Selston High School

Chapel Road, Selston, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG16 6BW

Inspection dates	2–3 April 2019

Overall effectiveness	**Good**
Effectiveness of leadership and management	**Good**
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	**Good**
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	**Good**
Outcomes for pupils	**Good**
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Senior leaders have accurately identified the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their improvement plans are having a positive impact.

- The trust supports and challenges school leaders effectively.

- Leaders ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of the pupils, with an increased number of vocational courses available.

- Pastoral leadership is strong. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school site. Exclusions are declining.

- Subject leaders have been instrumental in improving the quality of teaching.

- The quality of teaching is good. Most teachers use strong subject knowledge to plan clear sequences of learning. Their questioning skills are effective.

- Pupils achieve well in mathematics and science.

- Pupils' progress is improving, particularly in Year 10 and key stage 3. Disadvantaged pupils' progress is improving across most year groups.

- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They treat others with respect. Their mental health needs are supported well.

- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning.

- Leaders are committed to a school that is inclusive. When necessary, leaders make effective use of alternative providers to meet pupils' individual needs.

- Overall, pupils' attendance is above the national average.

- Most teachers make effective use of the school's policy on feedback to help pupils to improve their work.

- A small number of teachers do not provide work that is sufficiently challenging to the most able pupils or appropriate support to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is promoted well. However, some subject areas do not contribute as effectively to this development as others.

- Some teachers do not insist on pupils using spelling, punctuation and grammar accurately.

- Governors do not always challenge leaders to ensure that additional government funding is used as effectively as possible.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - governors challenge leaders to use additional government funding even more effectively to raise the achievement of eligible pupils
  - leaders enhance the current provision to ensure that all subject areas contribute to securing pupils' SMSC development.
- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that all teachers:
  - set the most able pupils work that is sufficiently challenging
  - use the school's system for providing pupils with feedback consistently, so that all pupils know how to improve their work
  - provide pupils with SEND with effective support, so that these pupils' progress continues to improve
  - have consistently high expectations of pupils' accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Inspection judgements

| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Good |

- Since the headteacher took up the position in September 2017, the school has experienced a period of stable senior leadership. Staff morale is high and the school continues to improve.

- Recent changes to senior leadership responsibilities have given a fresh impetus to school improvement. Staff understand senior leaders' 'top ten' expectations and the clearly communicated vision.

- Leaders have an accurate view of the quality of the provision. They know the school's strengths well and ensure that plans for improvement focus on identified weakness.

- Senior leaders have strengthened the capacity of subject leaders. Some subject leaders are undertaking leadership qualifications to develop their skills further. They gain valuable experience working with other colleagues within the trust. Subject leaders have a positive impact on reducing any inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.

- There are strengths at all levels of pastoral leadership. Leaders track and monitor pupils' behaviour and attendance rigorously. They provide timely support for vulnerable pupils who require it. As a result, for the majority of pupils, their behaviour and attendance continue to improve.

- The school's curriculum is well balanced. Leaders have made recent changes to meet the needs of some pupils more closely. This broadening of the curriculum has led to an improvement in achievement, particularly in vocational qualifications at key stage 4.

- Pupils engage positively with an extensive range of extra-curricular activities as part of the weekly enrichment curriculum. These activities enhance pupils' learning successfully beyond the classroom.

- Leaders track pupils' progress and attainment closely. They use evidence to identify those pupils who are underperforming so that these pupils can receive additional support. Pupils who receive this support make better progress as a result.

- Leaders have raised the profile of disadvantaged pupils significantly. Teachers prioritise the needs of these pupils when planning learning. Leaders' close mentoring of some of these pupils is helping to raise their self-esteem. Disadvantaged pupils are beginning to make stronger progress.

- Leaders respond to teachers' training needs effectively to enhance the overall quality of teaching and learning. Teachers, including those who are new to the profession, reflect closely on their own practice and identify individual areas to improve, as well as focusing on whole-school initiatives.

- Leaders prepare pupils well for the world of work. From Year 7 onwards, pupils learn about different career opportunities. Leaders provide disadvantaged pupils with close support to raise their aspirations and to promote different post-16 pathways.

- Leaders ensure that most teachers use information about pupils' prior learning sufficiently well in their planning to ensure that they set work at the right level.

- Leaders use the Year 7 catch-up funding effectively to help pupils eligible for extra support. These pupils making notable improvements, particularly in literacy.

- Leaders provide pupils with appropriate opportunities to develop their understanding of a range of SMSC issues, particularly through the school's 'Pledge Award'. Leaders are in the process of reviewing pupils' SMSC provision to ensure that all areas of the curriculum contribute well to this aspect of pupils' learning.

Governance of the school

- Governors and the trust have had a positive impact on improving the quality of pupils' education, as well as enhancing the condition of the school environment.

