

Meade Hill School

Chain Road, Higher Blackley, Manchester, Lancashire, M9 6GN

Inspection dates

27–28 March 2018

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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- This is a caring school where vulnerable pupils build their self-esteem and re-establish their trust in education. This is because of the care and guidance that they receive.
- Leaders have high expectations of staff and pupils alike. They know the school well and use this knowledge to identify appropriate priorities for development. These include enhancing the contribution that subject leaders make to school development planning.
- Pupils typically demonstrate good conduct and are polite and welcoming to visitors. Their behaviour reflects the caring and respectful ethos that is at the heart of the school.
- Pupils benefit from well-managed personalised education. A range of carefully chosen and closely monitored alternative educational placements equips them well for their future lives.
- Stringent and effective safeguarding procedures ensure that pupils are safe. Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They are knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe in the wider community.
- Pupils say that they like the school and recognise how it helps them to re-engage in education and learning. Pupils' attendance considerably improves once they join the school. However, despite the school's appropriate actions, persistent absence is high.
- The school's curriculum is carefully designed to ensure that it effectively meets the needs of pupils. It offers a wide range of academic and vocational study opportunities and activities that promote pupils' personal development and welfare. However, the school's website does not contain the required curriculum information.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge, particularly in English at key stage 3. They have a deep understanding of pupils' needs and carefully select appropriate and effective strategies to promote pupils' learning well. On occasions, particularly in subjects other than English and mathematics, the most able pupils sometimes do not receive the challenge that they need to develop their knowledge and understanding at greater depth.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses because of the quality of information that they receive and the quality of the questions that they ask. However, on occasion, their evaluations do not specifically focus on the impact of leaders' actions on pupils' learning and progress in this school.
- Pupils achieve well in school. They make good progress from their starting points and are well prepared for the next stages of their education, employment or training. Most pupils move on to college courses at the end of Year 11.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enhance the leadership and management of the school by:
 - ensuring that governors more precisely evaluate the impact of leaders' actions to improve the attainment and progress of pupils registered in this school, rather than more generally across the wider federation
 - updating the school's website so that the information relating to the curriculum accurately reflects the content provided for pupils in each year group.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and pupils' outcomes, by:
 - ensuring that those pupils who are most able routinely receive the challenge they need in order to develop their knowledge and understanding at greater depth, particularly in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Build upon the effective action already implemented by leaders to promote pupils' attendance and to reduce further the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- School leaders have a clear and accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the school because of their frequent and focused monitoring activities. These include the close analysis of assessment information and in-depth scrutinies of pupils' work.
- Leaders work closely and effectively as a team on each site and across the federation of schools. They have a shared determination to provide a high quality of education for pupils. They have high expectations, which they have shared with staff. As a result of increased expectations, leaders and teachers have effectively improved the quality of teaching since the last inspection.
- Detailed federation-wide development planning contains appropriate priorities for the school. It ensures consistency in the application of policies and procedures used on each campus across the federation. It also promotes a smooth transition for pupils when they move between each campus. Leaders are aware that sometimes the desired outcomes from the actions identified in the plan are not precise enough to make them easily measurable. Leaders are taking appropriate actions to address this issue.
- Subject leadership is developing well in the school. Leaders with subject responsibilities, particularly those in English and mathematics, are aware of the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects. They regularly report to senior leaders about pupils' progress and attainment in their subjects. However, the contribution that subject leaders make to the school's self-evaluation and subsequent development planning is more limited.
- Leaders' effective use of the pupil premium funding ensures that disadvantaged pupils make good progress from their starting points. Funding is used to provide specialist art, and drama therapy sessions, and to employ a child and adolescent mental health worker. These initiatives effectively promote pupils' engagement with education and help them to overcome personal crises. The pupil premium funding is also used well to provide special reading support on each campus. This promotes pupils' development of reading skills and allows them to access learning better in other subjects.
- Leaders' regular and effective communication ensures that parents and carers are well informed about their children's learning and progress. Leaders provide parents with regular high-quality and informative school magazines and frequent information letters. These keep parents and carers up to date with school life. Information that is more urgent is also communicated through the effective use of electronic systems. Parents receive informative annual reports about the progress that their children have made, their achievements and their next steps in learning.
- Leaders contribute well to annual reviews of pupils' education, health and care plans. They identify appropriate personal targets that are suitably challenging and appropriate for each pupil. Parents are encouraged to engage with the school. Regular parents' information events, including coffee mornings, allow staff to meet with parents and share information and advice about such things as online safety. Those parents who spoke with inspectors, or who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, showed overwhelming support for the school and the work of leaders and staff in helping their children to learn.

