

# Inspection of a good school: Ellesmere Park High School

Wentworth Road, Eccles, Manchester M30 9BP

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Inspection dates:

3–4 March 2020

## **Outcome**

Ellesmere Park High School continues to be a good school.

However, inspectors have some concerns that one or more areas may be declining, as set out below.

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

Pupils at Ellesmere Park High School feel safe and happy. The pupils who spoke with us said that pupils get on well together. Staff deal quickly with the small amount of bullying that takes place.

Pupils usually work hard in their lessons. They move calmly and purposefully to their lessons. They are respectful to each other and the staff in social areas. Pupils told us that their learning is sometimes disrupted by poor behaviour. They said that this happens when teachers do not use the behaviour policy.

Most staff have high expectations for pupils' achievement. However, some teachers struggle to help pupils meet the higher expectations set out in the school's new curriculum. As a result, some pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), do not achieve as well as they should.

There are a variety of clubs and activities that pupils can engage in after school. As well as sports clubs, they enjoy creating meals in cooking club. They are helped to think deeply and carefully in logic club. Pupils enjoy the links that they have with the local community. They said that they really enjoyed reading poems to the elderly in the local care home.

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

There have been considerable changes to the leadership of the school over the last couple of years. The new headteacher has a vision for education that is supported by the trustees, the governing body and other school leaders. Change has started to take place across all areas of the school. In particular, the curriculum has been greatly improved as a result of leaders' work. However, many changes are new. Consequently, the impact of the new curriculum is not fully evident in current pupils' learning.

Leaders have developed a well-planned curriculum. They have identified the knowledge that pupils need to gain. This has been ordered to build on prior learning as pupils move through the curriculum. Despite this, in some subjects, the curriculum does not meet the depth and breadth of the key stage 3 national curriculum. For example, in art, pupils do not learn about the different art movements over time.

Most teachers know their subject content well. Leaders have given teachers time to meet and share good practice. There are opportunities to work with subject specialist teachers from other schools in the trust. Despite this, some teachers do not have the skills or the confidence to deliver this curriculum effectively in the classroom. When this happens, pupils do not gain new knowledge at the standard expected in the new curriculum. As a result, pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11 has been well below the national averages in a range of subjects for the last two years.

Some teachers have low expectations of pupils in the lower teaching sets. These teachers attempt to tailor the curriculum to the needs of the pupils. Sometimes this results in these pupils having a different curriculum to everybody else. These pupils do not gain the knowledge that is expected in the new curriculum. This is particularly true for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND. These pupils do not achieve as well as other pupils.

Leaders promote pupils' personal development in several ways. The dedicated time to personal, social, health and economic education in the curriculum is well planned. There are further opportunities for personal development built into the academic curriculum. For example, pupils learn how to stay healthy in physical education and food technology. Leaders supplement this work with a variety of trips and clubs to extend pupils' experience beyond the academic curriculum. However, leaders do not have an overview of the pupils who participate in these clubs and activities.

Most pupils have high attendance. Many pupils behave well in school. Where teachers follow the behaviour policy, learning is rarely disrupted by poor behaviour.

Teachers told us that there has been a lot of work involved in developing the new curriculum. They felt that there was still more to do. However, they said that they understood why this needed to be done. They told us that they thought leaders did consider their workload and did what they could to help.

In discussion with the headteacher, we agreed that English, art and personal development may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff have received safeguarding training. They know what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil in their care. Leaders act promptly to support pupils that need their help.

Leaders are particularly aware of the growing concerns for pupils' mental health. They have ensured that this is well catered for in the personal development curriculum.

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

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

- Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum for pupils across all subjects, including personal development. Despite this, some teachers have difficulty delivering learning that meets the ambition of the planned curriculum. This is because some teachers do not have the confidence or skills to teach the curriculum effectively. Leaders should ensure that they continue to support teachers in developing good practice within their subject area. This will ensure that all pupils have access to a high-quality curriculum.
- Some teachers do not have the same high expectation for all pupils. When this happens, teachers do not offer these pupils the same high-quality curriculum as other pupils in the school. Leaders should ensure that teachers' expectations are high for all pupils. This will ensure that all pupils learn the knowledge they need to be successful in their studies.
- There are several trips and activities that take place for pupils in the school. Currently, leaders do not have an overview of the participation in these trips and activities. As a result, some pupils may not be accessing opportunities to develop their experience beyond the school's academic curriculum. Leaders should keep a closer check on who accesses the additional activities provided by the school. They should ensure that all pupils are able to participate in activities that they enjoy and serve to promote their wider development.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that a good school could now be better than good, or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Wentworth High School, to be good on 25–26 March 2014.

## 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>	144200
<b>Local authority</b>	Salford
<b>Inspection number</b>	10135145
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	778
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Paul Woodmancy
<b>Headteacher</b>	Iain Ross
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.ephs.org.uk/">http://www.ephs.org.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school changed its name from Wentworth High School and became part of the Consilium Trust in July 2017.
- There is a new chief executive officer (CEO) and regional director in the trust. This has led to increased support for the school. A new headteacher was appointed in September 2019. In the last couple of weeks, there has been a new chair of governors.
- The school currently uses alternative provision at the CSIN Eccles, SMS independent school and Edstart independent special school to contribute to the education of a small number of pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, we spoke with pupils about their work and school life. We held meetings with senior leaders, governors and subject leaders. We also spoke to the CEO and regional director of the trust.
- We reviewed documentation, which included leaders' evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, and the school development plan. We scrutinised information about pupils' attendance and behaviour.

- We considered the views expressed by parents and carers in the 49 responses to Ofsted’s online survey, Parent View, as well as parents’ comments received via the free-text facility on Parent View. We considered the 28 responses to a questionnaire for staff. We also considered the 22 responses to the questionnaire for pupils.
- We reviewed a range of documentation about the school. This included information about safeguarding, including the school’s record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff, and support for pupils.
- We did deep dives in these subjects during the inspection: English, art and history. We met with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with pupils, met with teaching staff and looked at pupils’ work. We also considered other subjects as part of the inspection.

### **Inspection team**

Erica Sharman, lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Claire Hollister

Ofsted Inspector

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