

Fred Longworth High School

Printshop Lane, Tyldesley, Manchester M29 8JN

Inspection dates

21–22 November 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Pupils receive a good and improving education. Leaders have stopped the decline in standards and have driven far-reaching improvements that are helping pupils throughout the school to make faster progress.
- Leaders have created an inclusive school community based on a sense of belonging and togetherness. Pupils and staff speak with affection about being part of 'Freddie's family'.
- Opportunities for pupils' personal development are exemplary. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe and profit from an extensive range of opportunities to prepare them for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum. The expressive and creative arts inject the curriculum with vigour and vitality.
- Governors have provided strong and effective challenge to leaders, which has been instrumental in securing faster pupil progress in humanities, English and mathematics.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons and during the school day. They are respectful, polite and considerate, and demonstrate consistently excellent attitudes to learning.
- Teaching is good overall and in many areas of the curriculum it is highly effective. Teachers use questioning skilfully and provide high- and middle-ability pupils with demanding work.
- The effectiveness of leaders' checks on the quality of teaching varies across the curriculum. This is contributing to the inconsistencies that remain in the quality of teaching.
- The impact of assessment differs across the curriculum. Pupils are sometimes unaware of how well they are doing in different subjects and what they need to do to improve.
- Leaders focus relentlessly on improving the quality of teaching. However, they do not routinely evaluate with clarity and precision the impact of different strategies they have employed. Consequently, leaders' plans for improvement are not consistently based on a clear understanding of what has worked well in the past.
- Outcomes for pupils require improvement because results in external examinations have shown that pupils have not made good progress in English and mathematics in the recent past. However, inspectors discovered that pupils currently at the school are making much faster progress in these subjects. As a result, this area of the school's work is quickly improving towards being good.
- Leaders have prioritised strategies to accelerate the progress made by boys, and their work is clearly having a positive impact. Despite this, teachers' expectations of what boys can achieve are not high enough.
- Teaching is not as effective for low-ability pupils as it is for others. Some teaching does not provide sufficient challenge for these pupils. Where teachers set demanding work, they often do not provide the careful support required for these pupils to access the work and make rapid gains in their learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop the leadership and management of teaching and learning by:
 - strengthening leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning to further reduce variabilities in the quality of teaching
 - ensuring that there is greater consistency in the way that pupils are assessed so pupils understand their current attainment and what they need to do to improve further
 - evaluating the impact of different strategies to improve teaching and accelerate pupils' progress more carefully so that plans for improvement are based on a clear understanding of what has worked well in the past.
- Develop the quality of teaching further, to build on improving outcomes, by ensuring that:
 - teachers have consistently high expectations of boys, especially in relation to the presentation and quality of their work and their participation in lessons
 - teachers provide pupils with low prior attainment with the careful balance between support and challenge that will enable them to make progress that is as swift as that of others.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Results from public examinations in 2016 and 2017 showed that the high standards previously achieved by pupils were not being sustained across the curriculum. In particular, the rate of progress made by pupils during key stage 4 in mathematics and English had slowed considerably.
- However, leaders quickly realised that urgent action was needed to address the issue of falling standards. The headteacher refocused the efforts of the school community, and a relentless focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning has been maintained ever since. As a result, leaders have made significant and sustained improvements in all areas that had been causing concern. Leaders have therefore decisively halted the decline in standards and pupils are now making significantly faster progress in areas such as English, mathematics and humanities. Outcomes are therefore rapidly improving towards being good.
- Leaders have created an inclusive community that abides by the school motto of 'belonging, engaging and succeeding together'. The work of the school is underpinned by strong and supportive relationships. Pupils are respectful and considerate of each other. They greatly value the warmth of the relationships they enjoy with members of staff, and are supported well with pastoral and academic matters.
- Leaders are shrewd in their use of additional funding to support pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. The special educational needs coordinator provides assured and compassionate leadership. The work of the 'inclusion team' has ensured that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making strong progress both academically and socially.
- Leaders' use of pupil premium funding is having a positive impact. Disadvantaged pupils are now making faster progress across the curriculum and throughout the school. They are attending school more regularly, and are less likely to misbehave. Despite this, leaders do not carefully evaluate the impact of pupil premium funding. Consequently, plans for future spending are not routinely based on a precise analysis of what has worked well in the past.
- Leaders can identify clearly how additional funding to support pupils who join the school with attainment below national expectations is being used to help them catch up with their peers. In particular, the vast majority of these pupils are making accelerated progress in English. As a result of improved literacy skills, these pupils are accessing the wider curriculum with greater confidence.
- Leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's overall strengths and weaknesses. This has enabled leaders to take decisive action to improve areas of weakness. Despite this, the effectiveness of leaders' checks on the quality of teaching and learning vary across the curriculum. Consequently, leaders have been markedly more successful in reducing variabilities in the quality of teaching in some subjects compared to others. In particular, weaker monitoring in mathematics and English lengthened the amount of time it took for leaders to achieve substantial improvements to the quality of teaching in these areas.

