

Uxbridge High School

The Greenway, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 2PR

Inspection dates

28 February–1 March 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The principal's strong leadership has led to rapid improvements in the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils since the last inspection. Pupils make good progress in all year groups and in most subjects.
- Pupils develop skills, interests and knowledge in a wide range of subjects because of the school's well-planned curriculum and a wealth of extra-curricular activities.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. Pupils show respect for each other and their teachers, and are proud to uphold the values of the school.
- Pupils are very well supported by staff in both their learning and in their welfare to enable them to make a success of their education. All groups of pupils do well.
- The school has meticulous systems and routines for safeguarding pupils. Pupils are alert to risks outside school and know how to keep themselves safe because of the guidance they receive at school.
- The sixth form provides a studious and vibrant learning environment in which students gain valuable study skills. They consistently achieve well in vocational subjects. The quality of teaching has remained good since the last inspection and is improving. Students are making better progress in A-level subjects.
- High-quality careers guidance helps pupils to be well prepared for the next steps in their education.
- Leaders' initiatives to improve teaching since the last inspection have been successful so that the quality of teaching is good. Teachers use assessment information well so that pupils receive the support they need to make good progress. There are a few occasions when teaching is less strong so that pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Some new and refined systems need to be fully embedded to sustain and build on the recent improvements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to develop leadership so that:
 - systems to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are embedded, leading to a sustained trend of improvement in outcomes for pupils, including students in the sixth form
 - inconsistencies in the use of key strategies are eliminated.
- Ensure that good practice in teaching is shared and reflected in all subjects so that:
 - teachers' use of the school's assessment systems is routinely effective in enabling pupils to make the progress of which they are capable
 - the quality of A-level provision across the curriculum continues to improve so that more students make strong progress from their starting points and achieve the highest grades.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the last inspection, the principal has worked with admirable determination, commitment and persistence to further improve the school. He has built a capable and dedicated leadership team which upholds his high and steadfast expectations. This strong leadership has led to rapid improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and outcomes for pupils since the last inspection.
- The principal rightly recognises the importance of providing additional responsibilities and further development opportunities for middle leaders. Senior leaders provide valuable training, including modelling good practice and coaching, to develop the leadership skills required of curriculum and pastoral leaders. Middle leaders are increasingly able to hold members of their teams to account for the quality of their work.
- Leaders have well-organised systems for the monitoring of the quality of teaching. Their evaluations of strengths and areas to improve are accurate and are used to inform training needs and provide support on an individual and whole-school basis. Teachers collaborate well to share good practice and ideas. New initiatives, such as teacher triads, when three teachers of varying levels of experience work together to help them develop their teaching further, are well received. The regular open-classrooms week is a worthwhile investment in time and hard work, enabling many teachers to visit each other's lessons and gather new ideas for their classes.
- Newly qualified teachers feel well supported to be successful in their new teaching careers, commenting on the ever-open door to ask colleagues for advice. The large majority of staff who responded to the survey for this inspection agree that they are proud to be a member of staff at the school. They agree that leaders' use of professional development helps to improve teaching.
- Pupils have a broad choice of subjects to study, and feel well informed by their teachers to make the decisions that are right for them. They broaden their horizons and enrich their studies through links with a diversity of organisations, such as the Royal Shakespeare Company and Brentford Football Club Community Trust. There are extensive extra-curricular activities, including regular trips to the theatre, museums, galleries and a range of locations to promote pupils' interests in different careers. Pupils extend their talents and knowledge in clubs covering a wide range of sporting, creative and performing arts interests. Leaders carefully track the uptake of these to ensure that they provide equal opportunities for different groups of pupils.
- Leaders pay close attention to the opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development across all subject areas in assemblies, tutor times and special events. Teachers apply their subjects creatively to citizenship topics so that pupils gain, for example, an understanding of voting systems and develop their debating skills. Leaders provide teachers with high-quality resources and information and organise guest speakers so that pupils receive guidance on, for example, sex and relationship education and stress management.

- The house system has become well established and, along with the 'proud' values, serves to improve pupils' attitudes to their learning and deepen their camaraderie.
- Leaders make sure that the small number of pupils who attend alternative provision are looked after well. The school monitors the pupils' progress closely. They receive a programme of activities, support and tuition which help them to overcome difficulties and develop a more positive attitude to their education.
- Leaders oversee the expenditure of external funding, such as the pupil premium and the Year 7 catch-up premium, effectively. They ensure that groups of pupils and individuals receive the support they need to thrive. Pupils receive personalised guidance matched to their particular individual needs in the flexible learning centre (FLC). This includes those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, those who speak English as an additional language and those who need to improve their literacy skills. Specialist teaching assistants and mentors enable pupils to develop their skills, grow in self-esteem and make progress, reinforcing the school's sense of safety and learning in the FLC.
- The principal and governors draw wisely on external support, for example to boost subject-leader capacity and leadership development, and for external reviews of policy and practice.
- Leaders have clear strategies in place to ensure that the improvements made swiftly since the last inspection are sustained. New and refined systems, such as that for the monitoring of the quality of teaching, are becoming embedded.

