



Name of School:	The Halley Academy
Headteacher/Principal:	Mr Ben Russell
Hub:	Leigh Academies Trust
School phase:	Secondary 11-18
MAT (if applicable):	The Leigh Academies Trust

Overall Peer Evaluation Estimate at this QA Review:	Leading
Date of this Review:	06/03/2024
Overall Estimate at last QA Review	N/A
Date of last QA Review	N/A
Grade at last Ofsted inspection:	Good
Date of last Ofsted inspection:	21/06/2022-22/06/2022



Quality Assurance Review

The review team, comprising host school leaders and visiting reviewers agree that evidence indicates these areas are evaluated as follows:

Leadership at all levels: Leading

Quality of provision and outcomes: Leading

AND

Quality of provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs

Area of excellence: Accredited

Previously accredited valid areas of excellence: N/A

Overall peer evaluation estimate: Leading

The Quality Assurance Review estimates are not equivalent to Ofsted grades. The QA Review uses a different framework to Ofsted and the review is developmental not judgmental.

1. Context and character of the school

The Halley Academy is an 11-18 secondary school with just over 900 students. It opened as a new school within the Leigh Academies Trust in 2018 and receives focused support and challenge from its trustees and other Trust schools. It is a nonselective comprehensive school serving Woolwich and surrounding London boroughs. The school has a well-resourced provision for autism, the Infinity Hub. It is an International Baccalaureate World School and is registered for the Middle Years and Career-related Programmes.



The school serves an area of high deprivation. Students are from diverse ethnic groups with over fifty spoken languages. The percentages for disadvantaged and SEND students are above the national average. The proportion of students with English as an additional language (EAL) is above the national average. Student mobility is high, although for the first time the Academy is over-subscribed for Year 7.

The school's vision focuses around five core values. The principal, appointed in 2023 is highly aspirational for his staff and students and is proud of what the school has achieved, particularly the progress made by the disadvantaged students. He said, "Together, we inspire, learn and achieve. Students enjoy coming to this school."

2.1 Leadership at all levels - What went well

- Senior leaders have a clear, inclusive vision which is shared by key stakeholders and summarised in five core values; respect, achievement, collaboration, integrity and resilience.
- The very high expectations are clear and consistently evident across the school. The small school model operates very effectively enabling staff and students to feel valued within a safe, learning environment.
- Communication between home and school is exceptionally strong and relationships between staff and parents/carers are highly positive.
- Leaders have invested in the fabric of the school to ensure that staff and students have access to "state of the art" facilities, for example, the engineering centre and digital resources such as Chromebooks for every student. The school is looking forward to the performing arts' centre opening soon.
- Leaders have worked relentlessly to create a disruption-free learning environment where all students thrive.
- Professional development is based on individual and school needs. Leaders ensure teachers continually hone their skills and knowledge through a programme of planned in-house training making use of external providers.
- Leaders use the Trust effectively to support professional learning and staff appreciate the training they receive. This has contributed to staff recruitment and retention.
- Middle leaders are highly knowledgeable about their subjects and want the best for their students. All students are taught by trained specialists across all subjects.



- Middle leaders share the vision and can articulate the core values and whole school priorities. They feel part of the school improvement journey. They said “Leadership is distributed with a strong ethos of inclusivity, collegiality and collaboration.”
- Quality assurance processes identify areas for development and timely actions are taken. Senior leaders act pro-actively to support staff and tackle underperformance. This has contributed to the consistency of practice across the school.
- Staff well-being and succession planning are very important to the principal which contributes to staff feeling valued. Consequently, staff turnover is not high, with staff fully committed to the school and the students. A member of staff said, “This is a fabulous school. I love coming to work here.”
- Leaders ensure that the personal development of students is equally as important as their academic achievement. They provide opportunities for students to develop as well-rounded individuals and to grow intellectually, morally, socially and emotionally. There is a strong focus on diversity as demonstrated through the tutor programmes as well as through the specialist curriculum.
- Developing the students’ cultural capital is a priority for leaders. There are a wide range of enrichment opportunities, particularly evident at Key Stage 3 which include various sports, field trips plus many clubs and societies.
- At Key Stage 4, leaders ensure that there are purposeful intervention sessions to support students’ learning. These intervention sessions are well attended and appreciated by students.

2.2 Leadership at all levels - Even better if...

... senior leaders continued to review the mission, values and small school model to ensure the distinctive ethos of The Halley Academy is maintained and there is the capacity to ensure on-going whole school improvement.

... senior leaders continued to embed the ambitious attendance strategies with a particular focus on persistent absence to ensure that the highly aspirational standards are maintained as the school increases in size.