- Members of staff value the training they receive to improve the quality of their practice. Leaders have created a vibrant environment for discussing what constitutes effective teaching. All teachers are involved in 'action research projects' as part of their performance management, which explore the effectiveness of different strategies for improving teaching.
- Leaders have also extended the scope of the work they undertake with other schools. This has greatly increased the range of opportunities for staff to share best practice. For example, the school works closely with a school in a neighbouring local authority. This partnership involves reciprocal 'magpie days', which involve teachers sharing ideas with counterparts from the other school. As a result, the quality of teaching is improving and teachers are helping pupils to make faster progress.
- Senior leaders adopt an open and distributive leadership style. Middle leaders value the trust that senior colleagues place in them. Subject leaders are keen to develop the ethos and unique characteristics of their faculties. They also value the improved training that has helped them undertake the different aspects of their roles with greater efficiency. As a result, middle leadership has been strengthened considerably in recent years. In particular, the heads of science, humanities and expressive arts have driven highly impressive improvements within their respective areas.
- Leaders provide pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum that serves them well. The decision to implement a three-year key stage 4 was made after lengthy consultation with pupils and parents. Leaders have increased the length of key stage 4 to enable pupils to gain accreditation in a broader range of subjects. In particular, they are keen for the majority of pupils to continue studying subjects in the creative and expressive arts, where they achieve exceptionally strong outcomes and which are much loved.
- Pupils benefit from an extensive range of extra-curricular opportunities. They participate in a wide range of sports from boxing to badminton. The school's vibrant extra-curricular arts offer secures the participation of a wide and diverse group of pupils.
- Leaders have been successful in developing pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum. In particular, there has been a concerted effort to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. Pupils respond positively to the regular opportunities they are provided with to discuss and debate different issues. In contrast, pupils are not supported as effectively to develop their numeracy skills in a range of subjects.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a real strength of the school, because leaders create rich and varied opportunities for pupils to become reflective, resilient and caring citizens. Leaders are aware of the lack of ethnic diversity among the school community and consciously seek to develop pupils' awareness of other cultures and religions. Pupils benefit from valuable opportunities to learn about others with very different life stories to their own. For example, pupils in Year 8 spoke with asylum-seekers, which provided valuable insights into the lives of others.
- Leaders' promotion of fundamental British values is highly effective. Leaders ensure that pupils develop a sound understanding of different values through a mixture of embedded systems and high-quality learning opportunities. For example, the school's procedures for encouraging good behaviour are complemented by a 'drop down' day that taught pupils about civil and common law. As a result, pupils have developed a deep respect for the rule of law, which is reflected in the excellent behaviour of pupils.

Governance of the school

- Governors have played a pivotal role in helping leaders to address declining standards. They have held leaders to account for weaker pupil progress, and they have challenged them to do better.
- Governors have developed close personal links with different subjects. They have a clear understanding of developments within their areas that they systematically share with other governors. This work has provided them with valuable first-hand insights into the challenges faced, and the improvements made, by leaders.
- Governors have worked in tandem with leaders to protect and nourish the school's ethos and values. Many governors, including the chair and vice-chair, have a long-standing association with the school. They fundamentally understand the role the school plays within the local community, and they are totally committed to ensuring that the local community is served by an inclusive, happy and effective school.
- Governors have demonstrated particularly strong oversight in relation to safeguarding and inclusion, and this has helped these areas to become established strengths.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The work the school does to keep pupils safe is exemplary. Leadership of this area has been highly effective in creating a culture of safeguarding within the school. Staff are vigilant to any signs of neglect and abuse. Systems for making referrals to the leaders of safeguarding are understood by all and used effectively. Record-keeping is precise and the school liaises well with a range of external agencies and with pupils' parents.
- Staff receive regular training on different aspects of safeguarding, including e-safety and how they can keep pupils safe from people with extreme views and from being radicalised.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- First-hand inspection evidence shows that teaching overall is good and improving.
- Pupils display very positive attitudes to learning. They arrive at lessons well-equipped and ready to learn. Pupils enjoy warm and productive relationships with their peers and members of staff. They work hard and are determined to do their best.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge, which helps them to spot and address pupils' misconceptions. It also underpins teachers' highly effective questioning of pupils. Teachers question pupils skilfully to elicit their understanding and deepen their thinking.
- A great deal of teaching is highly effective and supports pupils to make rapid and sustained gains in their learning. In these lessons, teachers have exceptionally high expectations of pupils and they provide work for pupils which is challenging and carefully matched to their aptitudes and abilities. Particularly strong teaching was observed in science, languages, music, art, drama, history and sociology.
- Observations of teaching and scrutiny of pupils' work indicate that teaching is improving quickly in mathematics. The large majority of mathematics teachers are

becoming increasingly adept at developing pupils' problem-solving and mathematical reasoning. As a faculty, they are establishing a culture in which pupils are increasingly willing to take risks and make mistakes. As a result, pupils are becoming more resilient and independent. The teaching of mathematics is particularly effective for pupils of middle- and high-ability. However, it is sometimes less effective for pupils with low prior attainment.

