

# Maghull High School

Ormonde Drive, Maghull, Liverpool, Merseyside L31 7AW

<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 June 2016
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Not enough of the most able pupils make the progress they should in Years 7 to 11 in a range of subjects, including science and mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the highest grades in most subjects at GCSE is too low.
- Outcomes for students in the sixth form are below average and some do not make the progress that they should.
- The gaps in the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others in the school are wide. However, the gap with other pupils nationally is narrowing.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and senior leaders have led significant improvements since the previous inspection so that more aspects of the school's work are now good.
- The leadership of teaching is good. The quality of teaching, marking and assessment has improved and is now good.
- Standards are rising, particularly in English and mathematics, and pupils' progress is accelerating so that more pupils are making good progress in a range of subjects.
- The focus on developing the reading skills of all pupils is helping to raise standards in many subjects.
- Pupils' conduct around the school is calm, orderly and respectful. The school's promotion of character education improves pupils' sense of self-esteem and their contribution to the community.
- Vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils are well supported and cared for because of the good pastoral care provided by the school.

## Full report

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

- Improve the outcomes for all pupils by ensuring that:
  - all teachers provide a consistently high level of challenge for the most able in the main school and in the sixth form
  - all teachers set higher expectations for the quality of presentation of pupils' work
  - all departments increase the number of most-able pupils achieving the highest grades at GCSE
  - interventions and support provided for disadvantaged pupils further reduce the gap between the achievement of these pupils and that of others in the school
  - ensure all pupils across the school receive comprehensive advice on pathways post-16, so that they can choose to follow courses in which they are likely to be successful.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher and senior leadership team provide strong leadership and are well supported by the staff. The headteacher is ambitious to improve the school further and good progress has been made since the previous inspection. However, the school cannot be judged to be good because of the underperformance of the most able pupils in all year groups and the gap between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school.
- The most notable improvements have been in teaching and learning. Teachers are developing interesting and creative ways of delivering their subjects and making sure that pupils have a very secure grounding in the basic skills in English and mathematics. Staff morale is high and teachers value and benefit from the many opportunities to improve their practice. Teachers have benefited from the support of partner schools and have responded well to the higher levels of challenge which they face from senior leaders and governors. Weaknesses in marking and assessment and the use that teachers make of questioning have been addressed so that these aspects are now strong and effective.
- Senior leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses, and what needs to improve through their regular and rigorous checks of the school's work. Development planning is thorough and focuses on accelerating the progress and boosting the achievement of all pupils. The mathematics, English and science departments have improved significantly, but leaders acknowledge that there is more to do to improve outcomes in languages and humanities subjects.
- School leaders track the progress of specific groups of pupils such as the most able or disadvantaged pupils so that they can target any underachievement quickly. The school has been successful in improving the achievement of most pupils but not the most able.
- Subject leaders are playing their part in developing and improving their subject areas and are increasingly held to account for the progress pupils make. They play a key role in ensuring that all the teachers in their subject areas are challenged to ensure that their pupils make good progress. Middle leaders are subject to in-depth reviews of their work at meetings chaired by governors.
- Performance management systems are effective and all staff know what is expected of them. The systems are used to reward effective teaching and support teachers where aspects of their work are weaker.
- The use of the Year 7 catch-up funding benefits pupils starting high school with lower attainment. One successful strategy is the summer school which runs for two weeks in August. This helps pupils to find out what is expected of them, to make new friends and come to school in September well prepared for Year 7.
- Funding to support disadvantaged pupils is used to raise aspirations, provide one-to-one support where necessary and to improve basic literacy and numeracy skills. The gap between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and that of others nationally has reduced significantly over the last three years. The gap with other pupils in the school is also starting to close, but remains wide.
- The curriculum provides a good range of courses suitable for the wide range of abilities of pupils in the school. There are different pathways for more academic pupils and those who require more vocational subjects. Raising aspirations is a key focus and the number of pupils following the more academic routes is rising steadily. The school's emphasis on improving and securing literacy and numeracy skills ensures that pupils are ready for the next stage of education and is raising standards across all subjects. For the last two years, nearly all pupils in Year 11 have gone on to further education, training or employment.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their appreciation and understanding of British values are promoted successfully through a wide range of experiences in assemblies and extra-curricular activities. There are numerous clubs, cultural visits, retreats and educational trips which are well attended by pupils. The school actively promotes 'character education', by which it means developing qualities of resilience, persistence, courage and a desire to contribute positively to the local and wider communities. Maghull holds the Rights Respecting School Award and is a Stonewall Ambassador School. All pupils have the same opportunities to take part in all aspects of school life and promote equal opportunities actively. There is no evidence of discrimination.
- The majority of parents who made comments on the school's work were positive. All aspects of the school's work were praised. The few criticisms voiced were discussed with the school leaders who were able to show that their actions are effective.

