

# The Chase School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	137625
<b>Local Authority</b>	N/A
<b>Inspection number</b>	387196
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	James McNeillie HMI

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Academy
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1646
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	304
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Brian O'Connell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kevin Peck
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	N/A
<b>School address</b>	Geraldine Road Malvern WR14 3NZ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01684 891961
<b>Fax number</b>	01684 566643
<b>Email address</b>	head@chase.worcs.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	11–18
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	9–10 November 2011
<b>Inspection number</b>	379332

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), academies, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the. Under the Education Act 2005, the academy must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and academy inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2011



## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and five additional inspectors. Inspectors observed learning in 48 lessons, or parts of lessons, taught by 47 teachers. The team met with groups of students, senior and middle leaders and spoke to one parent on the telephone. In addition, they observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation supplied by the school including that related to safeguarding, students' achievement and school improvement planning. The views of 491 parents and carers, a sample of students and a number of staff were taken into account.

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

- To what extent are all groups of students, including those in the sixth form, making good or better progress?
- How successful has the school been in tackling previous underperformance of some groups of students?
- Is teaching and the use of assessment sufficiently challenging and personalised to ensure that all groups of students are making good progress?
- How well do leaders at all levels systematically evaluate the work of the school and then take decisive action that leads to positive improvements in the range of students' outcomes?

## Information about the school

This is a much larger than the average-sized secondary school serving the town of Malvern and surrounding villages. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Most students are of White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average; a slightly higher proportion than usual of those students has statements of special educational needs.

The Chase School converted to academy status on 1 November 2011 and has specialisms in technology, science and languages. In addition, it holds a number of awards including International Schools, Healthy Schools, Eco-Schools, Sportsmark, Artsmark and Leading Aspect.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

The Chase School is a good school with an outstanding sixth form and students are prepared exceptionally well for their future. One parent wrote, 'I'm amazed that such a large school can achieve this family atmosphere with students and staff so helpful. My daughter is happy and thriving.' This positive comment reflects the very strong relationship the school has with parents and carers, which is as a result of the outstanding way in which it engages them in their children's learning and other aspects of school life.

Attainment rose substantially in 2011 across most key indicators. The proportion of students attaining five GCSE grades at grade C or above, including English and mathematics, was above the national average. Attainment in the school's specialist subjects was also above average and the number of students reaching the highest grades in many subjects increased further. The progress made by the majority of groups of students is good. Those students with special educational needs and/or disabilities make expected progress, when taking into account previous years' performance and, like their peers, progress is continuing to improve.

Students in both key stages and in the sixth form make a significant contribution to the success of the school. Their attendance is excellent. All groups, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are represented in the variety of leadership roles taken on by students. Strong relationships exist within the whole school community which supports students' good and, sometimes, exemplary behaviour. These strengths contribute very well to the cohesive and harmonious ethos. Their thoughtful and insightful reflections on a wide range of philosophical and topical issues demonstrate students' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This aspect links very well to the outstanding way in which the school promotes community cohesion. As a result of numerous opportunities provided by the school, all groups know precisely what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and put this knowledge into practice.

Teaching across the key stages is good with an increasing proportion of outstanding lessons. When teaching is at its best, students are inspired by the enthusiasm of teachers and progress exceptionally well because they have many opportunities to engage in their own learning. Teachers use assessment well during lessons, with particular strengths in the oral feedback they give to students. There are some missed opportunities to ensure that lessons precisely cater for students with specific and moderate learning needs. School leaders and classroom teachers are, however,

**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

addressing this with increasingly good impact.

Senior leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. They have focused the whole school community on building on strengths and improving on what were relative weaknesses and have been supported in doing so as a result of the excellent work with a range of partners. The impact of this work is clearly evident. In recent years, the school has consolidated and improved well on previously good and outstanding performance, for example, in students' achievement, the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of leadership, particularly middle leadership. Middle leaders are increasingly effective in evaluating and improving the quality of teaching in their particular areas. There is some extremely strong practice in this aspect although not fully embedded across all subjects. Overall, these strengths support the school's good capacity for improvement.

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Continue to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching to enable excellent learning for all groups of students by ensuring that:
  - teachers support students in all lessons to develop as sophisticated, independent learners
  - learning activities consistently match the needs of all groups of students, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities
  - leaders, particularly middle leaders, sharpen their processes for evaluating and improving the quality of teaching.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**2**

Students' attainment on entry to the school is broadly average and by the end of Key Stage 4 it is above average, therefore confirming the good overall progress made by students. The progress they make in mathematics and some of the specialist subjects is particularly strong. The school's reliable tracking data indicate this is continuing and progress in other subjects, such as English, is also strengthening further. In recent years, the overall progress made by students with special educational needs and/or disabilities has been satisfactory. The current progress of those with specific and moderate learning difficulties, as seen in observations of learning during the inspection, is improving and broadly in line with their peers. Individuals with statements of special needs make good, and occasionally outstanding, progress in their academic and personal development. This is as a result of tailored approaches to support these students' needs, for example as was observed in the learning of a Year 8 visually impaired student.

