

Cheadle Hospital School

100 Wilmslow Road, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 3DG

Inspection dates

11–13 October 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, supported well by a very able deputy headteacher and principal, is steadfast in her role. She has worked tirelessly to get the school 'off the ground' and effectively functioning.
- The proprietor (the Priory Group) provides strong governance. Governors are trained well and have an in-depth knowledge of the school. They provide challenge and support to senior leaders in equal measure and help to raise standards.
- Senior leaders work exceptionally well with the proprietor's quality assurance partner, ensuring that the school continually improves the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils.
- Pupils benefit from a curriculum that is tailored to meet their particular interests and academic ability.
- Without exception, pupils are fully engaged in their various programmes of study. They are familiar with their personal education plans and have a good understanding of how to improve their learning.
- Senior leaders, teachers and teaching assistants have an in-depth understanding of the challenges that each pupil faces. They are caring and sympathetic to pupils' experiences.
- The quality of teaching is good. Teachers and teaching assistants work exceptionally well together to ensure that pupils make good progress and enjoy their learning.
- Outcomes for all pupils, including the most able and those still developing their basic skills in English and mathematics, are good.
- Pupils say that they feel safe. They are thoughtful, appreciative of their teachers, and confident to share any concerns.
- Staff develop and maintain good relationships with medical and nursing staff to ensure that pupils are punctual and attend regularly.
- The headteacher routinely shares, and learns from, good practice within the Priory Group of schools. This supports continual school improvement.
- While pupils attain well and make good progress, the ever-changing nature of the ability, age and gender balance of different cohorts requires the school to provide a flexible and responsive curriculum. Currently, the vast majority of pupils are over 16. The school is still in the process of developing and refining the curriculum to ensure that these pupils achieve their absolute best.
- Thoughtfully devised procedures are in place to measure pupils' progress in accordance with their aptitude, ability and attitude to learning. Similarly, systems are in place to assess how well pupils are performing in all subjects. However, work in this area is new, and has not been fully shared across the school.
- Pupils' safety and welfare are of paramount importance. Stringent safeguarding protocols are in place to ensure that pupils are safe and secure at all times.
- Together, the proprietor and senior leaders have ensured that all of the independent school standards are met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that new system and procedures for monitoring pupils' progress, and assessing their performance, are shared with senior leaders and teachers across the school
 - making sure that the curriculum is fully responsive and flexible enough to meet the particular educational needs of continually changing cohorts of pupils, particularly those who are post-16.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders, with the support of the Priory Group's quality assurance team, recently completed a full audit of the school's work in relation to the independent school standards. Inspection evidence indicates that their conclusion that all standards are met is correct.
- The school has applied to the Department for Education to expand to include an extra 10 pupil places. An inspection of this additional provision, including the quality of leadership and management, teaching, outcomes for pupils, behaviour, welfare and safeguarding, indicates that the school is likely to meet all of the relevant independent school standards in these areas should its services be expanded.
- Although the school has only been in operation for a year, the headteacher, and most of the teaching staff, have brought with them their wealth of experience and dedication from the predecessor organisation. This has enabled the school to 'hit the ground running' and quickly implement a sound set of principles and policies, to ensure that the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils are good.
- The Priory Group structure provides many opportunities for expertise to be shared across different schools within the Group, often in the form of seminars and workshops on subjects such as using effective questioning in teaching and working with pupils who have autism. The proprietor also ensures that the headteacher and senior leaders are rigorously held to account for the performance of both teachers and pupils.
- Effective procedures for monitoring the performance of teachers are fully in place. Teachers' targets are clear and linked to the school's priorities as expressed in various documents, including its self-evaluation and development plans.
- Staff who completed the inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about all aspects of the school. All said that they are proud to work at the school and fully understand what senior leaders are aiming to achieve.
- Pupils and parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. For example, many letters written by parents refer to their children's experience at the school as 'life-changing'. Pupils describe their time at the school as being 'highly memorable' and their teachers and teaching assistants as 'fantastic' and 'really understanding'.
- Pupils benefit from a curriculum tailored to meet their specific educational needs and academic level of study. For example, some pupils study biology, mathematics and psychology at 'A' level, while others study for their GCSE examinations in a wide range of subjects. These include English and mathematics. In addition, for those pupils who have missed significant periods of education due to illness, basic skills courses are available. As an accredited centre, the school develops its own 'entry-level' qualifications to aid pupils' transition back into learning.
- Senior leaders' work to improve pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development enhances pupils' understanding in these areas. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures and are encouraged to pursue their musical and artistic interests.
- Pupils have a good appreciation of British values and readily share their views and ideas about politics and politicians. Pupils are well informed about democratic principles and the rule of law; they skilfully debate current issues such as animal cruelty, euthanasia and membership of the European Union.