### ■ The governance of the school

- Governors have a very good understanding of the quality of teaching and achievement in the school because they review progress and learning frequently. Subject leaders report to governors on a regular basis. Governors ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to be successful and work hard to break down any barriers to success.
- Governors know how to use published data to compare the school's performance against that of all schools nationally, and ask challenging questions to make sure that all teachers keep focused on improving standards. They look closely at how catch-up and pupil premium funding is used to benefit the eligible pupils. Governors are totally committed to overseeing further improvements in the progress of pupils and are proud of the way in which all staff have responded so far to greater challenge and the pace of change. Governors ensure that the ethos of the school promotes British values and raises the aspirations of all pupils. Governors manage the finances of the school well.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school has comprehensive safeguarding procedures in place that meet all requirements. Staff have up-to-date training and the school has effective links with parents and other agencies, which enhance the arrangements to keep pupils safe.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Evidence from the school's own checks on teaching, its own assessment information and the quality of work in pupils' books all indicate that teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. This has resulted in many more pupils making good progress and rising standards, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Teachers' knowledge is good. Teachers use effective, open-ended questioning which ensures that pupils are regularly challenged to think, justify their views and reflect on their answers. In mathematics, there are many examples of pupils working well together to solve problems. In English, most pupils are growing more confident in sharing and discussing their views. Work in science has improved and some lessons provide a real 'wow' factor so that pupils are fascinated and engaged.
- The school has comprehensively re-written its marking policy so that marking is consistently good across all departments. Pupils receive useful feedback to help them to improve, but not all pupils act upon this feedback. Teachers are improving literacy across subjects and promoting numeracy, especially in science.
- Pupils are often able to create and direct their own learning in subjects with a strong practical element, such as physical education and drama.
- Teaching assistants are used well to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs or disability. These pupils are supported effectively so that all can be equally productive in lessons. Strategies such as paired reading, one-to-one sessions and the strong focus the school puts on reading all have an impact in raising the achievement of these pupils.
- When teaching is less effective, pupils can lack interest and be compliant rather than actively engaged. Some teachers are not setting high enough expectations for the presentation of pupils' work, with the result that there is much scribbling out, work that is unfinished and some illegible writing.
- The progress of most pupils in the school has accelerated well because of good teaching. However, some lessons do not yet sufficiently promote the learning and achievement of the most able pupils.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Senior leaders ensure that all staff are well trained in safeguarding procedures and that pupils are well informed about how to keep themselves safe. Pupils report that they have good advice on road safety, railways, awareness of gangs, drug and alcohol abuse and use of the internet and social media.
- In discussions with inspectors, pupils in Years 7–10 expressed confidence in their teachers to care for them and resolve any issues. Pupils trust their teachers and feel safe in sharing any concerns they might have. Pupils of all ages say that they feel safe in school. They indicate that there is little or no abusive racist or homophobic language used. Bullying is not seen as an issue either by pupils or staff.