The quality of learning matches that of students' progress and, when given the opportunities to do so in lessons, many show excellent personal, learning and thinking skills. A notable example of this was in a Year 10 English lesson which focused on developing students to be highly effective listeners and group members.

**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

Many students are confident to contribute to lessons, partly due to the safe environment created for them by teachers and their peers. In a number of lessons, individuals and groups of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities also develop these wider skills very well. All groups of students understand what they need to do to improve in their own learning. Students are aspirational and could demonstrate to inspectors that they knew precisely how to achieve their goals and next steps in their education and lives. The proportion of students who are not in education, employment or training when they leave the school is substantially below the national average. When taking into account these factors, the overall above-average attainment, the well developed application of basic skills and students' high attendance, they are prepared thoroughly for their future economic well-being.

In one Year 7 science lesson, students discussed with sensitivity and reasoned argument the moral dilemmas of in vitro fertilisation. Older students could show how their spiritual and social understanding were very well developed when investigating probability in mathematics as well as responding to human rights and deportation in religious education lessons. Excellent cultural awareness was shown for example by students' understanding of how many community languages were spoken in large, multiracial cities, as well as the origins of Bollywood dancing.

A wide range of students take part in extra-curricular activities, including those that support the excellent connection of the school to the wider community. A learning council has been established and some of these students have visited other schools to gather good practice. One parent commented on how quickly her daughter in Year 7 had 'become an active member of the community'. Younger students are very well supported by their peers, some of whom act as reading and mathematics 'champions'. The student 'Talking in Confidence' leaders are an essential element to helping Year 7 students and others feel safe in school. In addition, the views of students decided the location of safe-crossing features on the road leading to the school.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>

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

**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

<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers have strong subject knowledge and very many use this well. Very positive relationships exist that engage students in their learning. In the best lessons, learning is planned so that there is a brisk pace, a range of well-matched activities that involve all students, resources are used very well to stimulate interest and thought and, importantly, students are given the opportunity to work independently of the teacher. Examples of outstanding teaching were observed in subjects across the curriculum. When teaching is less effective, teachers dominate lessons and in doing so limit the opportunities for students to get on with learning. Students know what they need to do to improve, which is a strength of the school's provision. This is as a result of good-quality feedback, with particular strengths in oral feedback and some helpful written comments.

The curriculum matches the needs of students well and the school's specialisms play a significant part in this. For example, two languages are available for most students to study in Key Stage 3 and both Japanese and Latin are available for older students. They speak positively of their experiences, particularly in relation to science and extra-curricular activities related to sport and the performing arts. Opportunities to follow a range of pathways are on offer, including good-quality vocational qualifications when appropriate for students.

Students are well cared for as a result of the organised provision and a team of committed and supportive staff. Arrangements for students joining the school in Year 7 and at key transition points are embedded and supportive. A number of parents and carers made written comments to Ofsted that matched this evidence. Many students whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable make good and, occasionally, better progress in their personal and academic development. This is as a result of the clearly targeted work of staff, including that with external agencies, and the school's own provision such as the 'Beacon Room'.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The good impact of leadership is evident in the strong and improving outcomes for students. High expectations of staff and students are communicated clearly by the headteacher and his senior team. Staff morale is high with those responding to Ofsted’s questionnaire confirming that they understand the direction of the school and are committed to bringing improvements. Target setting is realistic and challenging and has improved in recent years. The school’s tracking data has also developed well and supported leaders and classroom teachers to better monitor progress and ensure effective intervention for the majority of groups of students, overcoming any underperformance. Further fine tuning of these processes is planned for, including a sharper focus on evaluating the impact of interventions to ensure individuals and groups of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities make yet more progress. Suitable plans are in place to support the development of students’ achievement and the quality of teaching which have resulted in securing more consistency across this large institution. The detailed evaluation of the impact of actions planned is not consistent or firmly established across all levels of leadership. In addition, some of the judgements made in advance of the inspection were over generous when compared to national benchmarks. The establishment of the senior curriculum leaders’ group and teaching and learning groups have resulted in all aspects of previously strong provision increasing further.

