

Inspection of Moorside High School

Cellarhead Road, Werrington, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST9 0HP

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 February 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Previous inspection grade	not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005
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The headteacher of this school is Darryn Robinson. This school is part of Potteries Educational Trust which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Heather McLachlan, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Martin Jones.

What is it like to attend this school?

Moorside High is an inclusive and welcoming school. Staff know their pupils well and have high ambitions for them. The majority of students behave well in lessons and around the school site. Pupils are courteous and respectful to others. The school has recently introduced 'Moorside manners'. These values exemplify the high standards the school expects. Pupils and staff agree that, as a result, pupils' behaviour has improved.

Pupils know how to report well-being concerns. Pupils who spoke to inspectors said that staff deal with concerns promptly. Staff take appropriate action to address any reports of bullying. Pupils know that inappropriate behaviour is not acceptable. They are confident to report incidents swiftly to a trusted adult.

The curriculum is ambitious for all pupils including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). All Year 7 pupils now study two modern languages and there is now a wider range of GCSE and vocational options.

The school offers many extra-curricular clubs as well as trips and visits. During the inspection, over thirty pupils were performing 'We will rock you'. Pupils talk positively about the range of opportunities that are available to them. They also appreciate the extensive careers guidance on offer.

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

Leaders have made considerable changes to the school since the last inspection. Some of these changes are recent, however, they are already positively impacting the whole school community.

The school has restructured its curriculum after receiving feedback from pupils. GCSE options start in Year 9. All students study a range of different subjects until the end of Key Stage 3. Generally, teachers identify pupils' misconceptions skilfully and then address these misconceptions with pupils. However, this is not fully consistent. Activities at the start of lessons help pupils to recall what they have learnt before. For example in a GCSE physical education lesson, pupils recalled the functions of the skeletal system. They used this information to explore how different body systems contribute to better fitness.

The school has a clear approach to identify pupils who need extra support. Staff help pupils with SEND to achieve in line with their peers. The school makes good use of additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils.

The school's reading curriculum develops pupils' wider literacy. The school promptly identifies weaker readers. Targeted support helps pupils to improve their fluency. The school expects pupils to read every day. Pupils in Years 7-9 are particularly engaged in this programme.

The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Lessons begin and end calmly. The school uses 'REACH' values including 'community' and 'hard work' to help pupils improve. Pupils understand the importance of good attendance and the school is proactive when following up on pupils' absence.

Pupils learn effectively about healthy relationships through 'challenge days'. Pupils know how to stay safe online and the importance of consent and respect. The new house system offers leadership opportunities to pupils in different year groups. For example, pupils help their peers to better understanding sustainability. Pupils also enjoy regular competitions. They welcome these opportunities to serve their school.

The school offers all pupils a range of careers activities to enable them to achieve ambitious post-16 goals. Year 10 pupils recently attended an assembly with a higher education provider. These pupils were knowledgeable about the options open to them after Year 11, including T-levels.

Teachers are passionate about their subjects. They enjoy a range of career development opportunities. These include working in partnership with other schools in the trust. Governors and trustees recognise the school's strengths and weaknesses. They engage with leaders at all levels to further improve the school. Many parents say that the school has improved, though some parents are not fully supportive of recent changes at the school.

Staff are proud to work at Moorside High School. They are positive about how school leaders help to manage their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- ✓ Sometimes, teachers do not check pupils' understanding in lessons well enough. This means that teachers do not always know where gaps in knowledge exist or when pupils are stuck. The school should ensure that all teachers systematically check learning in their lessons so that they can identify gaps in learning and give pupils the help they need in a timely way.
- ✓ Responses to the parental survey suggest that some parents/carers are not happy about some of the changes being made at the school. This means that they cannot support their child to meet the school's expectations. The school should consider how best to communicate with all stakeholders when changes are introduced.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the definition of children in need of help and protection; pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's pupil premium funding (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	148508
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10294718
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	736
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Rachel Taylor
Chair of Trustees	Professor Martin Jones
Headteacher	Darryn Robinson
Website	http://www.moorside.staffs.sch.uk/
Dates of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- ✓ The school is part of the Potteries Educational Trust which contains three schools and a sixth form college.
- ✓ The Headteacher was appointed to the school in 2022.
- ✓ The school uses two alternative providers; one of which is unregistered.
- ✓ The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 11 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.

- ✓ Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- ✓ Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- ✓ Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior leaders, and with trust leaders.
- ✓ Inspectors also met with other staff in the school.
- ✓ Inspectors met with the chair of the trust, the chair and vice-chair of the school board (the local governing body) and members of the trustee and local governing body board.
- ✓ Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, science, languages, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- ✓ Inspectors also visited other lessons in different subjects and spoke to other curriculum leaders
- ✓ Inspectors spoke to pupils about their experiences in school.
- ✓ To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- ✓ Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation relating to the school.
- ✓ Inspectors reviewed responses to Ofsted's Parent View, responses to the staff survey and responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Michael Scott, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Eddie Wilkes	Ofsted Inspector
Philip Hamilton	Ofsted Inspector
Geoff Renwick	Ofsted Inspector

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