

# Inspection of Todmorden High School

Ewood Lane, Todmorden, West Yorkshire OL14 7DG

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Inspection dates: 22–23 January 2020

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Todmorden High School is a welcoming and friendly school. Pupils enjoy coming to school because they feel safe and they learn a lot. Pupils get on well with their teachers and enjoy good relationships. Pupils know that there is always someone who will help them if they have any concerns.

Pupils and teachers understand the 'ARCH' values of ambition, respect, care and honesty. These values are clear in the lessons and in the pastoral care in the school. Parents mention these values too. Pupils say that bullying is not common and that when it happens teachers deal with it.

In lessons, pupils get on with their work and they behave well. Teachers have high expectations of pupils in their lessons and inspectors saw this in their work. The school has thought carefully about what pupils need to learn. Along with their subjects, the school teaches pupils some extra topics such as Latin, touch typing and the history of art. There are plenty of clubs and activities at the school and the school is a big part of the local community.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Since the last inspection leaders have responded quickly to the things they were told to do to improve the school. Leaders have improved the curriculum so that there is a greater range of subjects and pupils achieve more. For example, pupils have an extra option available to them at key stage 4 after experiencing a wider range of subjects at key stage 3.

Leaders and governors understand their local economy and employment opportunities. This knowledge is used to plan a curriculum which is designed to help the pupils to be successful after school. Leaders have acted to increase the number of pupils entered for the English Baccalaureate group of subjects (science, history, geography and languages). All pupils have access to the full range of subjects. No one is left out.

Pupils are achieving more in English, mathematics, science and languages. Pupils are achieving very well in humanities. This is because lessons are planned carefully so that pupils go over what they have learned previously. Pupils enjoy the silent start to lessons and the short tests because they say it helps them to remember more. Pupils are also learning well because they get on with their work and behaviour in lessons is good.

There is still some variation in the effectiveness of the curriculum in different subjects. Subjects such as history and ethics, philosophy and religion have thought carefully about the order in which topics are studied. In key stage 3 in science there is still some work to do to ensure that Year 9 pupils are ready for GCSE. This is because some topics need to be taught in more depth.

Most teachers regularly and accurately check pupils' understanding. In most subjects, assessment informs teachers how to adapt their teaching and help pupils to know more. In some subjects, such as mathematics, assessment needs improvement to be more immediate and to inform pupils how to improve.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well looked after and they achieve well. They are supported in lessons effectively because teachers understand how to structure their learning.

The school is effective in supporting the personal development of pupils. Careers guidance is good because the school has considered carefully the local economy and post-16 options available for pupils. For example, careers fairs and careers weeks are planned to give pupils relevant information and choices. Hardly any pupils leave school without a clear plan and destination.

Pupils have a lot of confidence to ask questions. They are inquisitive and want to know more. However, pupils said that they would like more opportunity to debate and discuss ideas more in some of their subjects. Pupils have a good understanding of spiritual and moral questions because of the strong curriculum in ethics. There are lots of opportunities and clubs for pupils to take advantage of, such as gardening, archery, dance and cyber discovery.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and they are trained regularly. They know what to do if there is a concern. Accurate records are kept and issues are dealt with promptly. The culture of safeguarding extends beyond the school gates because the school engages with local community partners effectively. For example, the headteacher is involved in a local group of community representatives who work to improve dialogue and partnership in the area.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In some subjects the use of assessment is not precise and immediate enough to inform pupils how to improve and to help teachers to inform their teaching. Because of this, some pupils are repeating mistakes or moving on to the next topic without securing their understanding. Leaders should ensure that there is a consistent approach to assessment across the school.
- There is some variation in the delivery of the curriculum across the school. For example, in Year 9, in some subjects, pupils are not always learning what they need to bridge the gap between key stage 3 and GCSE. Leaders should work quickly to complete the curriculum changes that have been so far effective in raising achievement.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	107564
<b>Local authority</b>	Calderdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	10110620
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	863
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	John Hairsine
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gill Shirt
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.todhigh.co.uk">www.todhigh.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	18 October 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized secondary school.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We spoke with the headteacher and other senior and subject leaders. We met, formally and informally, with pupils and staff. Meetings were held with governors and we had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- We selected four subjects to look at closely as part of 'deep dives'. These were mathematics, science, ethics and history. A deep dive consists of visiting lessons and sampling work. We also sampled other subjects by visiting lessons, talking to teachers and looking at pupils' work.
- We talked to pupils and staff about safeguarding, including the risks that pupils face. Pupils and staff were selected randomly for our discussions. The school systems for vetting staff were checked.

- A range of staff, including newly qualified teachers and support staff, shared their views about pupils' behaviour and attitudes.
- Pupil, staff and parent surveys were reviewed. Any significant points in the surveys were followed up by further discussions with pupils and staff.

### **Inspection team**

Carl Sugden, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Matthew West	Ofsted Inspector
Janet Sheriff	Ofsted Inspector
Pritiben Patel	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
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