

Inspection of Windlehurst School

Windlehurst Road, Hawk Green, Marple, Stockport, Cheshire SK6 7HZ

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 March 2022

Overall effectiveness Good

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?

Pupils benefit from a calm and welcoming environment. They learn to take responsibility for their own actions. Pupils are keen to meet the high expectations that staff set for both their learning and behaviour.

Pupils are supervised well and they benefit from particularly strong relationships with staff. Pupils are happy in school and behave respectfully. They value the small class sizes. Pupils said that they are given the attention that they need.

Pupils settle quickly at the start of lessons due to well-planned and regularly rehearsed routines. Teachers use the information in pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans well to support pupils to access the curriculum.

Pupils achieve well. They gain a range of qualifications, including English and mathematics, by the end of Year 11. Those pupils attending alternative providers develop sufficient confidence to move on to further education or a work placement. Parents and carers are highly positive about the quality of education that their children receive.

Pupils feel safe in school. They understand how to keep themselves safe online and feel that they can speak to a trusted adult if they have a concern. Pupils said that there are some instances of bullying but that staff are quick to deal with these incidents effectively.

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

Leaders have designed and implemented a broad and balanced curriculum for pupils. Teachers, with the support of teaching assistants, deliver learning in a logical way so that pupils build upon what they know already. For example, in history pupils employed their information and communication technology skills when researching a local village. Teachers make sure that pupils can remember previous learning by revisiting earlier content regularly and addressing pupils' misconceptions when necessary.

Leaders have ensured that there are effective systems in place to help teachers to understand pupils' individual needs. Staff quickly identify those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND engage well in lessons. Leaders are ambitious for this group of pupils.

Pupils read frequently. Most pupils use and apply their reading skills across different subjects well. The dedicated team of staff who support pupils with SEND use their expertise to assess pupils' reading knowledge. This information is then used by teachers to ensure all pupils can access the curriculum. There are also reading support programmes in place to help pupils to catch up with their reading if they fall behind. However, leaders' use of reading assessments to inform additional support varies slightly in its effectiveness. This means that a small number of pupils do not progress as well through the reading curriculum as they should.

Pupils engage well in lessons and they enjoy learning. There is very little disruption in classrooms because staff know pupils well. Staff use their knowledge and expertise well to

skilfully manage pupils' behaviour. Those pupils who have difficulty in attending school as regularly as they should are provided with appropriate support. There have been marked improvements in some pupils' attendance and behaviour over time. However, senior leaders do not make the best use of attendance and behaviour information to inform support programmes for a small number of pupils.

The support for pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. Pupils understand the meaning of democracy and other aspects of life in modern Britain. They enjoy outdoor learning, where they learn to collaborate with their peers and plan activities such as outdoor cooking. Pupils partake in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. This helps pupils to learn the value of voluntary work in the community and about how to be successful in the workplace.

Senior leaders and governors have managed the school well through the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, they have used additional funding effectively to support staff and pupils to become familiar with the systems to deliver remote education. This has ensured that pupils continued to access the curriculum in many subjects while working from home. This has worked particularly well in English and mathematics.

Senior leaders and governors have a clear vision for the school. They encourage pupils to look after their own physical and emotional well-being so that they feel safe and happy. Staff are overwhelmingly supportive of leaders. Staff said that leaders are considerate of their well-being and workload. Governors know the school well and provide effective support and challenge to leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have robust systems to identify safeguarding concerns. This enables prompt and timely support for pupils. Staff report and share any safeguarding issues with leaders.

Leaders, staff and governors have had relevant training so that they understand and fulfil their safeguarding roles and responsibilities. Leaders work well with other agencies to make sure that pupils and their families get the support that they need.

Pupils are supported well to manage risks online, including those associated with social media. For instance, they learn about the dangers of sending or posting inappropriate content and linked issues relating to stereotyped attitudes towards different genders.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders do not use assessment information consistently well to shape the additional support for a small number of pupils when they fall behind with their reading. This means that these pupils do not progress through the reading curriculum as quickly as they should. Leaders should ensure that they use the information about the gaps in pupils' reading

knowledge effectively so that this small number of pupils receive the support they need to quickly become fluent and confident readers.

- Leaders do not use the information they hold about some pupils' behaviour and attendance to inform the support that this group of pupils receive. This prevents leaders from being able to provide the best possible help for these pupils and their families. Leaders should ensure that they use the information they hold relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour consistently well to more fully understand barriers to improvement. This will allow leaders to help pupils to overcome these barriers, attend school more regularly and regulate their own behaviour.

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	131889
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	10212218
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	48
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Diana Horrocks
Headteacher	Christopher Ormiston
Website	www.windlehurst.stockport.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 May 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school operates on two sites, the Hawk Green Site and the Millbrook Site.
- School leaders use four alternative providers for some pupils.
- The school provides for secondary-age pupils with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. All pupils have an EHC plan.
- There are some pupils with complex SEMH needs who have agreed part-time placements at the school. These pupils attend the Millbrook Centre.
- 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- During the inspection, inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, subject coordinators, class teachers and support staff. An inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority. An inspector also met with two members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, the online questionnaire for parents, including the free-text responses. Inspectors also reviewed the responses to Ofsted’s online pupil and staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors met with staff responsible for safeguarding at the school. They looked at a range of documentation relating to safeguarding. Inspectors spoke with staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors observed and spoke informally to pupils at breaktimes, form time and on arrival at the school. They spoke about bullying, behaviour and leaders’ expectations of pupils’ behaviour.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and reviewed samples of pupils’ work. Inspectors also looked at the school’s provision for reading, especially during lessons across different subjects.

Inspection team

Jon Ashley, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Nell Banfield

Ofsted Inspector

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