- Leaders nurture pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. They develop pupils' respect for all and promote equality for different pupils, irrespective of their needs, gender, sexual orientation or faith. All pupils are treated with understanding and respect.
- The school's curriculum is designed with a clear intention to meet the needs of the pupils and is implemented well by leaders and staff. A wide range of academic subjects, and many other opportunities and experiences, enrich pupils' learning. Carefully chosen enrichment activities promote pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem and ensure that pupils develop new skills. These include horse riding, the Duke of Edinburgh's bronze and silver award schemes, and other activities in conjunction with the Prince's Trust.
- Sport plays an important part in the curriculum and draws upon pupils' interests and competitive spirit. The school competes regularly against other mainstream schools in sports such as football, table tennis and basketball. Pupils and staff are equally proud of their achievement in becoming the City of Manchester champions in goalball, a Paralympic ball sport in which players are visually impaired or blindfolded.

Governance of the school

- Governance of the school is effective. Governors are proud of the school and share their vision effectively. Governors know the school well because of the quality of information that they receive from the executive headteacher and head of centre.
- Governors use their professional skills to ask searching and pertinent questions, particularly in relation to standards and finance. However, much of the detailed assessment data that they receive from leaders focuses on individual campuses that may share pupils from more than one school, or the federation as a whole. This federation-wide information limits governors' understanding of the specific impact of leaders' actions to improve outcomes for pupils at Meade Hill School.
- Governors monitor meticulously the school's finances, including the use of the pupil premium funding through effective committees. They ensure that leaders use the school's funding wisely to get the best value for the pupils who attend the school.
- Governors also make effective use of the additional opportunities afforded to them, by virtue of their membership of the federation, to ensure that funding is placed where it is most needed and resources are shared effectively. Governors have a secure understanding of the school's performance management procedures and their links to teachers' pay.
- The governing body accepts it has not ensured that the school's website provides the required information relating to the curriculum.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The governing body ensures that the school meets all the statutory requirements for safeguarding. These include the detailed checking of the suitability of adults to work with pupils in school and the provision of appropriate filtering and monitoring of the school's internet connection.

- Governors stringently check alternative education providers to ensure that pupils are safe and educated well when they undertake study activities away from the federation's campuses.
- Well-trained staff have up-to-date knowledge and are alert to the threats posed to pupils from radicalisation and extremism, including those threats arising from gang culture. Leaders and staff work closely and share information with families and other appropriate authorities to ensure that pupils are safe and protected from external risks and threats.
- Safeguarding records are meticulously kept, frequently evaluated, and effectively used to keep pupils safe. They are fit for purpose.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have good subject knowledge, which they use well to develop pupils' skills and knowledge in their subjects. Most teachers have high expectations and know pupils well. They use this knowledge effectively to inform their planning and match tasks closely to meet most pupils' needs and abilities.
- Occasionally, the most able pupils have limited opportunities to consolidate their knowledge and deepen their understanding of more complex aspects of subjects. This is particularly the case in subjects other than English and mathematics, such as geography and food technology, where pupils are sometimes presented with the same work despite differences in their ability and skills.
- Teachers have good relationship with pupils. Pupils rarely disrupt learning because of well-established routines, and the consistent application of school policies across year groups and between campuses.
- Teachers use questioning effectively to promote pupils' learning and to help them consolidate their knowledge and skills. Teachers routinely ask pupils to explain their answers or their methods of working.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed to support pupils, particularly in key stage 3. However, the eagerness of a small minority of teaching assistants to give pupils the answers during lessons sometimes limits the progress that some pupils make.
- Leaders ensure that pupils know what they need to do to improve through the consistent use of appropriate individual targets in all year groups. Detailed and consistent assessment procedures are used across the federation.
- Teachers promote pupils' literacy skills well across the curriculum. They often stress the use of subject-specific vocabulary and repeatedly exemplify its appropriate use. As a result, pupils are confident in their use of technical terms in a wide range of subjects.
- Teachers and teaching assistants make effective use of their knowledge of phonics to promote pupils' reading skills. This helps pupils to overcome a barrier to their learning and access more difficult texts.
- Teachers frequently make good use of technology to support pupils' learning, record achievements or share any concerns. Well-considered and effectively taught technological activities enthral many pupils, boost their confidence and promote their