Governance of the school

- Governors demonstrate commitment and dedication to improving their effectiveness since the last inspection. They have recruited appropriately to extend their range of skills. They are able to draw helpfully on their professional backgrounds and experience to fulfil their responsibilities.
- Governors have open and frequent communications with school leaders, including productive meetings with their link subjects. They ensure that leaders' reporting is clear and comprehensive to keep them well informed about key priority areas, such as the progress of groups of pupils and safeguarding matters. Through external training, they are growing in confidence in asking school leaders the right questions to help drive the school's priorities for improvement.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The leadership of safeguarding is strong. Leaders' organisation of extensive records relating to child protection and safeguarding concerns is thorough. Clear processes for staff to report any concerns are followed up swiftly. Leaders liaise and persist with outside agencies to provide support for pupils and families as needed. Staff are alert to signs of pupils being at risk, for example of going missing from education, of female genital mutilation and of radicalisation, making referrals appropriately.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils focus well on their work because they are motivated by their teachers' strong subject knowledge. Teachers promote pupils' interests so that they are inquisitive and keen to learn. The atmosphere in lessons is typically purposeful, where teachers forge positive relationships with and between pupils and nurture a safe and trusting learning environment.
- Pupils are responsive to their teachers' high expectations and embark swiftly on well-established routines for the completion of tasks and review of their work. Pupils are clear on what they need to do in lessons and can articulate this well because of their teachers' clear explanations.
- Teachers draw on a range of effective strategies and helpful resources to stimulate pupils' imagination and develop useful research skills. They provide opportunities for pupils to develop their reading and comprehension skills across different subjects.
- Teachers generally ask demanding questions and pupils enjoy choosing challenging tasks. Teachers deepen pupils' understanding and put right pupils' misconceptions. Pupils work well together and support each other's learning.
- Teachers use accurate assessment information to identify when individual pupils and groups in their class are at risk of falling behind. Extra help given, for example to pupils to improve their literacy, to most-able pupils and to those who have SEN and/or disabilities, is successful in enabling them to make better progress. Key strategies are becoming established to support these groups equally effectively in the classroom.
- Pupils routinely improve their work and are confident about what they need to do to gain higher marks because of the guidance their teachers have given them. They persevere admirably to put right any mistakes, and celebrate each other's successes. Most teachers and pupils use the school's 'feed forward' system productively so that the quality and accuracy of pupils' work get better. There are occasions when teachers do not follow leaders' expectations for using this system so that pupils do not make as much progress, for example in their use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils respond eagerly to the school's 'proud' values. They take great pride in showing the badges they are awarded in assemblies for demonstrating qualities such as being positive, respectful, open-minded, unique and determined. Leaders' nurturing and recognition of pupils' positive attitudes towards each other considerably boost their self-esteem and mutual respect.
- Pupils benefit greatly from an impressive range of outside speakers and themed assemblies. Pupils receive clear guidance on ways in which to keep themselves safe, for example when working online. Pupils know about risks in the local community because of information they receive in school and their regular work with the safer-schools officer.

- Leaders demonstrate a high level of care for each pupil's needs. Pupils feel very well supported by their teachers in school if they have any worries. Younger pupils appreciate the opportunity to talk to specially trained peer mentors from older year groups.
- Pupils acquire an excellent understanding of the world of work and begin to make choices about their future employment from the earliest stages in the school. They receive very helpful guidance about personal skills and qualifications appropriate for their career aspirations. They are able to make well-informed decisions about the next steps in their education.
- Overall attendance has improved and is above the national average. Leaders implement a wide range of strategies to support those individuals and groups of pupils who are persistently absent from school. The Wessex House initiative supports those with poor attendance, providing them with specific programmes of support and raised expectations. As a result, additional interventions and sanctions are no longer needed.
- Leaders give pupils opportunities to have periods of contemplation and quiet, with daily reflection times in tutor time and assemblies, and the use of the reflection room at lunchtimes. This is appreciated by pupils, for example if they want to have a calm time before sitting an examination.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils manage their behaviour very well at the start and end of the school day and between lessons. They move around the school calmly and settle swiftly in lessons. It is notable that there were snowy and very icy conditions on the days of the inspection and inspectors did not see any irresponsible or unsafe behaviour.
- Pupils are very welcoming and well mannered. In lessons and assemblies, pupils listen to each other respectfully, share good humour and are loyal to and appreciative of their school's values.
- Systems for the recording and tracking of behaviour incidents are used extremely effectively by teachers so that there is prompt follow-up in the rare cases when pupils' behaviour needs to improve. Pupils are clear on how the system works and note that behaviour in the school has got much better in recent years. This is borne out by leaders' records, which show a reduction in repeat offenders and in the incidence of exclusions. Individual pupils have improved their behaviour as a result of the work of the heads of house and guidance leaders, the close communications with parents and carers and the range of support available in the FLC. Incidents of poor behaviour are rare.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2017, pupils at the end of key stage 4 made above-average progress in a range of subjects, including mathematics, English and science. Attainment has improved and is at or above the national average for pupils from their different starting points.