The members of the governing body are increasingly effective in holding the school to account for its performance. Action to reduce in-school variation and, therefore, promote equality of opportunity, has had a good impact, as shown in the improving rates of progress for all groups of students. Those gaps that do remain are closing, such as the reducing number of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities in the school’s overall very low exclusion figures. Safeguarding practices follow recommended good practice. Leaders monitor the impact of this well and there are examples of high-quality work to secure the safety of the most potentially vulnerable students. The promotion of community cohesion is exemplary. This is as a result of the school’s excellent understanding of its context and what is needed to ensure that students have a broad understanding of multicultural Britain as well as international life. The excellent work with a range of local, national and international partners enables the development of all aspects of the school’s provision and students’ personal and academic development.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities</b>	<b>2</b>



**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

<b>met</b>	
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Sixth form

The view expressed by one student encapsulates the strengths of this phase of the school: ‘providing excellent opportunities for my future’. Students make outstanding progress in the sixth form as a result of strong teaching, an excellent curriculum and the very well-targeted support they receive. The proportion of students attaining the highest grades in Years 12 and 13 is continuing to rise. This then prepares them very well to go on to higher education, including world-respected universities, as well as into training and employment. Students respond exceptionally well to sixth form life and enthusiastically participate in, for example, charity fundraising and the mentoring of younger students. These activities not only support the school and wider community but also help to prepare students for being active and responsible citizens. Many lessons are inspiring and enable students to demonstrate at least good and, often, better progress on a daily basis. The depth of teachers’ subject knowledge is integral to this success. The curriculum offers a wide range of academic courses and is reviewed to take into account the needs of all students who join the sixth form, including those for whom vocational courses are more suitable. The team of staff which leads the sixth form is outstanding in their ability to set consistently high expectations and ensure continued improvement.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	1
The quality of provision in the sixth form	1
Leadership and management of the sixth form	1

## Views of parents and carers

A much higher-than-average proportion of parents and carers responded to Ofsted’s questionnaire. The overwhelming majority of respondents were happy with their children’s education, considered the school to be a safe environment and that they were informed well about the progress their children made. A very small minority of

**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

parents and carers stated that the school did not take account of their concerns. Conversely, most respondents were very happy with this aspect of the school's work and a number wrote comments to this effect. A few parents and carers took the opportunity to raise concern about how well the school helps its students to have healthy lifestyles. The inspection team considered this aspect in detail and the evidence confirmed that students have an excellent understanding of how to live a healthy lifestyle and that the vast majority do so. The inspection team also spoke to one parent who was extremely positive about the school's work. Leaders very much valued all the feedback received from parents and carers.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Chase 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 491 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1646 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	205	42	272	55	12	2	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	195	40	286	58	3	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	261	53	221	45	8	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	211	43	252	51	15	3	2	0
The teaching is good at this school	182	37	291	59	7	1	1	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	147	30	291	59	38	8	2	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	112	23	317	65	41	8	3	1
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)	161	33	285	58	12	2	1	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	169	34	292	60	15	3	2	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	158	32	280	57	17	3	4	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	127	26	285	58	32	7	2	0
The school is led and managed effectively	213	43	260	53	4	1	3	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	245	50	232	47	10	2	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 are 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](http://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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



11 November 2011

Dear Students

### **Inspection of The Chase School, Malvern, WR14 3NZ**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to the inspection team and the time many of you took to talk to us during lessons, at break time and in meetings. We judged that yours is a good school, and the sixth form is outstanding.

You, the students, are a significant strength of the school. Very many of you embrace the opportunities to take on leadership roles, be involved in extra-curricular activities and give your views on how your school could be even better. Your behaviour in lessons and around the site is good and the very positive relationships you have with your fellow students and members of staff create a cohesive and harmonious community. We enjoyed hearing lots of you give your reasoned and well-thought-out views on sensitive and topical issues. You told us that you feel safe at and enjoy school, and that Mr Peck and his colleagues are doing a good job. We agree with you.

You are exceptionally well prepared for your future. This is because, by the time you finish Year 11, the standard of your work across the curriculum is above the national average and most of you make good progress. In addition, you can apply your skills very well in different circumstance and you have an excellent understanding of what you need to achieve in the next stage of your lives. Your attendance is high – so well done for that. Some of you with particular learning needs make satisfactory rather than good progress, although this is improving well as was observed during the inspection. We have asked your school to continue to improve this by making sure all the learning activities in lessons precisely match what you need.

We have also asked your school's leaders to improve the number of outstanding lessons you experience. One of the ways we have suggested that they can do this is by ensuring that teachers give you even more opportunities to work independently. You can help by continuing to respond very well when this happens in lessons.

Yours sincerely

James McNeillie  
Her Majesty's Inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234**, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**