success. For example, some pupils in key stage 3 were delighted with the outcomes of a simple programming challenge in a computing activity. This resulted in pupils controlling the bounce of a virtual ball around a computer screen.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are proud of the school and recognise how it helps them to overcome many barriers to their learning, especially those relating to their social and emotional development and their mental health.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning in lessons are positive. They are increasingly eager to learn and often willing to talk with visitors about their learning and interests. Some pupils make such progress in their personal development that they are able to take ownership of their own learning and become less reliant on the direction of teachers about their studies.
- High-quality careers guidance from impartial and suitably qualified advisers is in place. Carefully focused guidance takes account of pupils' abilities and skills, alongside their preferences for future work and the current employment market. As a result, nearly all pupils leave the school to continue their learning in appropriate education programmes, training or employment.
- The high-quality management of the school's use of alternative education providers ensures that pupils' placements are closely matched to their needs and interests. Leaders monitor pupils' progress carefully through frequent contact with providers, including unannounced quality assurance visits by the school's personal education manager. Regular evaluations from the school's three dedicated key workers ensure that leaders are well informed about pupils' progress and attainment while on placement in alternative provision. Pupils frequently succeed in their placements and nearly all leave the school to continue their education on appropriate college courses.
- Fundamental British values are promoted well through the personal, social, health and economic curriculum, and through specific studies in other curricular areas, including those about different faiths. Pupils have a good understanding of the rule of law and the principles of democracy. The school council represents pupils' views to leaders and is involved in some decision-making.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' conduct around the school is typically of a high standard. Pupils are routinely polite to each other and adults, including visitors, because of well-established routines and the consistently high expectations of staff.
- On occasion, pupils' behaviour deteriorates because of their individual needs. Teachers and other adults deal with these incidents of poor behaviour well. Leaders use exclusion as a final resort and only after careful consideration. Exclusions are

proportionate and, although above the national average, their frequency typically diminishes as pupils spend more time at the school.

- Many pupils enter the school with very poor rates of attendance. Some have failed to attend a school at all. Leaders effectively use a range of strategies to improve pupils' attendance. They work closely with other agencies and with pupils' families. These strategies successfully promote pupils' trust in the school. As a result, many pupils' attendance improves considerably. That said, despite the school's best efforts, some parents do not ensure that their children attend as often as they should. Consequently, the rates of absence are still too high for some pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils enter the school with attainment typically well below that expected for their age. This is attributable to their often very low attendance at previous schools, or considerable disengagement with education, brought about by their emotional or mental health needs.
- Leaders set ambitious targets for pupils when they enter the school based upon detailed assessments of their academic and emotional needs. Typically, the longer pupils spend at the school, the better they are prepared for their future lives in society.
- Nearly all pupils make good academic progress in a wide range of subjects from their starting points on joining the school. However, in some year groups and subjects other than English and mathematics, the most able pupils do not develop their knowledge and understanding in as much depth as they should. This is particularly the case in key stage 3 in geography and food technology. Here, limited opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of more complex concepts restrict their progress and attainment.
- Leaders recognise the importance of literacy in empowering pupils to access learning and in preparing them for their future in the community. The effective promotion of reading, using a variety of media from comics to classic literary texts, ensures that nearly all pupils make good progress in their reading skills. As a result, pupils in key stage 4 access learning in a wide range of subjects and confidently use technical language. For example, in science, key stage 4 pupils used appropriate technical terms to evaluate robustly written responses to questions about deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA).
- Leaders correctly and effectively prioritise the development of pupils' emotional well-being and mental health. Effective use of strategies ensures that pupils are well supported in developing their emotional resilience to the stresses and anxieties that they face in everyday life. Pupils build strong, positive relationships with staff and re-engage in education. They considerably improve their emotional strength and their effective use of strategies to overcome their barriers to learning.

School details

Unique reference number	105614
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10049014

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	10 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	86
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Pauline Newman
Executive headteacher	Alan Braven
Telephone number	0161 696 0764
Website	http://manchester-ebd.co.uk/
Email address	admin@meadehill.manchester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	27–28 February 2013

Information about this school

- The school is one of two special schools that form the Manchester Federation of EBSD Schools. The school is located across two sites. Key stage 2 and key stage 3 pupils are taught at Meade Hill School in High Blackley. Key stage 4 pupils are taught at the Castlefield Campus. Key stage 4 pupils at the Castlefield Campus are taught alongside pupils from the other school in the federation.
- The work of the school is overseen by the federation's governing body. Each site is led by a head of centre. The federation is led by an executive headteacher based at the Castlefield Campus.
- At the time of the inspection, there was only one key stage 2 pupil and very few girls registered at the school.
- The school uses eight alternative providers. These providers are SMS Education, The Sports School, Carrington Riding School, Cera Cycloan, Manchester Settlement, SMS Coaching, Brighter Futures and Bury College.

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the curriculum on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons or parts of lessons and looked at pupils' work in a variety of subjects. They talked with pupils about their lessons and school life. Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, the two heads of centre and a range of subject leaders and other senior leaders. Inspectors spoke with the personalised education manager and the consultant who provides impartial careers advice and guidance to pupils. Inspectors spoke with representatives of the governing body, the local authority officer who works with the school, and the external quality assurance consultant who works with the school. They held a meeting with a representative of the Manchester integrated gang management unit.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised documentation relating to pupils' progress and to school management, including the arrangements to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- Inspectors spoke with parents and staff and took account of the responses to the online parent questionnaire, Parent View. The inspectors took account of the responses to the staff questionnaires and a letter received from a pupil. There were no responses to the online pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

John Nixon, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Linda Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2018