Inspection of Reddish Vale High School

Reddish Vale Road, Reddish, Stockport, Cheshire SK5 7HD

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 June 2024

Overall effectiveness	**Inadequate**
The quality of education	**Inadequate**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Requires improvement**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Inadequate**
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Linda Hanson. This school is part of the South Manchester Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Kim Earle, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Margo Kane.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's expectations for pupils' achievement, particularly disadvantaged pupils, are low. There are considerable weaknesses in how well teachers deliver the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are not supported well enough. Furthermore, instability in staffing and high staff absence means that pupils miss out on learning parts of the curriculum. Consequently, pupils' achievement across many areas of the curriculum is poor.

Most pupils behave well in lessons. They respond positively to earning 'RADI' points for exemplifying the school's values of respect, aspiration, determination and independence. However, on the corridors, their conduct is less positive. Many pupils do not attend school regularly. This contributes to the gaps that many pupils have in their knowledge.

Pupils are typically happy at this school. They trust staff to care for them well. Pupils take advantage of the wide range of clubs that are available. For instance, they enjoy netball and cinema club. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about farm club, where they learn to care for the alpacas. The school ensures that all pupils benefit from cultural trips, such as visiting a museum.

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

The school, and those responsible for governance, have overseen a decline in the quality of education that pupils receive. Trustees and members of the local governing body have not maintained a clear oversight of the school's work. They have relied too heavily on the inaccurate information that they received from the school. This situation is compounded further by a breakdown in the relationships between the trust, the local governing body and the school. There is mistrust, a lack of transparency and, at times, a refusal from the school to work together. However, since the recent changes in trust leadership, trustees have a more accurate insight into the school's effectiveness. The trust has slowly begun to implement improvement strategies. For instance, procedures around safeguarding have been strengthened.

Since the previous inspection, there have been some improvements to the design of the curriculum. This means that pupils study an ambitious, broad and typically well-ordered curriculum. Teachers are clear about what they should teach and when subject content should be taught.

The improved curriculum has made too little difference to pupils' achievement. This is because the school has not supported teachers to develop their understanding of subject-specific teaching strategies. As a result, teachers lack expertise in how to deliver the curriculum successfully. For example, some activities are not well matched to the content of the curriculum. Furthermore, some teachers do not have the subject knowledge that they need to teach subjects outside of their specialisms. Pupils do not progress well through the curriculum. Their attainment by the end of

Year 11 is significantly below the national average. They are not prepared for their next steps into education, employment or training.

The school does not identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND well enough. In some instances, gaps in pupils' learning have been misdiagnosed as SEND. In addition, teachers lack sufficient understanding of how to adapt learning effectively for pupils with SEND. This hampers how well these pupils can access the curriculum. They do not achieve well as a result.

There is considerable variability in how well teachers check what pupils have learned. At times, teachers do not think carefully about what they want to assess in order to make sure that pupils' learning is secure. Moreover, assessment information is not used well enough by teachers to identify and resolve gaps in pupils' learning. This means that pupils' learning is insecure. It hampers them from building on what they know and can do when new concepts are introduced.

The school identifies pupils who have gaps in their reading knowledge. However, the support that these pupils receive to overcome their reading difficulties is not effective enough. It does not enable pupils to gain confidence or fluency when reading. Reading remains a barrier for a considerable number of pupils. This hinders their ability to access the curriculum.

The school has worked with parents and carers to highlight the importance of their child attending school regularly. Even so, this has not made enough difference to attendance rates. Some pupils do not attend school regularly. The school does not have a secure enough understanding of the reasons for pupils' persistent absence.

Most pupils display positive attitudes to learning. They want to learn and do well. Nevertheless, there is a small minority of pupils who do not behave as well as they should, especially when moving around the school and at social times. Recent changes to managing poor behaviour, such as use of an additional support room, have been welcomed by pupils and staff. These strategies are beginning to make a difference in lessons, with reduced incidents of disruption.