- Governors are well informed and committed. They have forged supportive links with the school's leaders. Governors have benefited from training to develop their skills in relation to, for instance, pupils' outcomes and exclusions.

- Governors hold leaders increasingly to account for pupils' progress. They recognise that leaders use additional government funding well. However, they do not always provide enough challenge to ensure that leaders use this funding even more sharply to support eligible pupils in their achievement.

- Governors have received recent training on safeguarding issues. They ensure that leaders' systems to recruit new staff and volunteers are secure.

- Trust representatives work closely with senior leaders to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning and monitor the impact of leaders' improvement plans. Where appropriate, they provide leaders with additional training, including through learning from the best practice of other leaders within the trust.

- The trust has secured valuable external support that has been effective in improving the quality and consistency of teaching and learning.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

- Leaders responsible for safeguarding ensure that they carry out all the appropriate checks before staff and volunteers start working at the school.

- A team of well-trained and committed staff support the leader responsible for safeguarding effectively. Leaders are tenacious in following up any concerns that staff raise about pupils.

- Leaders maintain suitably comprehensive and up-to-date records of safeguarding concerns. They appreciate the potential dangers posed to pupils when in the local community. Leaders closely monitor pupils identified as being at risk, including children who are in the care of the local authority.

- Leaders liaise closely with external agencies to ensure that pupils receive appropriate help. They are conscious of threats posed by radicalisation and extremism and have made 'Prevent' referrals when necessary.
- Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They are fully aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and take their duties seriously. They can identify signs that a pupil may be at risk and understand the need to make a timely referral to leaders.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good

- Relationships between adults and pupils are productive and supportive. Teachers create a positive learning environment in lessons. Most teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Pupils' engagement in their learning is generally strong. This helps them to develop their confidence and self-esteem. They respond positively to praise and value the rewards which recognise their efforts to do well. Pupils are usually attentive and listen well in class. They are respectful of others, including their peers, adults and visitors.
- Teachers have a strong grasp of their subject and the external assessment requirements. They use appropriate strategies to help pupils recall their knowledge and make links between different areas of their learning. Pupils then make effective use of their skills to apply their understanding successfully to examination-style questions.
- A whole-school focus on improving teachers' questioning skills is having a positive impact. Many teachers use skilful questioning to elicit more complex responses from pupils. For instance, some teachers encourage pupils to clarify their peers' misconceptions. Furthermore, teachers make effective use of questions to explore pupils' ideas, before consolidating their understanding.
- Effective modelling of high-quality answers by teachers provides pupils with immediate feedback. This allows pupils to improve their responses and apply their learning to new problems. Year 11 pupils in particular appreciate this focused support.
- Year 7 pupils read with confidence. They show resilience when decoding unfamiliar words and identify literacy devices in the text accurately.
- Teachers' use of the school's new feedback policy is increasingly effective, for example in English, mathematics and computing. In the best examples, pupils receive detailed guidance to improve their work, enabling them to make positive progress.
- Additional adults use skilled guidance to help pupils with SEND to engage more fully with their learning. This leads to an improvement in these pupils' achievement.
- In a small number of cases, teachers do not use information about pupils' prior learning well enough to ensure that they set pupils work at the right level. These teachers do not provide the most able pupils with tasks that are suitably challenging to help them to deepen their learning. Similarly, they do not ensure that pupils with SEND receive appropriate support.
- Some teachers do not ensure that pupils use spelling, punctuation and grammar accurately in their written work.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.

- Pupils are polite and courteous to each other. Mutual respect between pupils and staff is clearly evident. There is a convivial atmosphere during social times and a calm learning environment throughout lessons.

- Pupils feel safe, well cared for and supported in school. Pupils are taught about reducing the risks they may face in the community, including in relation to substance abuse, knife crime, and staying safe online or when travelling to school. All pupils have completed basic first-aid training successfully.

- Staff in the student support centre respond swiftly to provide help that meets any additional pastoral and mental health needs that pupils may have.

- Pupils treat others from different cultures, religions or social backgrounds with respect. Those who identify as being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) are accepted fully within the school community. Incidents of racism or homophobic abuse are rare.

- Pupils' achievements are celebrated through a rich variety of rewards, including awards for attendance, behaviour, achieving the school's 'Pledge Award', sporting success or being a digital leader.

- The small number of pupils who receive some or all of their education through off-site alternative providers attend regularly and behave well. They access a range of appropriate qualifications, according to their needs. Leaders work closely with the providers so that these pupils are safe and their welfare needs are met fully.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.

- The school is inclusive. Leaders provide pupils with additional support and alternative courses to help them complete their studies. No pupils have been permanently excluded from school over the previous three years.

- The proportion of pupils excluded from school for a fixed term is slightly above the national average, but declining.

