English, the most-able pupils read confidently and fluently and most pupils, regardless of ability, develop an enjoyment of reading. In mathematics, the most-able pupils work out perimeter and areas of complex shapes. Other pupils apply their skills in practical situations such as telling the time or using money.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve equally well, making comparable levels of progress with other pupils in the school.
- Currently numbers are small in Key Stage 4, but the most-able pupils follow GCSE courses at a local secondary school in mathematics and English. All current Year 11 students follow GCSE science courses. The school does not enter students for examinations early. Students achieve awards in functional skills at appropriate levels in line with their abilities.
- The school makes good use of national and local assessment information so that it can measure itself against similar schools. Pupils compare favourably with these measures. Teachers set ambitious targets for pupils, which a large proportion of them go on to achieve.
- Older students achieve vocational awards in preparation for work or college. The school has identified that it could do more to expand the range of vocational courses and independent travel training to better prepare students for when they leave school.
- The primary physical education and sport premium is used to increase pupils' participation in competitive sporting events and widen their experience of different sports. This has improved their health and fitness. However, the unsuitable accommodation limits the achievement of pupils in physical education, as the hall is small and lacking appropriate facilities.
- The accommodation is not suitable for the increased complexity of need and numbers of pupils on the autistic spectrum disorder. The lack of quiet areas and flexible spaces does not allow individual work or therapy to be carried out to meet the needs of these pupils fully.

The early years provision is good

- The quality of education in the early years provision is good. Children join the school with skills that are well below what is typical for their age in all areas of learning.
- The school has set clear expectations of progress for children to achieve, relative to their starting points. Children's progress is closely tracked to ensure that all children regardless of background, gender or need achieve as well as possible. Children do particularly well in their personal, social and emotional development, communication and language and their physical development.
- Children are interested and curious. They enjoy the good range of stimulating activities on offer, particularly mark making, the climbing equipment and the small animals. These experiences provide good stimulation for children and motivate and encourage their communication, personal and social development well.
- Teaching in the early years is good; staff know children well and work closely with parents. Children are provided with interesting activities which stimulate them well. The behaviour and safety of children is good. They learn to follow simple rules, take turns and share toys with each other.
- High quality 'learning journeys' chart children's achievements and illustrate well the depth and breadth of their learning.

- The early years provision is well led and managed. Clear record keeping shows the progress that children make. Children are well prepared for moving to Year 1. Partnership working with parents is strengthened through the family outreach team. This close partnership helps children to settle quickly, address parental concerns and tackle barriers to learning.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Preparation for the next stage of their education, training or employment is good.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	103881
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	462580

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Foundation special
Age range of pupils	4–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	100
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pamela Stevenson
Headteacher	Judi Kings
Date of previous school inspection	9 July 2013
Telephone number	01384 818630
Fax number	Not applicable
Email address	info@halesbury.dudley.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone [0300 123 4234](tel:03001234234), or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and *inspects* to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone [0300 123 4234](tel:03001234234), or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: [0300 123 4234](tel:03001234234)
Textphone: [0161 618 8524](tel:01616188524)
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2015



