

Matthew Moss High School

Matthew Moss Lane, Marland, Rochdale, Lancashire OL11 3LU

Inspection dates

16–17 March 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The proportions of pupils who leave the school with five A* to C grades including English and mathematics and make expected progress are below national average.
- The progress of groups of pupils across all subjects and year groups is inconsistent. Pupils are not making rapid enough progress from their starting points.
- White British pupils and disadvantaged pupils continue to make less progress than their peers. The gaps are wide and not closing quickly enough.
- Although teaching is effective in many areas, there is too much inconsistency. Recent improvements have not yet had the full impact on accelerating pupils' learning.
- Teachers do not always take into account the various needs and abilities of the pupils. Consequently, the work pupils receive is sometimes either too hard or too easy.
- Pupils are not always being challenged to think for themselves and they rely too much on teachers giving them the answers.
- The effectiveness of feedback is too variable and there is inconsistent implementation of the school's policy.
- The standards in science are not as strong as in other subjects across all year groups.
- Improvement planning documents lack the necessary precision of measurable outcomes.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher is ambitious and tenacious in his drive to improve the school further. He is well supported by the whole school community.
- Leaders and managers have an honest understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The quality of teaching continues to improve and this is having a positive impact on pupils' progress.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language attain well in comparison to their peers nationally.
- Pupils feel safe and enjoy coming to school. The school is harmonious. Diversity is promoted and celebrated.
- The number of pupils who move on to high-quality employment or further and higher education is high as a result of good careers education, information, advice and guidance.
- Pupils behave well. They are courteous and respectful and take pride in their school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement by ensuring that there is consistency in terms of teachers' expectations of what pupils can and should achieve.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching so as to ensure that pupils make at least good progress by:
 - teachers planning learning that meets the needs of pupils taking into account their starting points
 - providing feedback that enables pupils to make better progress.
- Continue to close the gaps in the attainment and progress between disadvantaged pupils, White British pupils and other pupils.
- Continue to raise standards in science.
- Further improve leadership and management, including governance, by ensuring that the school improvement plan and appraisal targets are more sharply focused on measurable outcomes and monitored with even greater rigour.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Since the last inspection, there has been a seismic shift in culture and ethos to ensure that the academic achievement of pupils is given the proper emphasis. There is now greater accountability and responsibility for pupils' outcomes. The capacity to make further improvements is strong.
- The headteacher, supported by the leadership team, has worked assiduously in making the necessary improvements. They acknowledge that there is still some way to go, but there is no doubt that the school is going in the right direction to ensure sustained success. The leaders and managers are well supported by the whole school community in the realisation of their goals. As one member of staff noted, 'we will continue to strive for excellence and our whole school community will reap the rewards.'
- The leaders and managers have a very accurate and honest knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They know what needs to be done, how to do it and the urgency with which change needs to happen.
- The school is well aware of the gaps in achievement for pupils between White British pupils, disadvantaged pupils and their peers. The leaders and managers continually review strategies that seek to close these stubborn gaps.
- Appraisal and performance management systems have been used to good effect to improve teaching. However, the targets set need to be more explicitly linked to pupils' outcomes to ensure the necessary improvements happen with pace.
- Middle leaders are increasingly effective in promoting high-quality teaching, especially in mathematics where there have been several new appointments. Pastoral leadership continues to be a strength of the school.
- The school's work to consider how raised expectations nationally at key stages 3 and 4 affect teachers' expectations and assessment is at an early stage of development.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. It provides pupils with a range of opportunities to learn and make progress. The school acknowledges that the curriculum offer is narrower than in previous years and understands the dissatisfaction that this has caused among some parents and pupils.
- The school has worked hard to create and promote a reading culture.
- Fundamental British values and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils are well developed. These values underpin harmonious relationships that exist within this multicultural school.
- The school works well with parents and encourages honest and open communication dialogue. The school's own surveys and Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire) show that most parents are happy with the school.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The governing body holds school leaders to account effectively. Governors are prepared to ask challenging questions and are becoming more confident in their use of the school's own assessment information about pupils on roll and examination results of previous cohorts. They are aware of how the pupil premium funding is spent and the impact that it has had.
 - Governors are aware of how the school needs to improve but their checks on progress towards the objectives of the school development plan lack rigour. They use the appraisal process well and have a sound rationale for their decisions. They are not afraid to make difficult decisions when needed.
 - The governing body discharges its statutory duties, including ensuring that all students are safe and enjoy equality of opportunity.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There has been extensive training for staff and pupils and there is a high level of awareness and understanding of safeguarding procedures.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teaching does not always match pupils' varying needs or take full account of their starting points.
- Teachers' questioning and understanding of the ways pupils think about the subjects they are learning is inconsistent. Where this happens well, for example in mathematics, the pupils show real enjoyment and have the impetus to learn more.