- Following the introduction of a revised behaviour policy, which teachers are applying with greater consistency, pupils' behaviour has noticeably improved. As a result, fewer pupils spend learning time in the 'inclusion' room.

- Leaders promote a clear anti-bullying message regularly to pupils and parents and carers. The school was awarded the 'Anti-Bullying Alliance' gold award in October 2018. School records indicate that incidents of bullying have declined. Most pupils who spoke with inspectors said that bullying was dealt with effectively by adults.

- The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school has been below the national average for the previous three years and continues to reduce.

- Attendance has been above the national average for the previous three years. The attendance of current pupils continues to be good.

| **Outcomes for pupils** | **Good** |

- Leaders have taken effective action to bring about improvements in pupils' progress, most notably of current pupils. This is due to a consistently good quality of teaching and learning and teachers' raised expectations.

- The school's performance information and pupils' books indicate that current pupils are making better progress than that seen previously. This is particularly the case for pupils in Year 10 across a wide range of subjects, including English and mathematics.

- Pupils' attainment is improving. An increased proportion of pupils in Years 10 and 11 are on track to achieve at least a grade 4 in GCSE English and mathematics.

- In 2018, the progress of pupils in mathematics and science was in line with national averages. Current pupils continue to achieve well in these subjects.

- Pupils' attainment in vocational subjects is a strength, as well as in art, physical education and photography.

- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is improving, most notably for pupils in Year 10 and those in key stage 3. In these year groups, disadvantaged pupils' progress is moving closer to that of other pupils nationally.

- Over time, pupils' progress in humanities and modern foreign languages has been poor. In both, current pupils' progress is improving, particularly in Year 10.

- Pupils in key stage 3 are making good progress in English, mathematics and science.

- The majority of Year 11 pupils who left at the end of the last academic year moved on to some form of education or training successfully.

- Pupils who attend off-site alternative provision engage well in their learning because they study an appropriate choice of qualifications. These pupils secure the life skills necessary to move on to the next stage of their education or training.

- In 2018, most-able pupils did not make the progress that they should in comparison with similar pupils nationally. Current most-able pupils in Year 10 and key stage 3 are making stronger progress.

- Pupils with SEND enter the school with attainment below that of their peers. Previously these pupils have not made as much progress as they should. However, the progress of current pupils with SEND is improving.

School details

Unique reference number	142725
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10100723

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
Number of pupils on the school roll	796
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Karen Potts
Headteacher	Paul Halcro
Telephone number	01773 810321
Website	www.selstonhigh.org.uk
Email address	enquiries@selstonhigh.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- In April 2016, the school was the founding member of the Two Counties Trust.
- The headteacher was appointed to the role in September 2017. At the same time, the chief executive officer of the trust took up the substantive position.
- The senior team has recently been restructured. Some members of the team have taken on different leadership responsibilities.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school. It has a growing number of pupils on its roll.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is similar to the national average.

- The proportion of pupils with SEND, including those who have an education, health and care plan, is below average.

- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.

- The school is registered for sixth-form provision. However, it has not admitted sixth-form students since 2001.

- The school works closely with other local secondary schools to support a small group of pupils with their behaviour.

- The school uses the following alternative providers: Buxton Training Enterprises; East Midlands Vocational Academy; Pollyteach; CAST; and The Spring Learning Centre, within Holgate Academy. Some pupils also use EDLounge, which is an online provider.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 43 lessons across a wide range of subjects in both key stages 3 and 4. Many of these lessons were observed jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors also observed tutor time and one assembly.

- Inspectors looked at work in pupils' books across a range of subjects and year groups, with a particular focus on English and the work of pupils with SEND.

- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders and with teachers.

- The lead inspector met with the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the trust. She also met with representatives of the local governing body, including the chair.

- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour before school, during lessons and during breaktimes and lunchtimes.

- Inspectors spoke formally with pupils from key stages 3 and 4 and pupils with SEND. Inspectors also spoke informally with other pupils.

- An inspector listened to pupils from Year 7 read.

- An inspector spoke with representatives from four out of the six alternative providers that a small number of pupils from the school attend.

- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents relating to the school's provision, including: self-evaluation and improvement planning; minutes of meetings of the local governing body; information about the work of the trust; plans related to additional government funding; records relating to pupils' behaviour, exclusions and attendance; and information about the attainment and progress of all pupils and about safeguarding. Inspectors also reviewed information on the school's website.

- The lead inspector checked the school's single central register and the school's system for recruiting staff.

- Inspectors considered the 99 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, including the 57 free-text responses.

- Inspectors considered the 43 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff. There were no responses to the online questionnaire for pupils. Inspectors read a letter from a pupil.

Inspection team

Rachel Tordoff, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Stephen Long	Ofsted Inspector
Nigel Boyd	Ofsted Inspector
Jacqueline Newsome	Ofsted Inspector

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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