

Cheadle Hulme High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106140
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	377362
Inspection dates	20–21 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Patrick Geraghty HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,302
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Charles Nevin
Headteacher	Linda Magrath
Date of previous school inspection	18 January 2007
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. Inspectors spent the majority of their time observing teaching and learning in 50 lessons, taught by 50 teachers. They also held meetings with staff, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and other members of the governing body. Documentation was scrutinized including: information related to the tracking of the academic and personal progress of students; detailed analysis of students' attainment and progress; the school's self-evaluation; minutes from meetings of the governing body and evidence to demonstrate how the school supports students whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Inspectors also examined evaluations undertaken by the school to ensure that it meets statutory requirements with regard to safeguarding. In addition, 579 questionnaires completed by parents and carers were scrutinized along with questionnaires returned by a representative sample of staff and students.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether strategies to improve students' attainment and progress at Key Stages 3 and 4 have been effective and are sustainable.
- Whether teaching and learning are sufficiently challenging to promote and sustain outstanding outcomes for students.
- Whether the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation by leaders and managers at all levels is sufficiently well embedded to drive and sustain improvement.
- Whether the specialism in languages is having an impact on the quality of teaching and learning across the curriculum.

Information about the school

Cheadle Hulme High School is a larger than average 11 to 16 mixed secondary school. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Most students are of White British heritage. The number of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, although the percentage with a statement of special educational needs is above average. Seventeen students are in the care of the local authority. The school has Specialist Language College status and is also a Training School. It is also a Designated School for Physical Disabilities and Auditory and Visual Impairment. The school is a national support school.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Over the last seven and a half years and under the current headship this school has been on a meticulously planned and thoughtful journey to transform students' outcomes and the quality of all provision. Cheadle Hulme High School is now outstanding in all aspects. At the conclusion of the inspection, the headteacher commented to the inspectors that, 'Tomorrow we embark on a renewed and more intense focus on improvement'. This statement encapsulates the ethos of this exceptional learning community.

The headteacher has built a talented team of senior and middle leaders and of highly skilled, dedicated and enthusiastic teaching and support staff. Students espouse this aspirational and 'can do, will do' culture. The governing body drives for further improvement. Alongside this formidable aspirational ethos is a culture of mutual respect and value in the fundamental benefits and joys of learning. Standards are high and progress outstanding. Those who are most at risk of underperforming are identified, given high quality support and consequently make exceptional progress.

The curriculum is innovative and led by inspiring provision in the Languages. All is underpinned by outstanding care, support and guidance: students are supported to succeed. In the 'Every Child Achieves' operational room, students' progress is charted and personalised intervention strategies devised by senior and middle leaders and teaching staff. However, the very core and excellence of this school is centred in the classroom. Teaching and learning are outstanding. Outstanding practice was observed across the curriculum. The focus on literacy, thinking skills and oracy is exemplary. One Year 8 student reminded the lead inspector that 'we all talk to each other in this school'. The organisation of data and its use to aid progress, plan lessons and focus intervention is excellent. In a few mathematics lessons at Key Stage 3, some students were not sufficiently challenged to make the exceptional progress that this school expects of all its students.

The school is led by an exceptional headteacher. Management and leadership at all levels are outstanding. They enthusiastically drive a culture of continuous improvement, challenge and innovation. A seamless thread of thoughtful and robust quality assurance fuses into every aspect of the school's work. Parents and carers are highly supportive and well informed. Equality of opportunity, very clearly evidenced in outcomes, is promoted exceptionally well. Safeguarding is outstanding.

Given its track record of improvement and excellent self-evaluation, the school has outstanding capacity to meet future challenges and its own very high expectations.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all mathematics lessons at Key Stage 3 have a sufficient level of challenge so that all students make the exceptional progress expected by the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Students enter the school with just above average attainment and leave having made outstanding progress. During their time at school they convey enjoyment and delight in questioning, inquiry and learning. For example, the levels of enthusiasm across all lessons in English and modern foreign languages were exceptional. Students enthused in developing their language skills, demonstrated excellent cooperative skills but were also challenging of each other and showed an aptitude for independent learning. The development of thinking skills and inquiry pervades all the school's endeavours and forms one of its main characteristics. The progress of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is outstanding and reflects the exceptional care that they receive. The proportion of students gaining five or more A* to C grades at GCSE rose significantly from 2007 to 2010 to well above the national average. When English and mathematics are included this figure is also well above the national average. The recent 2011 examination results, together with the scrutiny of the school's rigorous tracking information on current Year 11 and 10 students, indicates that a very strong trend of improvement is continuing. Performance across different groups of students is high. For example, the attainment of free school meals students is significantly above the national averages for this group. The percentage of students gaining GCSE A* to A is also high.