Opportunities to promote pupils' personal development and develop their understanding of modern Britain are woven thoughtfully through the curriculum. Diversity days help pupils to understand and appreciate different cultures and beliefs. Pupils proudly take up positions of responsibility in ambassadorial roles. Peer mentors help new pupils settle into school. Annual performances showcase and celebrate pupils' talents. The careers programme ensures that pupils are informed about the options that are available to them when they leave school.

Some staff told inspectors that the school pays too little attention to their well-being and workload. For instance, late night emails are expected to be actioned by the following morning. Conversely, some staff spoke highly about the support that they have received from the school. Staff absence is high, as is the turnover of staff. There are a considerable number of new staff who have taken on leadership roles. However, there is a lack of clarity around their roles and responsibilities. Some

subject leaders are not supported well enough to identify areas for improvement in their subject. The school does not have rigorous processes in place for checking on the impact of its work.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Trustees and members of the local governing body have not held the school to account for the decline in the quality of education that pupils receive. They have acted too slowly to secure much needed improvements. Those responsible for governance must ensure that they take rapid action to improve the quality of education.
- The school's self-evaluation processes are not effective. This means that weaknesses are not identified or rectified. This has hampered the school from improving the quality of education that pupils receive. The school should ensure that its processes for evaluating its work are accurate and that it supports leaders to use these monitoring processes effectively.
- Teachers, including those who teach outside of their subject specialisms, do not have the subject-specific expertise to deliver curriculum content. This means that pupils do not develop a secure body of knowledge that prepares them for their next steps in learning. The school should ensure that teachers are supported to develop their expertise in how to deliver the curriculum so that pupils learn all that they should.
- Teachers do not use assessment strategies well enough to check pupils' understanding of the curriculum. Consequently, pupils have gaps in their knowledge that are not addressed. The school should ensure that teachers identify and then remedy gaps in pupils' knowledge so that their learning is secure.
- The school does not identify the needs of pupils with SEND accurately. Furthermore, the school has not ensured that teachers have the expertise that they need to adapt learning for pupils with SEND. Consequently, these pupils are not supported to learn well enough. The school must ensure that teachers are equipped with the knowledge and skills that they need to provide effective support so that pupils with SEND succeed.
- Pupils who find reading difficult do not receive effective support to quickly address the gaps that they have in their reading knowledge. As a result, these pupils do not gain confidence or fluency when reading. This hinders how well they can access the curriculum. The school should ensure that weaker readers receive appropriate support so that they are able to access the curriculum.

- A number of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, do not attend school regularly enough. This means that they miss out on academic learning, and they do not benefit from the school's provision for their personal development. The school should ensure that it analyses its attendance data more effectively so that it can provide suitable support to reduce absence levels.
- Having considered the evidence, we strongly recommend that the school does not seek to appoint early career teachers.

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 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	145133
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	10321459
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,027
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Margo Kane
CEO of the trust	Kim Earle
Headteacher	Linda Hanson
Website	www.reddish.stockport.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	25 and 26 January 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of South Manchester Learning Trust.
- The headteacher was absent prior to and at the time of the inspection.
- The school makes use of two registered, and one unregistered, alternative providers for a small number of pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 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.

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons

responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science, mathematics, modern foreign languages, physical education and geography. 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 discussed the curriculum in some other subjects, visited lessons and reviewed samples of work.
- 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.
- The inspectors met with the deputy headteacher, the CEO, leaders from the trust, senior leaders and other staff.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the local governing body, including the chair of governors. She also met with representatives of the trust board, including the chair and vice-chair of trustees. She held a telephone conversation with representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils from Years 7 to 10 about their experience of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's survey for staff and pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation document, the development plan, minutes of trustee and local governing body meetings and records of pupils' behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Jenny Jones, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
David Roberts	Ofsted Inspector
David Marchant	Ofsted Inspector
Alyson Middlemass	Ofsted Inspector
Paula Crawley	Ofsted Inspector

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