

Inspection of North Chadderton School

Chadderton Hall Road, Chadderton, Oldham, Lancashire OL9 0BN

Inspection dates:	5 and 6 November 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The co-headteachers of this school are Nikola Westhead and Nick Angus. The school is part of The Oak 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), Sarah North, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Iain Windeatt.

What is it like to attend this school?

Most pupils are happy to be part of this inclusive school community. Pupils from a wide range of different backgrounds mix well with each other. Staff care for pupils' well-being and safety. Pupils know who to speak to if they are worried or upset.

The school is ambitious for pupils to succeed. Pupils, and students in the sixth form, benefit from the improvements the school has made to the quality of education that it provides. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged, progress well through the curriculum in most subjects.

Pupils' behaviour during breaktimes and when moving between lessons is generally calm. In lessons, pupils listen respectfully to their teachers and to each other. Staff foster positive relationships with their pupils.

An increasing number of pupils benefit from extra-curricular activities. The school has extended its lunchtime so there is more time for pupils to join clubs. As a result, there are now more opportunities for pupils to participate in a wide variety of sports, musical and cultural activities.

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

Staff, members of the local advisory committee and trustees of the school are united in their desire to ensure that all pupils have access to a high-quality, broad and ambitious curriculum. The school, with the support of the trust, has taken effective action to address previous weaknesses in the curriculum and variability in the quality of teaching. As a result, outcomes for all pupils are now improving.

Recently, the school has considered carefully what pupils need to know and when this content should be taught. In each subject, including those taught in the sixth form, the curriculum sets out clearly for staff the essential knowledge that pupils need to learn. Subject teachers have received training on how best to deliver this knowledge. Consequently, pupils know and remember more of what they have learned.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. This helps them to deliver the subject curriculums well. Most teachers explain concepts clearly to pupils. They make sure that important learning is revisited. In the sixth form, teachers know the abilities of their students and plan lessons accordingly. However, in a small number of subjects, at key stages 3 and 4, some teachers do not choose the most appropriate methods to help pupils to learn key knowledge. For example, sometimes, teachers do not make the purpose of the lesson clear enough, or they introduce new learning too quickly before checking carefully that pupils have understood what has been taught before. As a result, some pupils develop gaps in their learning. They struggle to recall what has been taught. This prevents some pupils from progressing as well as they should in these subjects.

Pupils behave well around the large school site. Sixth-form students set a good example to younger pupils with their mature attitudes. They also enjoy their own spacious study

and social areas, which they use respectfully. Key stage 3 and 4 lessons across the school typically take place without disruption. The school studies patterns in pupils' behaviour and acts swiftly if it identifies any issues which need addressing.

The school identifies pupils with SEND quickly and accurately and meets their needs well. With the support of the trust, teachers are provided with relevant information and training on how to help pupils with SEND in the classroom. Consequently, staff are increasingly confident to support these pupils to learn well.

The school has appropriate procedures in place for tackling any concerns about pupils' attendance. The school seeks to understand the underlying causes of a pupil's absence. It works thoughtfully with pupils and their families to improve attendance. As a result, attendance is above the national average for all pupils, including those with SEND or who are disadvantaged.

Recently, the school has reviewed how it identifies and supports pupils whose reading knowledge is weaker when they join the school. It has developed effective systems to identify pupils who have gaps in their reading knowledge. These systems enable staff to pinpoint and remedy the specific problems that individual pupils face with reading. Most pupils become more confident readers over time. This allows them better access to the school's ambitious curriculum.

The school shows a strong commitment to ensure that pupils, and students in the sixth form, build the knowledge that they need to be well prepared for life beyond school. It has considered carefully what it wants pupils to know and when it is best to introduce sensitive topics, including aspects of sex and relationships education. The school provides a very full programme of careers education, including many opportunities to meet and learn from employers. Pupils are very complimentary about this aspect of school life.

Recently, positive changes have been achieved at the school with the support of the majority of staff. The school is considerate of staff's workload and well-being. The trust and members of the local advisory committee support the school using their expertise in educational matters.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects in key stages 3 and 4, the school does not ensure that all teachers use the most suitable techniques to help pupils understand subject content. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding. This hinders how well they progress through the curriculum. The school should ensure that,

in these subjects, teachers are fully equipped to deliver curriculum content consistently well so that pupils know and remember important knowledge.

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	141248
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10348310
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	1,572
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	204
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Iain Windeatt
CEO of the trust	Sarah North
Co-Headteachers	Nick Angus and Nikola Westhead
Website	www.northchaddertonschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	6 and 7 December 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school is part of The Oak Trust. It joined this trust in September 2013.
- 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.
- The school makes use of four unregistered alternative provisions.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements

(quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders, staff and members of the local advisory committee, including the chair of the local advisory committee.
- An inspector met with the CEO of the trust and representatives of the trust board.
- An inspector spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their experience of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of evidence, including the school's improvement plans, records of meetings of the local advisory committee and the trust board, and analysis of pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took into account 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 carried out deep dives in business studies, English, history, mathematics, modern foreign languages and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, and spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects and visited some lessons in those subjects.
- Inspectors also visited a number of other lessons in other subjects in the sixth form.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.

Inspection team

Timothy Gartside, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Derek Yarwood	Ofsted Inspector
Tim Long	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen Cox	Ofsted Inspector
Katy Robinson	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024