3.1 Quality of provision and outcomes - What went well

- There is a knowledge-rich and inclusive curriculum which prepares students well in terms of academic qualifications and personal development.
- The broad curriculum offers students a range of option choices at Key Stage 4 with a high percentage of students following EBacc subjects.
- Leaders have carefully sequenced the curriculum to ensure that students build on prior learning. The curriculum emphasises depth and breadth so that students' learning builds coherently over time and their understanding deepens. The core and EBacc subjects are particular areas of strength.
- Understanding and retrieval strategies were evident in all the observed lessons with independent learning being demonstrated particularly well in art and English.
- In the best lessons there was pace and challenge with teachers consistently using skilful questioning and modelling to deepen students' learning. This was clearly demonstrated in the core subjects.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is strong and evident in their classroom practice. Teachers effectively use cold calling strategies to promote engagement and participation from students.
- Teachers use resources well, maximising many online platforms and Chromebooks to promote learning. Resources are adapted so that all students can access the curriculum and enjoy their learning.
- Regular data drops and formative and summative assessments enable staff to regularly assess progress. Students, particularly at Key Stages 4 and 5 can articulate what they have learnt and where they need to improve.
- Homework is embedded across the school. The use of digital resources further promotes independent learning.
- A range of targeted professional development ensures that teachers continue to develop their subject knowledge and pedagogy. The school works effectively with external partners to provide relevant, research based, professional development. Training is made as bespoke as possible using online courses, whole school inset, mentoring and coaching.
- Classroom displays reinforce the core values and priorities for learning. The 4 expectations to enter and the 4 expectations to leave classrooms are adhered to consistently by staff and students.



- Students' behaviour around the site is impressive. They show consideration and respect for each other as well as to staff. This is evident in the corridors, between lessons as well as during social times both inside and outside the building.
- Students are polite and courteous. Relationships between students and teachers are very positive. This mutual respect creates a strong climate for learning.
- Routines are well established and transitions between activities are smooth with very little learning time lost. Leaders have worked hard to achieve disruption-free learning.
- Teaching staff are well supported by a dedicated team of support managers. One teacher said, "They are the glue which sticks us all together."
- Students understand what the school's vision is and can articulate what its core values mean to them.
- Students value tutor time which includes topics such as respect, integrity and resilience which reinforce the core values.
- Attendance is above the national average and all staff are pro-active in encouraging students into school. Staff and students alike expressed how much they enjoyed coming to school to teach and learn.
- The smooth transition from Key Stage 2 results from a strong induction programme involving over fifty schools so that students feel ready to join The Halley Academy community.
- During Key Stage 4 students are informed about post 16 opportunities and can confidently plan their next steps. The school has established very useful links with local colleges and Higher Education providers.

3.2 Quality of provision and outcomes - Even better if...

... leaders continued to focus on ensuring that students complete high quality homework across the curriculum to further promote independent learning.

... leaders further developed questioning techniques to promote students' deeper and higher-level thinking and to promote student agency across the school to further impact on standards.



... leaders identified strategies to stretch and challenge an increasingly able Year 7 cohort which are sustained as the school continues to grow in size.

4.1 Quality of provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs - What went well

- Senior leaders are highly ambitious for SEND and disadvantaged students.
- The SENDCo and her team collaborate well and work relentlessly to ensure that all SEND students benefit from targeted provision.
- The Infinity Hub is a centre of excellence for autism. One student said, “This hub has really changed how I feel about myself.”
- There is a clear process for teachers to identify students’ needs which is well used and implemented effectively to support SEND and disadvantaged students.
- Leaders are relentless in ensuring that all SEND and disadvantaged students have opportunities to achieve academic success and achieve this through a strong partnership with parents/carers.
- The SEND team provides the most vulnerable students with appropriate and timely support. Staff provide a range of interventions which include supporting students with speech and language difficulties using various online programmes. EAL is also a priority which supports a seamless learning of linguistic skills with students being entered for the Cambridge examination. One student said, “I owe everything to Halley. I came with no English. Now I am preparing for my GCSEs and am confident about doing well.”
- Additional support is given and withdrawn as appropriate to enable SEND students to fully access the mainstream curriculum and make good progress.
- Leaders are determined that SEND and disadvantaged students are prepared for their next steps. They systematically and rigorously investigate barriers to learning and engagement, liaising with in-house and external providers to overcome them.
- Leaders have implemented a range of strategies to improve provision. These include developing teachers’ classroom practice through focused INSET



sessions, increasing students' participation in enrichment activities and investing in direct contact with parents/carers.

- The SENDCo provides CPD to upskill her team as well as all staff to support SEND and disadvantaged students more effectively in lessons. This training is well received and is having a positive impact on learning with all staff accepting their responsibility for supporting SEND and disadvantaged students.
- SEND and disadvantaged students are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities. One student said, "There is so much you can do here."
- The lead for disadvantaged students uses the funding appropriately to address identified needs and break down barriers to learning as well as providing essential items of equipment and uniform.
 - Teachers receive timely updates on effective strategies which ensures provision is tailored to students' needs.
 - Meetings are held to support the parents of SEND and disadvantaged students particularly during their key rites of passage such as transition from Key Stage 2 to 3.
 - Disadvantaged students and those with SEND are guided on to appropriate pathways, they are well prepared for option choices and receive focused careers advice.

4.2 Quality of provision and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with additional needs - Even better if...

... the SENDCo continued to raise academic achievement for all SEND students through a heightened focus on reading which will impact on whole school improvement.

... leaders created further opportunities for SEND and disadvantaged students to exercise their student voice.

5. Area of Excellence

Quality of SEND provision

Accredited