Students' personal development is outstanding. They report that they feel very safe and that instances of bullying, which are very rare, are dealt with quickly. Students make an exemplary contribution to the establishment of a harmonious and caring school community. Their behaviour, including behaviour for learning, is outstanding and was very clearly evidenced in lesson observations. Involvement with the wider community through a variety of activities is outstanding. They take pride in the high esteem that the community holds for the school. Students have a very clear understanding of what they need to do to lead a healthy lifestyle. There are high participation rates in the very wide range of sporting and cultural opportunities provided by the school. Attendance is high. For example, for looked after children attendance last year was 95%. This, together with high attainment in language and numeracy skills and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, is ensuring that students are prepared exceptionally well for the next stage of their education or the world of work. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, reflected so strongly in the respect demonstrated throughout the school community, is outstanding.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is outstanding. Of the lessons observed almost all were good or better with over half of these graded as outstanding. A buzz of learning activity and endeavour permeates the whole school. There is highly thoughtful and well focused pursuit of improvement which students embrace and enjoy. This is best exemplified in consistently outstanding teaching in English and modern foreign languages. Provision in the language specialism was characterised by excellent pace, sustained high levels of creative thinking and reflection, lively engagement that included all students, high expectations and exhilarating and challenging teaching. Data are used exceptionally well for lesson planning. Group activities are very well matched to students' abilities. This exemplary practice is reflected across the entire curriculum. A notable characteristic across all subjects was the outstanding use of questioning to elicit extended responses and ideas from students. Students' language and independent learning skills are consistently and ambitiously honed throughout their time at the school. For example, in an excellent Year 8 geography lesson, students quickly assimilated challenging subject specific terminology and used it with ease and understanding in subsequent pair and class discussion. In a small number of lessons in mathematics at Key Stage 3, not all students were sufficiently challenged and consequently did not make the excellent progress that this school expects. Teacher and peer assessment are outstanding. Work is regularly marked with very clear indications for students of the ways and means towards further improvement.

The quality of the curriculum and its contribution to the achievement of high outcomes is outstanding. The school provides a very broad and balanced curriculum which meets the needs and aspirations of all students from high achievers to those whose circumstance make them potentially most vulnerable. The languages specialism has been a focal point for the school's drive for excellence and curriculum innovation. Students enjoy and appreciate the many opportunities provided. The

¹The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

weekly 'creative day' gives Year 8 students the opportunity to develop extended learning in the arts. They demonstrate high confidence in performance and rigorous feedback stimulates them to challenge each other and develop thinking, creative and oracy skills. All students take a French language examination in Year 9, most at GCSE level and some at NVQ level. Pass rates are high with, for example, 32 students gaining A*-A grades in the most recent GCSE results. GCE AS French is then offered in Year 10 and 11 to stretch the most able students. Excellent practice, engagement and resources were observed in Year 10 engineering. Partnerships to support curriculum development and innovation are strong. A strong focus on the development of literacy and oracy skills permeates the entire curriculum. There is an excellent range of extra-curricular activities which enjoy a very high level of student participation.

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Transition at all points is very well planned. The quality of support for potentially vulnerable groups of students is exceptional and evidenced in the high attendance and outcomes for looked after children, students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as those known to be eligible for free school meals. The high number of managed-move students are quickly and successfully integrated into the aspirational culture of the school. Links and work with external agencies enhances this high level of guidance and support. Data is used exceptionally well by pastoral staff to monitor the progress of all students and provide well-tailored intervention strategies. The quality of guidance, including careers guidance, throughout the students' journey from primary transition to planning educational progress beyond the school, is outstanding.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The inspirational leadership of the headteacher provides a razor sharp rationale for the school's work and a laser sharp focus on improvement. All other leaders and managers demonstrate exceptional teamwork and dedication to improvement and a culture of high aspirations for all. This has resulted in an outstanding sense of purpose in all the school does and a rapid and sustained rise in attainment and, indeed, in all aspects of the school's work. Planning is both meticulous and innovative. Ambition and endeavour flow through every level of the school's organization. Progress since the last inspection has been exceptional. The approach is exemplified in the Every Child Achieves Room. This is a dedicated operational centre where the progress of all students in Year 10 and 11 are individually tracked as well as all those throughout the school who maybe at risk of underperformance. From here, the senior management and individual departments plan intervention strategies to enable better and sustained student progress.

