

Inspection of Reddish Vale High School

Reddish Vale Road, Reddish, Stockport, Cheshire SK5 7HD

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 January 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

In recent years, leaders have transformed this school for pupils. It is a calm, happy and safe place to be. Pupils told inspectors that this school is a haven. It is somewhere that they feel they belong.

Pupils treat each other well. They accept each other's differences. Pupils agreed that if bullying does occur, staff are quick to intervene. Pupils said that when they need to talk to someone, staff are always willing to listen and to help.

Teachers expect pupils to behave well and achieve their best. In lessons, pupils display positive attitudes to learning. Relationships between teachers and pupils are based on mutual respect.

The majority of pupils spoke positively about the improvements that leaders have made to the school. For example, the quality of education that pupils receive is much stronger now than in the past. However, the curriculum remains in development in key stage 3. Some pupils do not achieve as highly as they should because they do not learn subject knowledge to sufficient depth.

Pupils value the emphasis that leaders place on their personal development. For example, the character programme provides opportunities for pupils to develop their leadership skills and influence decision-making in the school. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the extensive range of extra-curricular clubs available to them.

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

Leaders and those responsible for governance are passionate about raising all pupils' aspirations. They have overhauled the curriculum at key stage 4 to ensure that it begins to address the needs of all pupils, irrespective of their ability or background. In key stage 4, leaders have made sure that all pupils can study a broad range of subjects. For example, they have increased the number of pupils studying a modern foreign language.

Leaders are currently in the process of strengthening the curriculum in key stage 3 to ensure that it is as suitably broad and ambitious as the national curriculum. To this end, in some subjects, leaders are still finalising what they want pupils to learn and the order in which they should learn it. Where leaders are less clear about what they want pupils to learn, pupils' learning is disconnected. This means that some pupils in key stage 3 do not progress as well through the curriculum as they should. They are not fully prepared for the demands of key stage 4.

Across the school, teachers' subject knowledge is secure. In many subjects, particularly in key stage 4, teachers use their expertise increasingly well to help pupils to understand key concepts. Teachers have also successfully prioritised developing pupils' subject-specific vocabulary. Pupils said that this is helping them to access more of the curriculum.

The new whole-school approach to assessment is in its early stages. Not all teachers are using this system in the way that leaders intend. For example, some teachers do not check whether pupils have learned the knowledge in the curriculum. On occasions, teachers are not aware when pupils have missing knowledge.

Leaders are prioritising reading. However, leaders' current systems for identifying pupils who find reading more difficult are in development. They do not enable teachers to pinpoint with accuracy which aspects of pupils' reading knowledge are missing. This means that some older pupils do not read as well as they should. This affects how well these pupils progress through the curriculum.

Leaders accurately identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers make secure use of the information that they receive to support pupils with SEND to access the same curriculum as their peers. Pupils with SEND progress onto appropriate further education courses.

Leaders have fostered an environment where positive behaviour and attitudes are rewarded and celebrated. In lessons, pupils are able to learn without disruption. Pupils said that teachers apply the new behaviour system fairly. They appreciate this.

Pupils spoke enthusiastically about how the citizenship curriculum is enabling them to understand their rights and responsibilities. They said that the content is useful to their everyday lives. Pupils talked openly about their understanding of relationships and sexual consent.

Governance is strong. Governors are challenging and supporting leaders effectively to improve the quality of education for pupils. Staff appreciate leaders' support for their well-being. They are positive about the steps that leaders take to manage their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders' procedures to keep pupils safe are thorough. Staff are well trained to spot the signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. They are acutely aware of the dangers that pupils may face in the local community. Pupils appreciate how vigilant staff are in keeping them safe in school.

Pastoral staff work effectively with pupils and their families to help manage any safeguarding concerns. Leaders work closely with external agencies to ensure that they remain up to date with pertinent safeguarding issues. Leaders report any concerns quickly to ensure that pupils and their families receive the timely help that they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The Year 9 curriculum is in development. In some subjects, leaders are in the process of refining what pupils will learn and the order in which they should learn it. Consequently, some pupils are not developing a deep body of subject knowledge across all curriculum areas. Leaders should implement their new key stage 3 curriculum, ensuring that all teachers have thought carefully about what they want pupils to learn. This is so that pupils are more fully prepared for the demands of key stage 4.
- Leaders' new systems to assess how well pupils have learned the curriculum are not consistently well used by all teachers. This means that some subject leaders and teachers do not know where pupils have missing knowledge. Consequently, some pupils' learning is not as secure as it should be, particularly in key stage 3. Leaders should ensure that their approaches to assessment enable teachers to check that pupils have learned the core knowledge and concepts in each subject area.
- Leaders' strategies for identifying pupils in the early stages of learning to read are not fully developed. They do not accurately pinpoint where there are deficits in pupils' reading knowledge. This means that some pupils do not receive the timely support that they need to catch up quickly with their reading. Leaders should embed their plans to improve the identification of pupils' reading needs. They should ensure that staff are suitably trained to help pupils to read confidently and fluently.

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	145133
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	10212111
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	949
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Margo Kane
Headteacher	Linda Hanson
Website	www.reddish.stockport.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school uses alternative provision for a small number of pupils at two alternative providers.
- 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.
- The school joined the South Manchester Learning Trust in September 2017. When the predecessor school, Reddish Vale Technology College, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate.

Information about this inspection

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

This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the senior leadership team, middle leaders and a range of teaching and support staff. An inspector spoke with four members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors.
- An inspector met with the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust.
- As part of this inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, history, citizenship and art and design. Inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum planning, visited some lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils and teachers.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from Years 7 to 11. Inspectors also observed breaktimes.
- Inspectors checked the school's safeguarding procedures and the checks made on staff. Inspectors met with leaders, staff and pupils to evaluate the culture of safeguarding.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, the school development plans, self-evaluation documents, the curriculum, minutes from meetings of the governing body and behaviour records.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and the responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- Inspectors also considered the views of the parents and carers who responded to Ofsted Parent View. This included the comments received via the free-text facility.

Inspection team

Rachel Goodwin, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Colin Bell	Ofsted Inspector
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