

Inspection of Leasowes High School

Kent Road, Halesowen, West Midlands B62 8PJ

Inspection dates:	3 and 4 December 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Christiana Papadopoullos. This school is part of Invictus Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Edward Vitalis, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jessica Shulman.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are justifiably proud to belong to Leasowes High School. The school's motto of 'every day, in every way, our students come first' permeates through school life. Whether this is by providing an ambitious and broad curriculum, offering many opportunities to learn beyond the classroom or keeping pupils safe, the 'Leasowes Learner' is placed at the heart.

The school is calm and purposeful. There are extremely effective relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes towards people from backgrounds different to their own and state that 'you can be different at Leasowes'. Pupils have positive attitudes to their studies. They act maturely around school, including at social times. Pupils enjoy coming to school. All pupils speak highly of the pastoral support and care they receive.

The school has very high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils respond well to these and understand what it means to be a 'Leasowes Learner'. Pupils report high levels of confidence in staff dealing with any issues that may arise. They are proud to be part of the school and embrace the varied opportunities to develop their skills and character, such as theatre visits, Duke of Edinburgh's Award expeditions and school productions.

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

The school's improvement journey has gained momentum over the past eighteen months. Leaders and staff are relentless in their desire to provide pupils with the best possible education. Trustees, local academy council members and senior leaders all understand the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school works closely with trust colleagues to address improvement priorities. Staff, pupils, parents and carers describe a school which is calm and purposeful, with a curriculum that now meets the needs of all pupils.

In 2023, outcomes at the end of Year 11 were too low. With the support of the trust, the school has recently reviewed its curriculum to raise the level of ambition for pupils and improve standards. The curriculum now clearly identifies the key knowledge that pupils need to know, as well as the order in which they need to learn it.

Staff present subject matter clearly. Teachers ensure that learning activities build on pupils' previous learning and use checks of pupils' learning well to identify gaps or misconceptions. This enables staff to refine their teaching so that pupils make good progress through the curriculum. For example, careful explanations and selections of tasks support pupils to make high-quality masks in art. However, this is not consistent across all subjects. On some occasions, pupils' understanding is not checked effectively. At these times, some pupils find it harder to learn the new curriculum as gaps in their knowledge or misconceptions remain.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs accurately identified. Pupils with SEND are well supported and follow the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. There are clear procedures to identify pupils' needs. Teachers

know pupils well. However, at times, teachers do not consistently use the available information about pupils' SEND to adapt their delivery of the curriculum effectively. As a result, pupils with SEND sometimes struggle with the tasks set and do not achieve as well as they should.

The school's approach to helping pupils at the early stages of reading is effective. Pupils who have gaps in their reading knowledge are swiftly identified and receive targeted support to help them to read confidently and fluently. In addition, the school ensures reading is given a high profile. The school ensures that pupils have frequent opportunities to enjoy high-quality texts during form time.

The school's personal development programme is well planned and thorough. Pupils learn about pertinent themes such as healthy relationships and online safety. They also learn about tolerance and respecting those who are different from themselves. Pupils also benefit from high-quality careers guidance, support and advice. Staff ensure that these opportunities for meaningful encounters with the world of work are accessible to all pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teachers do not check pupils' understanding of key knowledge carefully enough. This means that, sometimes, gaps in pupils' learning are not identified quickly enough. As a result, some pupils do not progress through the curriculum as securely as they should. The school should ensure that teachers check pupils' understanding systematically so that any gaps in knowledge can be resolved quickly.
- Sometimes, the school does not ensure that learning activities for pupils with SEND are adapted sufficiently to meet their needs. This means that, on occasion, pupils with SEND do not make the progress that they should in their learning of subject curriculums. The school should ensure that staff's support for learning activities for pupils with SEND matches the ambition of its curriculum so that pupils build their knowledge well over time.

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 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	143582
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10344118
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,060
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jessica Shulman
CEO of the trust	Edward Vitalis
Headteacher	Christiana Papadopoulos
Website	www.leasoweshighschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	24 and 25 September 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Invictus Academies Trust.
- The school uses two registered 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

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth-form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

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.
- The lead inspector met with the CEO of the trust, trustees and members of the local academy council.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, curriculum leaders, teachers and pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science, religious education, design and technology and physical education and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around school and at social times. They considered pupils' views about behaviour and bullying in school. They also spoke with staff about their workload and well-being and about pupils' behaviour.

Inspection team

Neil Warner, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Trudi Young	Ofsted Inspector
Nicola Walters	Ofsted Inspector
Jo Evans	Ofsted Inspector

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