

# Reddish Vale High School

Reddish Vale Road, Reddish, Stockport, Cheshire SK5 7HD

## Inspection dates

9–10 February 2016

## Overall effectiveness

**Inadequate**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an inadequate school

- Too few pupils make the progress expected of them, particularly high ability pupils. Attainment is well below average.
- Teaching does not ensure that pupils make consistently good progress.
- The gap in the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others in school has widened each year for the last three years. Faster progress is now being made due to the extra support provided but the gap is too wide.
- The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is well above average, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.
- In observing lessons there is not enough focus on the impact teaching has on pupils' learning and the development of skills and knowledge.

### The school has the following strengths

- Governors have a clear vision for improving the school and this is shared by senior leaders and all staff.
- Teaching is improving, particularly in English, mathematics and science where new leaders are making a difference.
- Recently implemented strategies to improve teaching are successful but the school is still working to overcome a long legacy of underachievement and lower expectations.
- Since the last inspection, pupils' behaviour around the school has improved significantly.
- Pupils are well-cared-for and relationships in school are good. Their awareness of British values is developing through many aspects of the curriculum.
- Pupils and most parents appreciate the hard work of the staff and report that everyone is safe in school.
- Attendance has improved significantly and is now in line with the national average.

## Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is at least good by ensuring that:
  - learning proceeds at a good pace
  - teachers use probing questioning to develop and extend pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills
  - lessons provide challenge and especially for the most able.
  
- Sharply improve rates of progress for all groups of pupils so that more pupils make good progress from their starting points by:
  - setting higher expectations for the progress of pupils in Key Stage 3 so that they have a stronger foundation for learning when they start their GCSE courses
  - working to close the gap in the attainment between disadvantaged pupils and others in school.
  
- Reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent by working closely with their families to raise awareness of the importance of full attendance.
  
- Increase the effectiveness of leadership and management, by:
  - checking on the quality of teaching, with middle leaders taking a full role
  - making sure that when teaching is observed the focus is on what the pupils are learning
  - ensuring that the monitoring of subject leaders' assessments of the likely outcomes for pupils at the end of Year 11 is consistently rigorous.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- While some aspects of leadership are good, further improvement is required because leaders' efforts have not yet resulted in sustained improvements in achievement for all pupils. A great deal of effort is being channelled into supporting Year 11 in the run up to GCSE examinations in the summer, but more needs to be done to secure stronger progress in Years 7 to 9.
- The headteacher has made some good appointments so that the senior leadership team is well equipped to continue the work of improvement. Leaders have done much to strengthen the quality of teaching. They recognise where there are still weaker areas and are providing support and challenge. However, when observing teaching, some leaders tend to focus too little on the impact of teaching on what the pupils are learning and what progress they have made.
- There has been a high turnover of teaching staff in the recent past as the school has sought to employ effective and talented teachers. As a result, teaching is stronger in English, mathematics and science. Leaders have used performance management effectively to reward better teaching. A programme of coaching and staff development is ongoing and all teachers are motivated to improve their practice. Teachers are working very hard to improve the school and most indicated that they are proud to work here.
- In the most recent GCSE examinations, some departments fell well short of what had been predicted for pupils' attainment. Improving the accuracy of teachers' assessments has been a key focus since September. The school now uses better measures to check on the accuracy of teachers' estimates.
- There have been many changes in middle leadership. Senior leaders have provided training to make sure that middle leaders are able to contribute to whole-school improvement more effectively.
- Pastoral leadership is effective. The school has invested wisely in an experienced and effective behaviour, attendance and safeguarding team. The impact of their work is seen in improving attendance, reducing exclusions and improving the behaviour of pupils around the school.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs or disability is improving outcomes for these pupils. Their needs are being identified more rapidly and a wide range of support strategies is starting to improve their rates of progress.
- The school is using the funding to support disadvantaged pupils in a number of ways. These include mentoring in school, work experience, support for participation in after-school clubs and activities and writing workshops. Aspirations and ambitions are raised through visits to universities, art galleries and motivational talks. These initiatives are starting to take effect and current data show that the gap is beginning to close in both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4.
- The Year 7 catch-up funding is used to increase the reading ages and numeracy skills of the weakest pupils. Strategies last year enabled all pupils to make accelerated progress in both English and mathematics.
- The curriculum has been adapted to meet the needs of pupils. The school has put a stronger emphasis on English and mathematics to increase pupils' basic skills. Some pupils who find academic subjects difficult follow an alternative curriculum with a bespoke timetable, for example, a City and Guilds qualification in agriculture. The school runs its own farm shop and pupils are able to develop life skills working in the shop.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered through many subjects in the curriculum and through personal, social and health education. The British values of respect, tolerance and freedom of speech are reflected in the school's ethos and vision statement. Discussions in 'topic of the week' are often related to responses to what is in the news and provide the opportunity to consider British values.
- The school provides useful careers guidance and has received an award for its work in this area. Impartial advice is given about the range of future options including apprenticeships. A careers officer works in the school four days each week. Some tutor time is given to developing employability skills as well as interview practice. The school has effective links with local businesses.
- The very great majority of parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire agreed that their children are safe in school and many commented on their appreciation of the work of the teachers in supporting their children.
- The local authority has provided bespoke training. The consultant headteacher has put the sharing of good practice at the heart of the support now being offered.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governors are totally committed to improving outcomes for pupils. They have taken effective action to check on many aspects of the school's work. For example, members of the governing body chair regular

