

Inspection of The Mosslands School

Mosslands Drive, Wallasey, Merseyside CH45 8PJ

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 October 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Sixth-form provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe. Relationships between pupils and teachers are typically positive. Pupils know that there is someone they can speak with if they are worried about something. Staff are quick to deal with bullying if it does occur.

Teachers have raised their expectations of how pupils behave during lessons. Consequently, most pupils behave well in lessons. They listen carefully to teachers' instructions. Students in the sixth form are positive role models. However, some pupils show boisterous and disrespectful behaviours during social times. This is often left unchallenged.

Pupils and students benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities, such as sports and trips. They have won competitions in science, technology, engineering and mathematics activities. Pupils enjoy participating in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. They spoke highly of their experiences in the science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics project.

Despite this, pupils do not achieve as well as they should. This is partly because of weaknesses in the planning and delivery of some subject curriculums.

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

Leaders have developed a broad curriculum with a wide range of academic and vocational subjects. The changes that leaders have made to the key stage 4 curriculum are having a positive impact. The proportion of pupils studying the full suite of subjects in the English Baccalaureate has increased in recent years. In the sixth form, leaders have secured strong links with external providers who deliver vocational courses, such as engineering. These choices are meeting pupils' and students' needs and interests.

Some subject curriculums across key stages 3, 4 and the sixth form have detailed plans of what pupils and students are going to learn and when. In these subjects, teachers use their subject knowledge well to help pupils and students think deeply about a topic. Pupils are able to build their knowledge and understanding. However, subject leaders for some other curriculums have not set out fully what teachers need to teach and when. Consequently, pupils and students have gaps in their knowledge.

Some teachers do not use assessment strategies well enough to check how well pupils have understood their work. As a result, some teachers do not have a good understanding of what pupils know and what they need to recap.

Leaders identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. They provide teachers with appropriate information about pupils. However, some subject leaders and teachers do not use this information well enough to adapt their curriculum plans to meet the needs of these pupils.

Consequently, some pupils with SEND are not able to access the full curriculum. This means that they do not achieve as well as they should.

Reading is a priority. Pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read have more opportunities to develop their reading skills and build their vocabulary than in the past. Staff make sure that pupils who struggle to read receive extra support to help them catch up.

Leaders have improved the systems for managing pupils' behaviour. This has helped to make classrooms calm places where pupils can learn. Pupils and staff told inspectors that behaviour in lessons is getting better. However, during breaktimes and between lessons, some pupils do not take responsibility for their own behaviour and show a lack of respect for others. Some pupils use derogatory language. Staff do not consistently tackle these instances of poor behaviour.

Students in the sixth form behave in a mature fashion, both in lessons and around the school. They get on well with each other and their teachers.

Recent work to tackle attendance is leading to small improvements for some individual pupils. Leaders are working to reduce pupils' absence from school.

The personal, health, social and economic education curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to learn about British values. Pupils learn about respecting differences between people and different religions. Leaders place a strong emphasis on developing pupils' mental health. However, some aspects of the personal development curriculum are not planned and delivered consistently well. This is partly because of the impact of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic on leaders' planning.

Pupils and students receive appropriate careers information, advice and guidance. Leaders have developed strong links with local employers. This is helping pupils and students to develop their employability skills. Students in the sixth form spoke positively about the support that they receive for applications to university, employment and apprenticeships.

Most staff enjoy working at the school. They feel that leaders are considerate of their workload. Staff value the support that they receive to develop their subject knowledge.

Governors have not challenged and supported leaders effectively. Some recent appointments have increased the level of expertise. However, governors recognise that much still needs to be done to further improve the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They know how to recognise the possible signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Staff know how to raise concerns. Leaders follow these up appropriately. They work well with external agencies and the local authority to help and support pupils when needed. Most pupils know how to keep themselves safe when working online. They learn about the risks associated with knife crime.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subject leaders have not thought carefully enough about essential knowledge that they want pupils to learn and the order in which it should be taught. This hinders pupils' and students' learning across the curriculum. Subject leaders should ensure that all curriculum plans identify key knowledge and the order in which subject content should be taught. They should also check that these subject plans are implemented effectively, so that pupils and students know more and remember more. Senior leaders should ensure that subject leaders have the training and support they need to develop their curriculums further.
- In some subjects, teachers do not always use assessment strategies well enough to check pupils' understanding and what they have remembered of their learning. As a result, some pupils have gaps in knowledge. Subject leaders should ensure that assessment strategies are used more effectively to identify pupils' misconceptions so that they can build their knowledge over time.
- Some teachers are not using the information that they have about pupils with SEND to help these pupils to access the curriculum. This means that the progress of some pupils with SEND is uneven. Leaders should ensure that teachers consistently use the information that they have to meet the needs of these pupils.
- Some pupils do not regulate their own behaviour as well as they should at social times and when they move between lessons. As a result, their behaviour can become boisterous. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the skills that they need to implement the school's behaviour policy consistently.
- The governing body has not, over time, supported and challenged leaders effectively enough around the quality of education that pupils receive. Governors should ensure that they have the necessary training so that they can carry out their roles more effectively.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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

Unique reference number	105103
Local authority	Wirral
Inspection number	10204395
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	1125
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	128
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jane Owens
Headteacher	Adrian Whiteley
Website	www.mosslands.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	19 and 20 April 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There has been an increase in the number of pupils on roll since the previous inspection. Many pupils attended a nearby school which closed in 2016.
- There have been significant changes in governance since the previous inspection. A new chair of governors was appointed in September 2021.
- Leaders make use of three alternative providers for a small number of pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders, staff, the chair of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors held telephone calls with a representative of the local authority and with representatives of three alternative providers.
- Inspectors spoke to many pupils and students about their experience of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed their behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and the school's single central record. Inspectors met with leaders, staff, pupils and students to check how effective safeguarding is in the school.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of evidence, including the school's self-evaluation document, improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings and records of pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in art and design, English, geography, science and mathematics. Inspectors met with staff, visited lessons, looked at pupils' and students' work and spoke with them about their learning.
- Inspectors reviewed leaders' curriculum plans and pupils' and students' work in a range of other subjects. Inspectors spoke with subject leaders in some of these subjects.
- Inspectors considered the 53 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire, including the 53 free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the 47 responses to the pupil survey and the 70 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

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