

Inspection of Small Heath Leadership Academy

Muntz Street, Small Heath, Birmingham, West Midlands B10 9RX

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 May 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils value the education that they receive at Small Heath Leadership Academy. They say that staff go out of their way to help them when they need it. Pupils say that the 'STAR' values of service, teamwork, ambition and respect create a community in which diversity is celebrated. They say that bullying is rare and that teachers deal with it when it does happen.

Pupils really value the extensive opportunities they have to take on leadership roles in the school. Pupils support each other well. For example, new pupils for whom English is an additional language are supported by pupil mentors who help them integrate well into the school. Pupils value the support that they receive from their peers, which they say is one of the strengths of the school.

Leaders have high aspirations for their pupils, and pupils work hard in lessons to meet these expectations. Leaders work with the wider community to make sure that pupils are aware of the opportunities that they have outside of school. For example, links with top universities allow pupils to learn about higher education and employer visits explore careers pupils may follow.

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

Leaders are ambitious for their pupils, and they expect them to do well. Leaders have thought carefully about what they want pupils to learn and in most subjects, they have designed a well-sequenced curriculum. In these subjects, important knowledge is clearly identified, and teachers use this effectively to plan what they are going to teach. For example, in music, by the end of Year 8, pupils are using their knowledge of tempo and rhythm to support their own compositions of different musical genres, building on the work they have done in Year 7. Curriculum plans clearly identify opportunities for teachers to check pupils' knowledge. However, teachers do not consistently use this to good effect. Teachers do not act on what pupils do not know consistently enough and this means that gaps build in some pupils' knowledge.

Leaders have introduced clear routines for the start of lessons, where they help pupils to remember what they have learned previously. Most teachers implement these consistently. However, pupils are not routinely given the opportunity to extend and apply their knowledge in lessons. This sometimes stops pupils from retaining important information over time.

Leaders promote the importance of reading. Pupils are encouraged to read widely and often. All pupils participate in the school's reading programme. Pupils at the early stages of reading are identified quickly and supported to be able to develop fluent reading skills. Leaders are currently implementing a new phonics scheme in order to further accelerate reading progress.

Teachers manage behaviour well in the classroom through clear, consistent routines. All staff support movement around the school and at social times. Pupils know leaders' expectations and understand the consequences if they do not meet them. Leaders support pupils who need additional help effectively, and pupils value this support. Pupils are enthusiastic about the rewards they receive when they get things right.

The extensive curriculum for personal development prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Leaders have focused on developing the behaviours pupils will need to be responsible, respectful and active citizens through the curriculum and the 'Star Diploma'. Some pupils say that they would like the opportunity to participate in more extra-curricular clubs. This would enable all pupils to experience a broad range of activities. Pupils have access to an effective careers programme.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified by leaders and appropriate support plans are put in place. Some of the plans do not contain as much useful information as others, and leaders are reviewing these to make sure that teachers have the correct information to support all pupils with SEND effectively. Pupils who attend the Hearing Resource Centre have access to high-quality support and this helps them to achieve well.

Leaders are passionate about the school. They make sure that all pupils can achieve ambitious outcomes. This vision is shared by governors who are proud to be part of the school. Leaders have more work to do to make sure that the curriculum fully reflects their ambitions.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding leaders are experienced and well qualified. They understand the risks to their pupils and the particular issues that pupils might face. Leaders deal with complex safeguarding cases effectively, taking care to provide the support that pupils and their families need. Leaders make appropriate referrals to outside agencies and are relentless in making sure that pupils get the help that they need.

Staff receive extensive training, and this helps them to report concerns that they may have about pupils. Leaders use this information to make sure that they provide all pupils with the education they need to keep themselves safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not made sure that all teachers use their checks on pupils' learning to inform their teaching. This means that gaps in knowledge are not always remedied quickly enough. Leaders should make sure that teachers use the

information they gain from these checks of understanding to inform their practice.

- Leaders have not made sure that pupils have sufficient opportunities to deepen and extend their knowledge in lessons. This stops pupils from retaining important information and using this knowledge to apply it to new situations. Leaders should ensure that curriculum plans provide effective opportunities for pupils to extend their learning and remember more 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	144464
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10227749
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1157
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Kamruddin Kothia
Principal	Enass Al-Ani
Website	www.smallheathleadershipacademy.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined the Star Academies Trust in January 2018.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with hearing difficulties, with eight pupils currently attending.
- The school uses two registered alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and other senior and middle leaders, including curriculum leaders and the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors held discussions with teachers and representatives of the multi-academy trust.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, science, mathematics, geography and music. For each of these subjects, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with members of staff individually and in groups and spoke to pupils at various points during the inspection. Inspectors took account of responses to pupil and staff surveys, as well as Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors looked at records relating to behaviour, bullying, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding arrangements by checking the school's approach to staff's recruitment, scrutinising policy documents and meeting with the designated safeguarding lead.

Inspection team

Claire Price, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Lois Kelly	Ofsted Inspector
Tim Bassett	Ofsted Inspector
Mike Onyon	Ofsted Inspector

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