- Alongside new procedures for assessing pupils' academic work, senior leaders have developed a highly imaginative system for monitoring pupils' academic performance and attitudes to learning. However, this system is new and is yet to be shared with all senior leaders and fully implemented across the school.
- The school operates in an ever-changing landscape and so the composition of cohorts of pupils varies considerably from term to term. For example, some pupils might come to the school in crisis or may be undergoing short periods of psychiatric assessment. Senior leaders are well aware of this variability and of the need to ensure that the curriculum is fully responsive and flexible enough to meet the educational needs of these continually changing cohorts of pupils, particularly those who are post-16. The school does not have a website. The school's up-to-date safeguarding policy takes into account current government requirements and is made available to parents on request.

Governance

- The Priory Group model of governance is highly effective. The chair of the governing body is an experienced educational professional, while the vice-chair has considerable experience of working in social care. Their in-depth knowledge of education and social care enables them to play an informed role in ensuring that the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils are continually improving.
- All governors provide a good balance of support and challenge to senior leaders and teachers. They are acutely aware of the need for staff to be flexible and responsive to the needs of pupils and ensure that they have access to high-quality training opportunities.
- Governors agree and review the headteacher's and teachers' targets robustly. They tackle any underperformance and reward staff appropriately for raising standards.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. In this school senior leaders leave absolutely nothing to chance when it comes to ensuring the safety and welfare of pupils.
- Senior leaders' approach to safeguarding creates an open and safe culture in the school where staff, pupils, stakeholders and parents are well informed. Induction procedures are thorough and consistent for all staff.
- Policies and procedures are 'watertight' and fully understood by all members of staff; they know exactly what they need to do if a pupil raises a concern about their safety or welfare. Pupils and staff learn about the risks of radicalisation, extremism and child sexual exploitation.
- Staff are familiar with the most recent legislation and guidance relating to keeping pupils safe in education. Senior leaders ensure that all staff benefit from comprehensive training that is regularly updated in line with changes in legislation.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The good quality of teaching, learning and assessment has a consistently strong impact on pupils' progress in all subjects. However, teachers measure pupils' progress in several different ways. The school's self-evaluation notes that, 'owing to the complex, high acuity needs of learners, it is important that there is a focus on the softer elements of progression which underpin academic progress'. These elements include assessing

the impact of pupils' mental health on their concentration, establishing pupils' willingness to engage in learning and gauging their hope for the future.