- The teaching of English is also improving. English teachers question pupils skilfully and are adept at facilitating discussion and debate. Teachers model different skills well and encourage the use of sophisticated vocabulary within lessons. This is helping pupils to become increasingly articulate, both orally and in writing.
- Although it is evident that teaching is quickly improving, leaders acknowledge that there is still too much variability in the quality of teaching. In particular, the quality of assessment differs markedly across the curriculum. Assessment is particularly effective in history, science and art. In these subjects, pupils know precisely how well they are doing and can also explain clearly what they need to do to improve. In contrast, assessment in some other subjects is not supporting pupils to develop a clear understanding of how to improve their work.
- There is also pronounced variability in the extent to which teachers follow the school's assessment and feedback policy. Leaders' inconsistent monitoring of this area of the school's work has contributed to this variation.
- Teachers' expectations of what boys can achieve are inconsistent. Where boys make progress that is as fast as that of girls, teachers have equally high expectations of both girls and boys. They expect boys to play an active role in lessons and do not accept poorly presented work. Where boys make weaker progress, teachers' expectations are too low. They have a tendency to demand less from boys in lessons and they are too accepting of work that demonstrates a lack of effort and care.
- Teaching is less effective for low-ability pupils. In some lessons, teachers' expectations of what low-ability pupils can achieve are not high enough. As a result, they are not provided with demanding work that challenges them to make rapid progress from their starting points. In other lessons, teachers provide low-ability pupils with work that is challenging. However, they do not provide these pupils with the careful support that would enable them to fully access the work that is set.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding and is central to the school's ethos. All staff take their responsibilities in this area very seriously. The care and consideration that staff have for pupils are evident in the daily interactions that take place in classrooms and in corridors.
- Pupils are committed to doing their best, and pupils of all abilities demonstrate resilience in lessons. They persevere when they find things difficult and understand what makes a successful learner.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They have confidence that staff would sort out any issues that may arise. Pupils were particularly complimentary about the support

offered by the 'inclusion centre' and the heads of year.

- Lessons, assemblies, tutor time and 'drop down' days for personal, social, health and economic education equip pupils with the skills and knowledge to keep themselves safe. Pupils are supported to avoid the dangers of social networking, mobile technology and being online. Pupils are also helped to develop an age-appropriate understanding of what constitutes healthy relationships.
- Pupils say that bullying rarely happens within the school. Pupils say they know whom to speak to if they encounter bullying and they are confident that members of staff will resolve any issues effectively.
- Leaders have effectively promoted pupils' physical and emotional well-being. The school utilises the expertise of counsellors to support vulnerable pupils.
- Leaders have attached great significance to the role of form tutor. Form tutors see it as their responsibility to develop the characteristics and behaviours that will enable their tutees to be successful both at school and when they leave.
- The very small number of pupils who access alternative provision attend regularly and are well supported to develop the broader social and employability skills that will enable them to be successful when they leave the school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils behave exceptionally well in all areas of the school. They are sensible, mature and courteous towards others in lessons and when moving around the site.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons and examples of low-level misbehaviour are extremely rare. Pupils told inspectors that, on the rare occasions when poor behaviour is seen, teachers take swift and appropriate action to ensure that the pace of learning is maintained.
- There are few incidents of serious misbehaviour in school. Pupils are rarely excluded because they respond positively to the school's insistence on high standards of behaviour. The number of pupils who were excluded during the last academic year was half the figure for the previous year. This is because of improved behaviour coupled with the school's effective development of alternative punishments to exclusion.
- Pupils' behaviour around the site is excellent. Pupils respond positively to the guidance and direction that is provided by school prefects.
- Pupils' attendance is excellent. Leaders have implemented a broad range of strategies that have brought about a significant decrease in absence during the previous academic year. In particular, leaders were able to secure significant improvements in the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. As a result, no group of pupils is disadvantaged by regular absence.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes require improvement because results from public examinations over the last few years have indicated that pupils have not made consistently strong progress across the curriculum. In particular, pupils' progress has not been good in mathematics, humanities and English. Results in mathematics and English were particularly weak in

2017. This is because teachers in these faculties had been slow to respond to the challenges posed by new GCSE examinations.