- The Phoenix Centre in the school addresses different barriers to learning such as social, emotional, behavioural or medical issues. The centre provides mentoring, group therapy, art therapy, support to improve pupils' self-awareness and self-confidence, and sensitive support to help pupils who have lower self-esteem. The centre provides a safe and secure environment for any pupil in need of extra care.
- Pupils generally know their targets and how to improve their grades. Pupils in Year 10 say they receive useful careers advice. However, this is not the case across all year groups and some pupils who spoke to inspectors said they would welcome more guidance on careers and the options available to them post-16.
- Pupils have many opportunities to take on leadership roles as prefects, mentors to others and membership of school council action teams. The action teams consider aspects such as health, transition arrangements, enhanced learning and the environment.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- School records show that incidents of poor behaviour have declined significantly, exclusions are low and most pupils are punctual to school.
- Where engagement levels are high and teaching is effective, the conduct of most pupils is excellent. When teaching is less engaging, there can be some very low-level disruption or lack of engagement. Some pupils are not reaching high enough standards in the presentation of their work. Teachers' comments for improvement are not always acted upon. Some work remains unfinished.
- Rates of attendance have risen to at least average. Successful strategies have increased the attendance of disadvantaged pupils, and the number of pupils who are persistently absent has considerably reduced.
- The well-being, behaviour and attendance of the small number of pupils on alternative provision are checked daily and their progress is compared with that of others in school.

### **Outcomes for pupils**

### **require improvement**

- The proportion of pupils gaining five or more GCSE passes at grades A\* to C, including English and mathematics, has risen steadily in the last two years and school's data shows that this rise should continue for pupils taking GCSE examinations this summer. Standards in all subjects are improving. Pupils in Year 11 are now making faster progress, particularly in English and mathematics. However, outcomes require improvement because the progress of the most able pupils is not as strong as it should be and few pupils achieve the highest grades of A\* and A. The most able pupils are not yet making good progress in science, history, Spanish, art, music, religious education, drama and geography.
- Progress has improved in English and the proportion of pupils making good progress has increased each year for the last three years. This is the result of good teaching and improved literacy skills. There has been a substantial improvement in the progress and attainment of pupils in mathematics. Again, more pupils than previously are making good progress and achieving well. The school anticipates that the proportion of A\* and A grades will rise this year, but it is still too low, given that the majority of pupils have average or above-average starting points.
- Standards are rising in science subjects because the school makes sure that the right pupils are following the best courses for their likely success. Work in science is also better because of pupils' improved skills in mathematics. Standards have been consistently high in the performing arts because teaching and leadership in these subjects are strong. There is more to do to improve the progress and attainment of pupils in humanities, design technology and language subjects.
- The progress of low-attaining pupils is limited by poor literacy skills but work to remedy this is well under way. Smaller class sizes and individual support are making a difference. The school has put a strong focus on improving the reading skills of all pupils by testing pupils four times each year and actively promoting and rewarding reading. The impact of this is seen in much increased borrowing rates from the school library and a good improvement in the reading levels of pupils in all year groups.
- The gap between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and that of other pupils nationally at the end of Year 11 has narrowed substantially. However, the gap between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and that of others in the school in English and mathematics has widened until this year. Across the school, the strategies to increase the progress of disadvantaged pupils are successful narrowing the gap in most subjects.

- The achievement of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is improving because of the good support provided for these pupils. Rates of progress in English and mathematics are improving as reading ages increase.
- Pupils attending alternative provision gain useful qualifications which will lead them on to further education, training or employment.
- Virtually all pupils move on to courses in the Maghull sixth form, different colleges and schools or apprenticeships. As a result, the proportion of pupils who are not in education, training or employment when they leave school is very low.