sub-committee meetings on teaching, learning and safeguarding. They oversee the work of the school, ask searching questions and rigorously pursue areas of weaknesses, setting a clear timescale for improvement. They have appointed a consultant headteacher who works in the school one day each week. The partnership with another school has secured improvements in several areas.

- Governors have highly relevant professional expertise in teaching and management. The improvements evident in teaching, behaviour and attendance show that the school has made considerable progress since the last inspection and continues to do so. Governors have ensured that recommendations from external reviews of governance and the investment of pupil premium funding have been implemented.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Thorough checks are made on staff to ensure that they are cleared to work with children. The school provides useful guidance to pupils about how to stay safe such as when using the internet. The change in culture in and around the school means that pupils are better protected from bullying and poor behaviour. School staff make good use of links with external agencies and make sure that documentation is thorough and at least meets minimum requirements.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment** requires improvement

- Sometimes the pace of learning is slow because pupils have no sense of urgency. Occasionally, teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils' sustained and rapid progress.
- In some lessons, pupils complete a series of tasks and do not make gains in their understanding, thinking and learning. Teachers' questioning is not sufficiently probing to extend knowledge and thought.
- In some subject areas there is a gap between the work pupils produce in class and the work they complete under examination conditions. Teachers are working to improve this by providing more practise in answering questions to gain the maximum number of marks and in experiencing examination conditions so as to reduce pupils' anxiety about examinations.
- Where progress is good, in an increasing number of subjects pupils' attitudes to learning are positive and they make good progress.
- Teaching assistants support the learning of individual pupils and small groups effectively.
- A new framework for planning lessons has been introduced in science and has immediately made a difference to the rate of progress for most pupils. In English, mathematics and modern foreign languages there is good use of subject knowledge and a focus on subject-specific vocabulary.
- Marking of books has improved in all subject areas and pupils receive good advice on how to improve their work.
- Pupils' standards of presentation of their work have improved considerably and scrutiny of pupils' books across a range of subjects shows that many are taking pride in their books.
- Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare** requires improvement

#### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good
- Pupils respect each other and their teachers and express their appreciation for the way in which teachers give extra time to helping them.
- Pupils respect those of different cultures, races and faiths. Pupils report that bullying is now rare but there is some occasional name-calling. Instances of homophobic, racist or gender bullying are rare. Anti-bullying procedures have a high profile in school and are known by all. During the inspection, pupils were learning about rules for safe use of the internet and social media.
- Many pupils lack confidence and the school is working hard to build up their resilience to the pressure of examination conditions. The school also provides effective support for pupils' physical and mental health.
- Pupils have leadership opportunities to influence school decisions through the pupil council and know that their voice is heard.

#### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.

