

Inspection of Tarporley High School and Sixth Form College

Eaton Road, Tarporley, Cheshire CW6 0BL

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 April 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected nine years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

What is it like to attend this school?

Most pupils feel happy and safe at this school. They enjoy learning. Pupils get on well together and have positive relationships with staff.

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to succeed academically. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), benefit from a high-quality education. Pupils at this school achieve highly.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Most pupils meet these expectations. When bullying incidents occur, leaders take decisive action to resolve them. Leaders are thoughtful in their response to such incidents and take time to identify and address any underlying concerns.

Pupils in key stage 3 enjoy participating in the extra-curricular activities on offer, such as art and sports clubs. They also benefit from opportunities to work alongside older pupils, for example, by getting involved in the school play or by contributing to the school's 'Half-Term Magazine'.

Students are incredibly proud to be part of the school's sixth form. They particularly value the strong relationships that they have forged with their peers and the staff. Students experience an exceptionally high-quality education, both academically and in terms of their personal development. They enjoy acting as ambassadors for the school in the local community, for example they visit care homes and nurseries.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum for pupils in key stages 3 and 4, and students in the sixth form. Leaders ensure that pupils, including those with SEND, leave the school with the qualifications that they need to succeed.

Subject leaders have thought carefully about how to organise their curriculums so that pupils' learning builds securely on what they already know. Subject leaders have identified the knowledge that pupils need to learn and the order in which they should learn it. They have done this particularly effectively in key stages 4 and 5. In a few subjects in key stage 3, subject leaders have not clarified the information that pupils need to know. This means that teachers are not clear about the important knowledge that pupils should learn and by when.

Teachers are highly knowledgeable about the subjects that they teach. They use this expertise to explain new ideas clearly to pupils. Where teachers identify misconceptions, they address them quickly. Leaders have ensured that teachers frequently check what pupils know and can remember. This helps teachers to identify any gaps in pupils' learning before they move on.

Leaders swiftly identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers are well trained to adapt their delivery of the curriculum for these pupils. Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND have the help and support that they need to access the same curriculum as their peers. Pupils with SEND achieve highly.

Leaders prioritise reading. They have focused on developing pupils' vocabulary, particularly within subject areas. Leaders have developed a programme to identify those pupils who find reading more difficult and to help them to catch up quickly with their peers. However, this programme has not yet been implemented. As a result, pupils who struggle with their reading do not currently receive the support that they need.

The school is calm and orderly. Most teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and do not allow learning to be disrupted. Typically, pupils behave well during lessons and at breaktimes. Students in the sixth form have highly positive attitudes towards their learning. They are independent and conscientious. They are excellent role models for younger pupils.

Leaders ensure that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. For example, pupils learn about democracy and how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy. Students in the sixth form engage in a wide-ranging programme of enrichment activities. Leaders check participation rates carefully to ensure that students experience a wealth of opportunities, including learning sign language, how to budget and about healthy relationships. These students are exceptionally well prepared to become independent young adults.

Leaders provide a thorough careers programme. They ensure that pupils, including students in the sixth form, have the opportunity to engage with employers. Pupils spoke very positively about the high-quality careers guidance that they receive. They get the timely information that they need to make appropriate decisions about their next steps.

Leaders at all levels are sharply focused on providing a high-quality academic education. They are successful in achieving this. School leaders have a clear vision for how they can continue to improve. Staff appreciate the support that they receive to manage their workload. They are very proud to work at this school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have a robust approach to safeguarding. Staff are well trained to identify any signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Leaders engage effectively with external agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils and their families receive the help and support that they need.

Leaders are proactive in their approach to safeguarding concerns, for example they conduct focus groups with pupils so that they can better understand pupils' own perspectives on their safety and well-being.

Pupils learn about how to stay safe through the wider curriculum, for example they learn about how to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a very small number of subjects at key stage 3, subject leaders are still refining the knowledge that pupils should learn. This hinders how well some teachers design learning activities that build on what pupils already know. Senior leaders should ensure that subject leaders are clear about the specific knowledge that pupils need to learn and when they should learn it.
- Leaders have not identified and supported those pupils who struggle with reading well. This means that a small number of pupils are not supported to access the curriculum as well as they should. Leaders should implement their plans to identify and support these pupils so that they catch up quickly.

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	138483
Local authority	Cheshire West and Chester
Inspection number	10275317
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	1,208
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	189
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nigel Taylor
Headteacher	Jonathan Deakin
Website	www.tarporleyhigh.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 and 6 March 2014 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- At the previous inspection, this school was a standalone academy. Since that inspection, the school has established a trust called the Sandstone Trust. Three other schools have joined this trust.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider for a very small number of pupils.
- 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 spoke with the headteacher, other leaders and staff.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives of both the trust and the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, history, modern foreign languages and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils and students in the sixth form about their learning and looked at samples of their work. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils and students in the sixth form about their experience of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures, including the school's single central record. The inspectors met with leaders, staff and pupils to check on the effectiveness of safeguarding in the school.
- The inspectors reviewed a wide range of evidence, including the school's self-evaluation documents, minutes of trust board meetings and records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors considered the responses shared through Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for pupils and staff.

Inspection team

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