- Despite this, information provided by school leaders and evidence seen by inspectors indicate that outcomes for pupils have improved considerably and are moving quickly towards being good. This is the result of improved teaching and more astute subject leadership. Leaders' efforts to improve outcomes have been underpinned by the school's positive and ambitious ethos, which has instilled within pupils a tangible commitment to doing their best.
- Leaders have driven changes that have brought about rapid improvements in mathematics, English and humanities. These improvements are reflected in the faster progress that current pupils are making in these subjects throughout the school. Despite this, leaders acknowledge that a great deal of work is still to be done and they are keen to guard against complacency. For example, they are aware that pupils are not making as much progress in geography as they are in history. They are also keen to ensure that improved progress in English and mathematics translates to positive outcomes for the 2018 Year 11 cohort in public examinations.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils continue to make excellent progress in a number of subjects, including: science, art, dance, music, drama and physical education. In all cases, these outcomes are the result of highly effective teaching that inspires pupils to do their best.
- Leaders have ensured that all members of staff have high expectations of what disadvantaged pupils can achieve. This, allied to leaders' discerning use of pupil premium funding, is securing incremental improvements to the progress made by disadvantaged pupils. As a result, the progress of disadvantaged pupils is getting closer to that made by non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.
- The progress made by pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities has also improved and compares favourably to national averages. This is because they benefit from improved teaching and excellent support from staff in the 'inclusion centre'. These staff ensure that there is a sustained focus on overcoming personal barriers to achievement.
- The school's own data shows that pupils in Years 7 and 8 are making the quickest progress, particularly in English and mathematics. This is because leaders have undertaken a considerable amount of work with feeder primary schools to ensure that pupils do not repeat work from primary school unnecessarily. In turn, this has led teachers to provide pupils with an appropriate level of challenge that is facilitating rapid progress.
- Outcomes from 2016 public examinations indicated that the most able pupils had underachieved in comparison to the most able pupils nationally. As a result, leaders focused on improving teaching for this group. Leaders increased teachers' expectations of what the most able pupils should achieve, and teachers responded by increasing the level of challenge for these pupils. This improved teaching was reflected in outcomes from 2017 public examinations. These results showed that the most able pupils had made considerably quicker progress than in the previous year.
- In contrast, the 2017 public examinations showed that low-ability pupils had made slower progress than in recent years. Observations of teaching confirmed that teaching for the least able pupils is less effective than it is for the most able.
- Leaders are acutely aware that girls make faster progress than boys. As a result, they

are implementing an ambitious range of strategies to diminish these differences in achievement. Information presented by leaders indicates that boys are now making faster progress throughout the school. However, the amount of progress made by boys still lags behind that of the girls. This is because teachers do not consistently have the same high expectations of boys as they do girls.

- Pupils benefit from extensive careers guidance. Pupils in key stage 4 have a fortnightly careers lesson. All pupils in Year 11 have a personal meeting with an independent careers adviser. Leaders have also introduced the 'aspire' group to develop targeted pupils' awareness of the opportunities that are available to them in the future. As a result of this work, all pupils leave the school for an appropriate destination. The proportion of pupils who study level 3 qualifications after leaving the school compares favourably to national figures. As a result, pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 137448 |
| Local authority | Wigan |
| Inspection number | 10032815 |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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| Type of school | Secondary comprehensive |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 16 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 1,278 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair | Brian Wilson |
| Headteacher | Janet Garretts |
| Telephone number | 01942 883796 |
| Website | http://flhs.org.uk |
| Email address | garrettsj@flhs.wigan.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- Fred Longworth High School is larger than the average secondary school. It converted to academy status in September 2011. When its predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted in 2010, it was judged to be outstanding.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is broadly similar to the national average. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and of pupils who speak English as an additional language are much lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is similar to the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who join the school with high prior attainment is above the

national average. The proportion of pupils who join the school with low prior attainment is below the national average.

- The vast majority of pupils live within close proximity to the school.
- The school uses two alternative educational providers: 'Fix it' and 'My life'. These are accessed by a very small number of Year 11 pupils for one day per week.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in lessons across a range of subjects and year groups, including some joint observations with school leaders. They also carried out a scrutiny of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils, and talked informally with others at break and lunchtimes. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. An inspector listened to a group of pupils read.
- Discussions were held with staff, including senior and middle leaders, and classroom teachers. A meeting was held with the chair and vice chair of governors. An inspector also spoke with an external consultant who has been working closely with the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised information about the school's performance and a range of other documents. These included the school's self-evaluation, its development plan and information on the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe.

Inspection team

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Will Smith, lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Rochelle Conefrey | Ofsted Inspector |
| David Roberts | Ofsted Inspector |
| Jon Ashley | Ofsted Inspector |
| David Hampson | Ofsted Inspector |
| Annette Patterson | Ofsted Inspector |

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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