- Teachers and teaching assistants have excellent relationships with pupils and a good understanding of their specific learning needs. Most teachers are specialists in a range of subject areas, including mathematics, English, art and computing. They use their specialist knowledge well to enthuse and engage pupils.
- Teachers have well-established procedures for reintegrating pupils into mainstream schools. They prepare pupils well with the right skills and attitudes to pursue higher-level courses of study and specialist programmes of learning in schools, colleges and universities.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils and ensure that they closely follow their tailored learning plans. This was evident during observations of A-level Spanish and mathematics, where teachers skilfully questioned pupils, getting them to think deeply about their work and engaging them in meaningful, productive discussions.
- Teachers are highly skilled at engaging pupils and developing their communication skills. This was exemplified in a key stage 3 class where pupils were exploring the positive and negative aspects of using social media. The teacher ensured that all pupils shared their ideas, challenged others' views and took turns to read. All pupils made good progress because they could relate to the subject matter, which the teacher made interesting.
- Regular pupil reviews provide opportunities for pupils to talk to teachers about their learning and reflect on their studies. Pupils are routinely asked to consider and assess whether they are meeting or exceeding the expected standards in their various subjects. This very effective system supports pupils in developing a good understanding of, and insight into, what they need to do to improve their learning.
- The presentation and standard of work in pupils' books is at least good and often outstanding. Teachers encourage pupils to achieve to the best of their ability. As a result, pupils are proud of their achievements and prepared to put in extra effort to pursue areas of interest.
- Teachers ensure that pupils' books are marked and up to date and consistently apply the school's marking policy. They offer good advice to pupils and check pupils' responses to it.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Teachers' work to develop pupils' confidence and nurture their interests is exceptional. Many pupils at the school are high academic achievers. All have learning plans and regular subject review meetings with teachers.
- Pupils have many opportunities to discuss with staff any concerns they may have about either their academic work or their personal circumstances.
- Impartial careers advice is available to all pupils, from various local authorities and specialist partners. This helps to ensure that pupils are appropriately placed after leaving school. For example, last year 27 pupils who were not in employment, education or training prior to coming to the school were successfully placed in colleges, work

experience and on apprenticeships. In addition, since January 2016, 22 pupils from two units have been reintegrated back into school. This is due to the school's highly effective work to develop pupils' skills and confidence.

- Pupils say that they feel safe at all times. They know that they can talk to any member of staff if they feel unsafe, or unwell. On the very rare occasions that staff find themselves in difficult or risky situations, they use a personal alarm system to summon up help. This enables staff to keep both themselves and pupils safe.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the dangers and risks of using the internet and mobile communications. All pupils and staff receive training about how to stay safe online. Pupils are always closely supervised when using the internet.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils have highly positive attitudes to learning. They are welcoming towards visitors and enjoy talking about their learning. Pupils readily share their ideas in class and are respectful towards staff and each other.
- Pupils behave considerately when moving around the school and sensibly during physical education. This was evident when pupils were observed playing cricket. They followed the rules, listened carefully to instructions and showed good team work.
- Pupils' behaviour in class is good. Those who spoke to inspectors said that lessons are rarely, if ever, disrupted by inappropriate behaviour. During the inspection, all lessons observed were calm and purposeful, despite the fact that pupils often moved in and out of lessons. This is due to a number of factors. For example, pupils may have attended therapy sessions, or been too unwell to complete lessons. Nevertheless, any such movement is seamless and managed exceptionally well by staff.
- Pupils are of the view that behaviour is good, as are staff and parents. The school's behaviour logs show very few incidents of poor behaviour. There have been no exclusions for at least the last 12 months.
- Pupils have a good understanding of discriminatory behaviour, such as racism and homophobic bullying. They are adamant that neither happens in school.
- School staff work closely with nursing staff to ensure that all pupils who are able to attend school do so on a regular basis. Pupils' good attendance is due to the consistent application, by all staff, of the school's policy on attendance and on rewards and sanctions.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress in their learning in a wide range of subjects from their different starting points.
- Pupils start school at various times during the school year and stay for different lengths of time, ranging from a few weeks to more than a year. Due to these variations, it is not possible to compare pupils' progress and attainment with that of other pupils nationally.
- The school provides 'structured daily individualised learning programmes' for all pupils. Specialist teachers support pupils in continuing the subjects they study at school, ensuring that they do not fall behind and that they are well prepared for their reintegration into mainstream schools.

