

Inspection of Laurus Ryecroft

Lumb Lane, Droylsden, Manchester M43 7LJ

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 January 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Laurus Ryecroft respond extremely well to the exceedingly high expectations that leaders set for their academic and personal development. Pupils' behaviour is impeccable and they achieve highly.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), enjoy the purposeful and supportive learning opportunities that they receive from their teachers. Pupils work conscientiously in lessons. They are eager to come to school each day.

Teachers and leaders forge positive and trusting relationships with pupils. Leaders resolve bullying incidents swiftly and appropriately. This helps pupils to feel safe. Pupils are incredibly considerate of their peers. They value differences and respect each other's opinions.

All pupils thrive in the carefully designed extra-curricular 'electives' programme. Pupils enthusiastically take part in an extensive range of activities. This includes taekwondo, animal farm club, comic club, cheerleading club, journal club, conspiracy club and debates association. Pupils also participate in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, cadets and various theatre and international visits. Pupils relish the opportunities to hold leadership roles, such as house captain, prefect and sports captain. Pupils fully embrace the wide experiences which prepare them well for modern society.

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

Leaders have uncompromising standards and ambitions for all pupils, including those with SEND. They are unapologetically aspirational for all pupils. They empower pupils to flourish academically and personally. Leaders have ensured a high proportion of pupils study the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects. Almost all pupils study a modern foreign language and achieve remarkable outcomes.

Leaders have meticulously developed the curriculum to suit the needs of the pupils. They have thought carefully about what powerful knowledge they want pupils to learn. Leaders also invest highly in teacher training and professional development. As a result, teachers are exceptionally skilled in determining when and how subject content should be taught. Pupils consequently build a rich and secure body of knowledge and subject vocabulary over time.

Teachers use assessment systems and information extremely well. Teachers ensure that pupils deepen their understanding of the subject by swiftly addressing misconceptions and errors. Pupils have ample opportunities to revisit prior learning and connect this to new subject content across different curriculum areas. Leaders use every minute of the day well. For example, they hold morning meetings to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Such opportunities provide pupils with

the knowledge, skills, resilience and confidence that they need to be highly successful. Pupils achieve exceptionally well.

Reading is at the heart of leaders' priorities. Leaders invest extensively in a range of programmes and resources to ensure that pupils become exceptionally capable of reading a wide range of novels, poems and information texts. Leaders adeptly identify pupils who struggle with reading and put effective support in place for them. Pupils who find reading difficult are supported appropriately through the schools' 'fresh start' programme. Such support work develops pupils' fluency and fosters a love of reading. Pupils use the school library avidly. They talked enthusiastically about books they have read.

Leaders work diligently with external agencies and SEND experts to identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers are trained well and are suitably informed of these pupils' individual learning needs. This enables teachers to use support plans effectively in the classroom. Pupils with SEND benefit from well-considered programmes of support. They make the same exceptional progress through the curriculum as others in the school.

Pupils are highly committed to their learning. Pupils are motivated to do well and they take pride in their work. They manage their own behaviour exceedingly well, in and out of the classroom. Adults rarely need to intervene. This means that disruption to learning hardly ever happens.

Along with their strong focus on pupils' academic gains, leaders are equally keen to ensure that all the pupils are prepared fully for life beyond school. Leaders have designed purposeful and well-considered programmes to prepare pupils fully for their next steps. Pupils learn the significance of respect, equality of opportunity and service through a carefully considered beliefs and values programme. Pupils celebrate interfaith week, organise charitable projects and take part in national debate events. Leaders also offer pupils a high-quality, impartial careers programme. This includes university visits for all year groups and a wide range of apprenticeship workshops. Such opportunities inspire pupils to achieve high goals.

The local governing body and trustees are well qualified and highly effective. They judiciously hold leaders at all levels to account for the quality of education at the school. Leaders recognise and manage staff's well-being and workload well. Staff value the support that they receive from leaders and their morale is high.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have developed highly organised systems that ensure all the pupils are kept safe. Leaders provide regular and up-to-date safeguarding training to all staff. This equips staff with the ability to identify pupils at risk of harm. Leaders have embedded strong communication and safeguarding reporting systems. This enables leaders to remain alert to new concerns and respond swiftly. Leaders forge strong

partnerships with external agencies and experts. They have a relentless approach to ensuring that pupils with vulnerabilities are supported quickly and appropriately.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe from risks such as sexual harassment, online abuse and unhealthy relationships. They receive regular workshops and assemblies to inform them of local issues and risks. Pupils know what to do if they have any concerns and who to go to for support and advice.

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	145894
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	10244623
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	964
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Tony Little
Head of School	Martin Vevers
Website	www.laurusryecroft.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school newly opened in September 2018 with a multi-academy trust.
- The number of pupils on the school's roll is rising.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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.
- Inspectors held meetings with the head of school, trust leads, senior leaders and subject leaders. Inspectors also met with a range of other staff during the

inspection. Inspectors also met with representatives of the board of governors, including the chair of governors, trustees and a representative of the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, English, science, history, art and design and Spanish. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders and teachers, visited a sample of lessons, reviewed samples of pupils' work and spoke with some pupils, including pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils.
- The inspection team also met the leaders of some other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils from Years 7 to 11 about their experience of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, and observed their movement around the school and at lunchtime.
- The inspection team analysed safeguarding documentation, including the single central record. Inspectors spoke with a range of pupils, staff and leaders to evaluate the culture of safeguarding in the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the leaders responsible for personal development, behaviour and attendance, early careers teachers and reading.
- 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 checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and the school's single central record. Inspectors met with leaders, staff and pupils to check how effective safeguarding is in the school.
- Inspectors considered the responses of parents to Ofsted Parent View and the responses of pupils and staff to Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Amina Modan, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Lee Peachey	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Stott	Ofsted Inspector
Paula Crawley	Ofsted Inspector

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