- The balance between knowledge and key skills is not always achieved in some subjects; consequently, pupils do not learn as well as they should. At times, pupils are not able to apply their skills to differing situations and contexts because they have limited understanding of what they have to do.
- The effectiveness of teachers' feedback is inconsistent and not all teachers apply the school's marking policy. Where feedback is specific and instructional, in line with the policy, pupils develop a strong capacity to learn from their mistakes and make good progress.
- The effectiveness of teacher's implementation of the school's literacy policy is mixed. Spellings, for example, are not always corrected and pupils continue to misspell key words and terminology.
- Nonetheless, teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection. Pupils are keen to talk about the subjects where they feel they learn best. They have noticed the improvements in teaching in mathematics and often cited this as one of their favourite subjects as they can see that they are making progress.
- Teaching is especially strong in English and mathematics. The teaching in modern foreign languages is outstanding, as borne out by the outcomes in French and Urdu.
- The relationships that pupils have with their teachers and with each other are cordial and purposeful. Classrooms are positive places for learning and the pupils were keen to get on. They are appreciative of their teachers and especially those who provide additional opportunities for them to learn outside of normal school hours. They know that this helps them to make better progress.
- Teaching assistants ably support pupils and this aids the strong progress that these pupils make.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils feel safe and they say that bullying is very rare and when it occurs it is dealt with effectively and swiftly. Inspectors found that incidents of bullying are carefully logged and monitored.
- The school has carried out considerable work on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender awareness. Consequently, there is a very open and accepting culture in the school which places equal value and importance on every individual.
- Pupils and staff have received extensive training and input on recognising the signs of child sexual exploitation. They speak with knowledge and understanding about the signs and indicators and how they would go about raising any concerns that they may have.
- Parents are particularly positive about the confidence that the school fosters in the pupils.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite, welcoming and confident. They showed maturity when speaking with adults, including visitors.
- Pupils' behaviour seen outside the classroom is calm and orderly. The pupils are often self-regulatory and do not tarry in getting to lessons.
- Absence rates have consistently fallen for every pupil group and their attendance is now similar to the national average. The attendance rate for disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The number of fixed-term exclusions has reduced significantly since the last inspection.
- The pupils commented that teachers' expectations are higher with regard to behaviour and that they like this. As a result of the new behaviour system, they said to inspectors that 'we don't get away with much any more.'

Outcomes for pupils require improvement

- Pupils enter the school with below-average levels in the basic skills of English and mathematics. At the end of key stage 4, the proportion of pupils making expected progress is below national average.
- The gaps between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the school and nationally are closing but not rapidly enough in mathematics and science.

- The achievement of White British pupils is persistently low across all subjects and all year groups.
- Historically, pupils have not made sufficient progress in key stage 3 which has meant that they have not been sufficiently prepared for key stage 4.
- Pupils are not making good enough progress in science because the standards are not high enough and the attainment gap remains wide.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability are well supported and are making good progress.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well as a result of well-focused support and appropriate teaching.
- Pupils who join the school with low reading ages follow a reading recovery programme that makes significant improvements to their reading ability. As one pupil commented to inspectors, 'When I came to this school I could not read but now I can.'
- There has been a significant emphasis placed on improving the progress that the most-able pupils make. As a result, the progress that they are making is now above their peers nationally.
- The school's assessment information and pupils' work shows that current progress in most year groups and across all subjects is accelerating as a consequence of improvements in teaching.
- The proportion of pupils not in education, employment or training is well below the national average.

School details

Unique reference number	105839
Local authority	Rochdale
Inspection number	10002213
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	788
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Birchenough
Headteacher	Mark Moorhouse
Telephone number	01706 632910
Website	www.mmhs.co.uk
Email address	admin@mmhs.rochdale.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25–26 September 2013

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The majority of pupils are from Pakistani backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is well above the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding given to schools for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is above the national average. The proportion who have education, health and care plans is over twice the national average.
- Since the last inspection, there has been a high turnover of staff.
- The school hosts local authority provision for ten pupils with hearing impairments.
- The school is a Stonewall Champion School and holds the Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance quality award.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The school meets the requirements for the publication of information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons across all subjects across all year groups. Two lessons were undertaken with members of the leadership team.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils from both key stages about their experience of school and their learning.
- Inspectors reviewed pupils' work during lessons and as part of a wider work sample.
- Inspectors considered 38 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, 105 pupils' responses to Ofsted's inspection questionnaire and 61 responses from staff to Ofsted's survey. Inspectors also considered surveys of parents and pupils that the school had undertaken.
- Inspectors met with the chair of the governing body and five other governors and also two representatives from the local authority. Meetings were also held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders and members of staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised a variety of documentation including the school's own self-evaluation and development plan; minutes of governing body meetings; anonymised performance management documents; school policies and assessment information. A range of documentation regarding safeguarding was scrutinised, including behaviour and attendance records.
- The reports following the external reviews of governance and pupil premium recommended by the last inspection were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Jonathan Jones, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Marcia Harding	Ofsted Inspector
Jonathan Smart	Ofsted Inspector
David Woodhouse	Ofsted Inspector

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