- Pupils develop good communication skills. In lessons, they are eager to get on with their individual course work and programmes of study. Pupils have many opportunities to practise and refine their writing skills and pursue their reading interests.
- Post-16 pupils who have not gained a GCSE pass at grades A* to C in English or mathematics continue with these subjects and are encouraged to develop their information technology and computing skills. The school's recently devised system for measuring pupils' academic progress shows that whether pupils have been at the school for a short or long period of time, they make good gains in all subjects.
- Pupils who are long-term admissions have the opportunity to study various GCSE and A-level courses. For example, in 2015, six pupils sat a total of 31 examinations, all gained five GCSE qualifications at grades A* to C, including in English and mathematics. With regard to entry-level qualifications, 10 pupils gained their functional skills certificates. In 2016, 13 pupils sat 96 examinations in various subjects. All achieved their predicted grades.
- The school is registered to accept transferred examination candidates from mainstream schools; this enables teachers to steer pupils toward success in their chosen areas of study.
- To meet the school's unique circumstances, senior leaders have worked with teachers to develop appropriate credited awards. Post-16 pupils are currently devising their own unit awards with the guidance of teachers.
- Senior leaders' analysis of pupils' performance shows that all groups of pupils make at least good progress, regardless of their age, gender or ethnicity. A small proportion of pupils are defined as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. As with other pupils, individual learning programmes and good-quality teaching ensure that they make the same good progress in reading, writing and mathematics as their peers.
- The most able pupils are well supported with their A-level work in subjects such as mathematics, psychology, biology and Spanish, often on a one-to-one basis, by experienced teachers. Outstanding art teaching inspires pupils to produce excellent art work as shown in pupils' Aboriginal, Turkish and Japanese-influenced artwork. This work has helped pupils to achieve the highest possible standards in GCSE examinations.

School details

Unique reference number	142524
DfE registration number	356/6006
Inspection number	10020877

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Tier 4 community adolescent mental health inpatient provision
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	13 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	50
Proprietor	The Priory Group
Chair	John Anderson
Headteacher	Jacqueline Wetters
Annual fees (day pupils)	£33,250
Telephone number	0161 428 9511
Email address	jacquelinewetters@priorygroup.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Cheadle Hospital School is part of a large nationwide collective of schools, colleges and hospitals owned by the Priory Group. Pupils attend the school from different local authorities across the country. All are patients at the adjoining hospital.
- The school opened in November 2015 after several years of operation as a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).
- The aim of the school is to, 'provide a positive and inclusive experience of education to all our young people, to increase self-esteem and confidence and to facilitate progression and achievement'.
- The school, based in Cheadle Royal Hospital, provides education services for boys and girls aged between 13 and 18 who are either undergoing mental health assessments or receiving treatment for a diagnosed mental health condition.
- The school is registered to accommodate up to 50 pupils, many of whom are detained in accordance with the Mental Act 1983.

- The main school provides education services to pupils with various psychiatric illnesses and houses a PICU (psychiatric intensive care unit) and low secure and rehabilitation units. These services are provided through three units, Orchard, Meadows and Woodlands. A fourth unit, for pupils with eating disorders, Rivendell, is housed in a hospital in Altrincham.
- The average length of stay at the school varies widely. While some pupils stay at the school for as little as two weeks, others stay for over a year. The age range of pupils varies widely throughout the academic year, as does the ratio of boys to girls.
- A few pupils are in the care of a local authority. A small proportion of pupils have either a statement of special educational needs or education, health and care plans.
- The school does not have a website. However, all statutory policies, including those for safeguarding pupils, are up to date and available for parents.

Information about this inspection

- As part of the inspection, the Department for Education asked Ofsted to consider an application from Cheadle Hospital School for a material change to provide education services to an additional 10 pupils from Fairhaven, a specialist psychiatric unit in Warrington. The unit formed part of the inspection.
- At the time of the inspection, several pupils had been at the school for less than a month and were still in the process of undergoing psychiatric assessments.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across three sites and five units and looked at pupils' workbooks and assessment information on their progress and attainment. One joint observation was carried out with a senior leader.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, unit leaders, teachers and teaching assistants. Discussions took place with pupils on two sites.
- Inspectors held meetings with the chair and vice chair of the governing body, the school principal and the regional quality assurance leader for the Priory Group.
- Inspectors met with various hospital staff, including the director and deputy director of Cheadle Hospital School.
- Questionnaires submitted by 13 members of staff were scrutinised as well as letters, cards and notes sent to the school by parents and previous pupils. Parents' views were gathered through telephone conversations and Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors examined a range of documents. These included the school's reviews of its own performance, development plans, checks on the quality of teaching, safeguarding documentation, including risk assessments, and various records of pupils' attendance and behaviour.

Inspection team

Lenford White, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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