## 16 to 19 study programmes

## require improvement

- The attainment of students in the sixth form has declined over recent years and some have not made the progress that they should. Improvements in the quality of teaching and more effective guidance on which courses are suitable for students are beginning to have an impact so that, in the current year, school progress data shows that the declining trend should be halted and reversed.
- The pass rate at A level for A\* to E grades is 100% but only a small proportion of students achieve the highest grades. Disadvantaged students make better progress than others currently in the sixth form.
- In the past, leaders have not used data with sufficient accuracy to clearly identify starting points and ensure that students and teachers measure progress precisely. This has sometimes led to an over-optimistic view of students' progress. This has been addressed and the school's tracking data is now secure.
- The starting points of many students are below the national average and the school has reviewed and changed its curriculum to take account of these lower entry points. Students have the opportunity to follow a number of different pathways, including more academic courses and a wide range of vocational courses. The sixth form is open and inclusive so that students of all abilities are provided with courses which will improve their future chances. The quality of advice they receive is good.
- The quality of teaching is now good across most subjects. Teaching is particularly strong in theatre studies, engineering, information technology and business studies. Students who have yet to achieve a grade C in English or mathematics continue with these subjects and the pass rate for the resits is well above the national rate.
- There are many opportunities for enrichment. Students have the chance to visit universities and colleges and to hear speakers explaining other options such as apprenticeships and routes directly into employment. There are trips, such as to London and Parliament, as well as numerous cultural opportunities to visit theatres, museums and galleries.
- Attendance is improving and the attitude of most students to their studies is good. Students speak warmly about the good teaching they receive, the guidance and support provided for their future plans and the opportunities for work experience. Sixth formers feel safe and know how to manage risk.
- A real strength of the sixth form is seen in the fact that in the last two years, every student has gone on to university, college, apprenticeships or employment.
- Leadership of the sixth form is good because leaders have a very clear view of the challenges students face and are implementing a clear plan for improvement, but the impact of their most recent actions has yet to show in the outcomes for students. The school delivers the 16–19 programmes of study effectively.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	137520
<b>Local authority</b>	Sefton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10012141

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>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	982
<b>Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes</b>	214
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Geoff Howe
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mark Anderson
<b>Telephone number</b>	0844 4773438
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.maghullhigh.com">www.maghullhigh.com</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:school@maghullhigh.com">school@maghullhigh.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12–13 March 2014

## Information about this school

- Maghull High School is slightly larger than the average-sized high school. It converted to academy status in October 2012.
- Sixth-form students are part of a consortium with two other local schools.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is just above average. The pupil premium is funding to help overcome disadvantage and is for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after.
- The very great majority of pupils are from White British families. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is very low.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is above average.
- The school's Phoenix Centre provides support from counsellors for pupils with health problems or social and emotional difficulties.
- The school uses alternative providers for a small number of pupils. These are Hugh Baird College, Everton Free School, Impact, Harmonize, Evolve and Alder Hey Learning Centre.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.



## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils learning in most subjects in Years 7 to 10 and Year 12. Pupils in Year 11 and students in Year 13 were on study leave because of their GCSE and A-level examinations. Some of these observations were carried out jointly with the deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at a range of pupils' work in many subjects across the school, either in lessons or as a separate activity.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders, curriculum leaders, other members of staff and groups of pupils from Years 7 to 10 and Year 12. The lead inspector met governors, including the chair and vice-chair of the governing body, and the school's adviser with the Leadership in North and Central Sefton (LiNCS) school improvement cluster of schools.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and action plans, information about pupils' attainment and progress, records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance, the school's safeguarding and other policies and records of checks on the quality of teaching and learning.
- They observed pupils' behaviour at break- and lunchtimes, and attended one assembly and some tutor sessions.
- Inspectors gained the views of parents from the 25 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and from letters written to the inspection team by parents.
- The views of staff were gained from the 44 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire and from discussions with individual teachers.

## Inspection team

Judith Straw, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Holland	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Lomas	Ofsted Inspector
Liam Trippier	Ofsted Inspector



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