- The number of pupils who are persistently absent is high and particularly so among disadvantaged pupils who receive support through the pupil premium. The school's efforts to improve overall attendance are proving effective and in 2015 attendance rose significantly to be in line with the national average and persistent absence decreased.
- A new and well-devised behaviour policy has significantly reduced the number of exclusions and behaviour around the school is usually good. Pupils report disruption to their learning in some lessons and some unwelcome jostling in the corridors.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are generally positive. Some pupils do not grasp the opportunity to take control of their own learning. The presentation of work could be better, particularly among lower ability pupils.
- Pupils attending courses elsewhere are regularly visited and checked to make sure they attend, behave and are safe.

## **Outcomes for pupils**

## **are inadequate**

- By the end of Year 11, many pupils did not make progress at the rate needed to secure five good GCSE grades including English and mathematics. Outcomes for Year 11 in the last GCSE examinations in 2015 were inadequate. There is considerable improvement in the current Year 11 and standards are beginning to rise. However, too many pupils are still working below their targets. Some pupils are persistently absent and this severely hampers their attainment and progress.
- Pupils start in Year 7 with attainment that is well below average. Many arrive with literacy skills that are poorly developed for their age. Emphasis on improving these important skills to help pupils make faster progress is uneven, though, for example, younger pupils read to an older pupil once each week. Where more support is provided, the school can show a reasonable improvement in reading ages but low levels of literacy are still a barrier to learning across all year groups.
- Pupils' progress is improving across the school in mathematics, English and science where new leaders since January of this year have already made an impact. Nevertheless, progress information in all year groups shows that there are some pupils who are not making sufficient progress to reach their targets. This is often because teachers are still working to overcome low starting points and a long legacy of underachievement.
- In some year groups, high ability pupils have made the least progress. This is because there is insufficient challenge for these pupils as expectations are too low.
- The gap in the achievement of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium and others in both English and mathematics at the end of Year 11 has widened for the last three years. Current data show that this gap should begin to narrow in the current year.
- In the recent past, pupils who have special educational needs or disability have made very slow progress. This is much improved because of the wide range of strategies the school has developed. These include art therapy, stress busters and circle time for literacy and support in basic mathematics. Currently the progress of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is stronger than that of other pupils.
- Pupils following alternative courses either in school or with another provider often demonstrate improved behaviour and attitudes. Their achievement is generally in line with others in school.
- Most pupils go on to further education, training or employment. All of the pupils in Year 11 in 2015 went on to courses for which they had applied.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	137885
<b>Local authority</b>	Not applicable
<b>Inspection number</b>	10008157

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	921
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Peter McCaldon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Colin Short
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 477 3544
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.reddish.stockport.sch.uk">www.reddish.stockport.sch.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:admin@reddish.stockport.sch.uk">admin@reddish.stockport.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12 February 2014

## Information about this school

- This is an average-sized secondary school.
- The very great majority of pupils come from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as a second language is low.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is high and includes almost half of all pupils. The pupil premium supports pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is below average for school support but above average for pupils with statements of special educational needs or who have an education, health and care plan.
- In 2015 the school did not meet the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A small number of pupils currently attend alternative provision at Stockport College.
- Since the previous inspection, leadership has been strengthened by the appointment of a consultant headteacher who works in the school one day each week. He is a national leader of education.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in most subjects and across all age groups. Some learning was observed jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors held meetings with groups of pupils from Years 7, 9, 10 and 11. They spoke informally to many other pupils at breaks, lunchtimes, in lessons and at tutor times.
- Inspectors sampled work in pupils' books in all year groups and particularly in Year 11, across a range of subjects including English, mathematics, science and the humanities.
- Meetings were held with representatives from the governing body, including the Chair and Vice-Chair, senior and middle leaders, the school improvement partner from the local authority and the consultant headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at a range of school documents. These included information relating to safeguarding and child protection, attendance and behaviour, development planning, subject planning, tracking information on pupils' progress, performance management systems and procedures for checking on the quality of teaching and learning.
- The views of staff were gained from the 66 responses to the Ofsted questionnaire.
- Inspectors gained the views of parents from 152 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Judith Straw, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Tim Gartside	Ofsted Inspector
Elizabeth Kelly	Ofsted Inspector
Pritiben Patel	Ofsted Inspector

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