- All groups of pupils make good progress. Disadvantaged pupils achieve as well as their peers. The progress made by most-able pupils and pupils who speak English as an additional language is a strength of the school.
- Leaders have developed their systems for checking the accuracy of teachers' assessments, including working with other schools for moderation. Leaders' regular review of pupils' progress in all year groups enables prompt identification of those who are underachieving and puts in place support for individual pupils. In Year 7, for example, the extra help pupils receive with literacy and numeracy when they need it ensures that they catch up quickly. The school's achievement information and work in pupils' books show that pupils in key stage 3 make good progress.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their different starting points as a result of extensive help to meet their individual needs.
- Pupils read widely and often because of their regular use of the library and the opportunities in lessons, including reading out loud frequently. A range of initiatives, the sharing of literacy information with staff and the checking of comprehension all serve to boost pupils' interest and skills in reading. Pupils were enthralled by the talks given by authors who visited the school on World Book Day during the inspection.
- Improvements to the quality of teaching in the school and a full programme of careers guidance ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.
- Leaders are rightly focusing on improving the quality of teaching in the few subjects in which pupils are making less-than-average progress. This work is beginning to make a difference.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Sixth-form leaders are ambitious for students and the school and have been proactive in facilitating improvement.
- The broad curriculum offer meets the needs of students so that they are able to study the subjects they need to pursue their career choices. Leaders recognise the importance of students broadening their interests and experiences beyond their academic studies. All students select additional activities, such as mentoring younger pupils in the school, helping with sports coaching and participation in schemes such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and the Young Enterprise charity.
- Students receive helpful and bespoke careers guidance and support with university applications so that they are well placed to pursue the courses of their choice. They benefit from the school's links with outside organisations, including nearby Brunel University, which provide students with insight into a range of professions and the world of work.
- Students rapidly develop a range of valuable study skills, including research and managing their working routines independently. They are well prepared for the next steps in their education. The school's careful follow-up of students' destinations after they leave the sixth form shows that nearly all progress to university, further education or apprenticeships.

- Teachers and students interact very positively and there is a high level of pastoral support. Students who spoke to inspectors, and expressing the views of others, described the sixth form as a 'vibrant community' where the 'pursuit of knowledge is encouraged' and 'teachers care'. Students are aware of ways in which to keep themselves safe and healthy through the topics discussed in regular citizenship sessions and assemblies.
- There is sustained high-quality provision of vocational courses. Students do consistently well in their achievement in vocational qualifications.
- Students appreciate their teachers' subject specialism and how approachable they are if they need extra help with their studies. Students are very clear on the requirements of their courses. They know what they need to do to achieve their target grades because their teachers provide them with detailed and regular assessments, in accordance with the school's policy.
- Students have purposeful attitudes to their learning in the stimulating lessons their teachers provide. Students organise their work well and are proud of their achievements. They are ambitious for their future careers. They value the opportunity to complete high-quality work experience opportunities that are directly relevant to, and strengthen, their applications for courses and jobs in the future.
- Leaders have had a proactive response to disappointing results in some A-level subjects in 2017 so that assessment and monitoring systems are now more stringent. Leaders ensure that teachers' assessments are accurate. Current achievement information indicates that students are making much better progress in A-level subjects this year.
- Initiatives to improve teaching and learning have been effective. Leaders recognise accurately that teachers' expectations for students' more productive use of time and set tasks need to be more challenging in some cases so that more pupils attain higher grades. While overall the progress made by pupils who retake GCSE mathematics and English is in line with the national picture, the progress of some students in these qualifications needs to improve.

School details

Unique reference number	136768
Local authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	10047284

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1235
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	204
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Peter Waine
Principal	Nigel Clemens
Telephone number	01895 234 060
Website	www.uhs.org.uk
Email address	office@uhs.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	22–23 June 2016

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- More pupils than average are eligible for support from the pupil premium funding.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is higher than average. Approximately one half of the pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportions of pupils who receive support for SEN and/or disabilities or who have a statement of special educational needs are close to the national average.
- The school makes use of alternative provision at The Skills Hub, Old School Building, Providence Road, Yiewsley, Middlesex UB7 8HJ for a few pupils.

- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for attainment and progress of pupils by the end of key stage 4.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 38 lessons, sometimes accompanied by school leaders. Briefer visits to lessons were also made as part of learning walks.
- Inspectors held meetings with school leaders, the chair and vice-chair of governors, a parent governor, groups of staff and pupils. One inspector held a telephone conversation with a member of staff at the alternative provision used by the school. Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of school documentation.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils around the school and in lessons, and held informal conversations with staff and pupils.
- One inspector attended an assembly. Another visited events being held as part of World Book Day.
- Inspectors took into account the responses to surveys completed by staff and pupils and to Parent View, the online questionnaire.

Inspection team

Amanda Carter-Fraser, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Geoff Butler	Ofsted Inspector
Johanna Davey	Ofsted Inspector
Yvonne Chisholm	Ofsted Inspector
Andy Webster	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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