

Inspection of a good school: Lymm High School

Oughtrington Lane, Lymm, Cheshire WA13 0RB

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 December 2022

Outcome

Lymm High School continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Lymm High School, including students in the sixth form, commit fully to the school's values. Leaders and staff encourage them to enjoy learning, achieve their potential and become socially responsible citizens. Pupils and students are exceptionally polite and respectful towards each other, members of staff and visitors to the school.

Pupils and students said that they feel safe when they are in school. They know who to speak with if they are worried or upset. Pupils told inspectors that they have confidence in the ability of teachers to sort incidents of bullying out quickly. Leaders deal with incidents of bullying effectively. Teachers know pupils and students well. Pupils and students value the high-quality pastoral support that is available to them.

Leaders have very high expectations of what pupils and students can achieve. All pupils and students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), enjoy an ambitious and aspirational curriculum. This ensures that pupils and students are provided with an excellent basis for future learning and employment. Pupils, and students in the sixth form, achieve exceptionally well.

Pupils and students embrace the ample opportunities provided by leaders to take on leadership responsibilities and enhance their wider development. For example, they value the wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer, including a pool lifeguard course, debating and LGBTQ+ clubs, and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

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

Leaders and governors have a clear and ambitious vision for the quality of education that pupils and students receive. Following a number of considerable improvements to the curriculum, this vision has been realised. Pupils enjoy a suitably broad range of academic,

vocational and creative subjects. For example, all pupils in key stage 4, including pupils with SEND, can study the suite of subjects that make up the English Baccalaureate. Students in the sixth form benefit from well-designed curriculums that are delivered well by staff. Pupils and students, including those with SEND, achieve highly.

Subject leaders have thoughtfully considered the order in which pupils and students learn the knowledge and skills that they need. Teachers have a strong knowledge of the subjects that they deliver. They use their expertise to deliver curriculums with confidence and clarity. For example, teachers take opportunities to make relevant links between current learning and previous topics. Leaders ensure that staff make effective use of assessment strategies. This helps teachers to identify and address pupils' and students' misconceptions quickly. Pupils and students learn the curriculum well.

Leaders and staff identify the needs of pupils and students with SEND accurately and swiftly. Leaders have ensured that teachers have access to high-quality training. This enables teachers to adapt the delivery of subject curriculums expertly to meet the needs of pupils and students with SEND. Pupils and students with SEND learn the same broad and ambitious curriculum as their peers. They are fully included in the life of the school.

Pupils and students behave exceptionally well across the school. They follow the well-established school routines without needing instruction. Learning in classrooms is rarely interrupted. Pupils and students show maturity and responsibility in their desire to participate in lessons and to consolidate their learning through independent study.

Leaders have strengthened their systems to identify those pupils who find reading more difficult. Staff work effectively together to support these pupils, to help them to catch up. Leaders have invested in resources to encourage the small number of pupils who are reluctant readers to develop a passion for reading. Some sixth-form students have also received training to support younger pupils with reading.

Leaders have a well-designed personal development programme in place for pupils and students. They have considered how best to deliver some aspects of this curriculum. For example, leaders ensure that sensitive topics are delivered by well-trained and knowledgeable staff.

Developing responsible citizens is at the heart of the school's offer for pupils and students. Leaders encourage pupils and students to develop their resilience, teamwork and leadership skills. Pupils and students engage in meaningful debate about ethical and topical issues. They value and benefit from high-quality and impartial careers advice and guidance.

Governors are well informed about the key issues in the school. They support and challenge school leaders to refine the quality of education for pupils and students.

Staff are extremely proud to work at the school. They recognise and appreciate the steps taken by leaders and governors to care for their well-being and to manage their workload. There is a strong sense of solidarity and moral purpose among the staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know pupils and their families well. They provide effective and current safeguarding training for staff and governors. Leaders and staff are knowledgeable about local and national safeguarding matters.

The safeguarding team works closely with external agencies to ensure that pupils, students and their families receive timely support when they need it.

Pupils and students know how to keep themselves and their friends safe. For example, they learn about safe and healthy relationships and understand about sexual consent.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 2013.

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.

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	138732
Local authority	Warrington
Inspection number	10256155
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,920
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	352
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Liz Green
Headteacher	Gwyn Williams
Website	http://www.lymmhigh.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 February 2018, under Section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Lymm High School is a single academy trust.
- Leaders send a small number of pupils to four registered and two unregistered alternative education providers.

Information about this inspection

- 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.
- As part of this inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English; mathematics; design and technology; modern foreign languages; and science. For each deep dive, inspectors met with curriculum leaders, visited some lessons,

spoke with pupils, students and teachers and looked at samples of pupils' and students' work.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, other senior leaders and the special educational needs coordinator.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body of the school and with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors checked on leaders' safeguarding procedures, including the recruitment checks made on staff and governors. Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead, a representative of the governing body, and staff, pupils and students to discuss the wider aspects of safeguarding. They scrutinised a range of documents pertaining to safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered survey responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.
- Inspectors observed pupils' and students' behaviour around school, at breaktimes and at lunchtimes. They spoke with them about behaviour and bullying.

Inspection team

Niamh Howlett, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Geoff Baker

Ofsted Inspector

Katy Robinson

Ofsted Inspector

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