Sophisticated quality-assurance measures ensure that the school’s evaluations of its effectiveness are entirely accurate. The outcomes are used with a very high degree of effectiveness to drive ambition and improve performance. The management and use of data both by senior and middle leaders and by teachers are exceptional. Teaching and learning are at the heart of all the school does. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored rigorously; second best for anyone simply will not do. Morale is exceptionally high. Students embrace with gusto the challenging and aspirational culture promoted by staff. Outstanding leadership over time has turned the school into an exhilarating learning community which is constantly seeking further improvement and new aspirational horizons. The governing body is exceptionally knowledgeable on all aspects of the school’s work. It makes a crucial contribution in supporting the school, challenging its work and holding it rigorously to account. Members of the governing body are highly influential in providing it with strategic direction. They embrace the learning community by not only welcoming associate student governors onto their board but also have student representatives at the teaching and learning sub-committee.

The school has highly positive relations with parents and carers as evidenced in the very high proportion of positive responses in returned questionnaires. In particular, the school makes a strong effort to include all parents and carers in their child’s learning through excellent communication and response systems. The school has forged strong partnerships particularly in offering its expertise in language teaching to other schools. Well tailored partnerships with a host of external agencies provide specialist support for a range of students and particularly those who are most vulnerable. Exemplary promotion of equal opportunities ensures all students, regardless of ability or background, make excellent progress and achieve very well. The school has been successful in promoting an exceptionally harmonious school community and has a strong understanding of its local community in which it is held in very high esteem. A multitude of trips abroad and the whole-school impact of the languages enrich students’ understanding and respect for cultural and religious diversity. Safeguarding is outstanding; policies and procedures are highly comprehensive in range and coverage. The school’s value for money, set against outcomes, is outstanding.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Views of parents and carers

The response rate, at around 44%, was well above average for this type of school. An analysis of responses to the questionnaire indicates that the vast majority of parents and carers are happy with their child's experience at school and that appropriate steps are taken to ensure that their child is well prepared for the future.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cheadle Hulme High School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received **579** completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1,302 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	260	45	303	52	13	2	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	291	50	281	49	1	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	247	43	278	48	11	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	230	40	293	51	14	2	1	0
The teaching is good at this school	259	45	294	51	3	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	197	34	328	57	26	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	133	23	377	65	36	6	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	213	37	310	54	11	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	221	38	322	56	11	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	256	44	286	49	17	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	163	28	339	59	23	4	2	0
The school is led and managed effectively	299	52	258	45	4	1	1	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	322	56	244	42	5	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



22 September 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Cheadle Hulme High School, Cheadle, SK8 7JY

Thank you for the very warm and friendly welcome that you gave my colleagues and me when we inspected your school this week. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit to your school. We would also like to commend you for your outstanding behaviour and your commitment to making the school such a harmonious place in which to work. We would particularly like to thank the many of you who spoke with us.

Our inspection found that yours is now an outstanding school. You are making outstanding progress throughout your time at the school. Your results are high and well above national averages. There is much good and outstanding teaching in the school. In these lessons, you respond exceptionally to the teachers' high expectations. Your curriculum options are outstanding. The teachers and support staff give you outstanding care, guidance and support.

The leaders in your school worked with us to decide on some ways in which your provision could be better. We decided that to achieve this, the school should:

- ensure that all mathematics lessons at Key Stage 3 have a sufficient level of challenge so that you all make the exceptional progress expected.

You now have a new challenge: to help your school to improve even further by ensuring everyone continues to focus on the pursuit of excellence and for you to continue your endeavours in your studies so that you can achieve your full potential in life.

I wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Patrick Geraghty
Her Majesty's Inspector

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