

Inspection of a good school: Lime Academy Hornbeam

Folly Lane, Walthamstow, London E17 5NT

Inspection dates:

5 and 6 December 2023

Outcome

Lime Academy Hornbeam continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Sean Egan. This school is part of Lime Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Kirsten Jowett, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Christopher Cole.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school where everyone is made to feel welcome. Pupils are kind and accepting of others. They work and play alongside one another, regardless of differences.

Staff get to know pupils well. This helps them to identify when something may be out of the ordinary for their pupils. Staff use this knowledge to keep pupils safe and provide them with personalised support. Pupils are well looked after and trusted staff help them if they need it. The school is a calm and settled environment where, overall, pupils behave well.

Pupils rise to the challenges and high expectations set by staff. Students in the sixth form are encouraged to be ambitious for their future adult lives. Pupils enjoy all that the school has to offer. Younger pupils, for example, get involved in all sorts of activities in school, including trampolining and cooking. Other opportunities include fencing and learning to play the ukulele.

Pupils take on different responsibilities in school, such as their work on the school council. Pupils participate in school-wide events. For example, by setting up and selling books at the school's book fair.

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

Leaders have been well supported by the trust to review and refine the school's curriculum. Together, they have established a broad and ambitious curriculum which, in most subjects, sets out clearly what pupils need to know and be able to do. However, in a few subjects, curriculum thinking lacks precision. In these subjects, it is not as clear what

pupils on each 'curriculum pathway' are expected to be taught and when. The school and the trust work together to enhance the subject expertise of staff.

Teachers present information clearly and promote pupils' use of vocabulary across the curriculum. Teachers check pupils' understanding in lessons and correct misconceptions when they arise. However, the school's checks on what pupils know, remember, and can do over time are not routinely effective at picking up and addressing any gaps in pupils' knowledge. As a result, sometimes pupils do not have the understanding they need for new or more complex learning.

The school prioritises the teaching of early reading. Pupils who are at the stage of learning to read using books are given texts that are matched to the phonics sounds they know.

The curriculum is underpinned by three key aspects. These relate to pupils' independence, communication and emotional well-being. Staff are skilled at fostering these principles. All this helps pupils to engage in their learning, to communicate their needs and ask for help, and to develop positive working relationships with adults and each other. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils respond well to these. When pupils become upset, angry or anxious, staff use their expertise to make sure that pupils are well supported to manage their feelings and emotions.

The school has taken decisive action to improve pupils' rates of attendance. This includes working with parents and carers to identify the barriers that affect attendance. The school motivates pupils to attend regularly. For example, staff celebrate and reward pupils who attend regularly or whose attendance has improved.

Leaders focus on providing opportunities for all pupils that prepare them for adulthood. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including travelling in the community, and to take care of their personal health. They are encouraged to think about a wide range of careers and to be ambitious for their futures. Pupils, including students in the sixth form, visit places of work and explore different industries. They have regular outings, such as to a local farm or to go horse riding. These give pupils opportunities to practise and rehearse skills taught in school as well as to build confidence and resilience.

The school works in close partnership with other settings and experts in the trust to evaluate and improve the school's work. Trustees and the local advisory council have a range of knowledge and skills, which equips them to support the school's leaders effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, curriculum thinking lacks precision. It is not routinely clear what pupils on each 'curriculum pathway' are expected to be taught in these subjects. The use of assessment is not used routinely well to identify what pupils know and to inform their next steps in learning. The school should continue to develop curriculum thinking so that, in all subjects, staff are clear about what to teach and when for pupils on each pathway. The school should ensure that checks on pupil's learning identify what pupils know and can do and what they need to learn next.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 June 2018.

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

Unique reference number	138454
Local authority	London Borough of Waltham Forest
Inspection number	10290210
Type of school	Special
School category	Academy special converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	283
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	52
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Christopher Cole
Headteacher	Sean Egan
Website	www.limeacademyhornbeam.org
Dates of previous inspection	20 and 21 June, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been a number of changes to the leadership team since the previous inspection. The headteacher has been in post since March 2023.
- The school caters for pupils with a range of special educational needs. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school makes use of one registered alternative provider.
- The school operates on two sites, the William Morris Campus, Folly Lane, Walthamstow, E17 5NT and Brookfield House Campus, Alders Avenue, Woodford Green, Essex, IG8 9PY.
- 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 judgement 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, English, mathematics and physical development. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, had discussions with staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects as part of this inspection.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for improvement.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record of pre-employment checks; 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 met with senior leaders, teachers and the wider school team.
- Inspectors met with the chair of the trust and other trustees.
- Inspectors met with the chair and other members of the academy council.
- They also considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents, staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Kieran Bird, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Deborah Walters

His Majesty's Inspector

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