



Cheadle Hulme High School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106140
Local Authority Stockport
Inspection number 287427
Inspection date 18 January 2007
Reporting inspector Susan Wareing HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Woods Lane
School category	Community		Cheadle Hulme, Cheadle
Age range of pupils	11–16		Cheshire SK8 7JY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0161 4857201
Number on roll (school)	1333	Fax number	0161 4866031
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Rev Charles Nevin
		Headteacher	Mrs L Magrath
Date of previous school inspection	8 October 2001		

Age group	Inspection date	Inspection number
11–16	18 January 2007	287427

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector. During the inspection, meetings were held with representative groups of students across the school, the Chair of Governors, the headteacher and other senior staff, some curriculum team and subject leaders, and coordinators of inclusion support. A small sample of lessons was visited. The school provided a wide range of documentation, including recent pupil data, to support its self-evaluation. Two hundred and eighty parental questionnaires were returned, enabling the inspection team to gather and take into account the views of approximately one fifth of the parents with children at the school.

Description of the school

Cheadle Hulme High School is a larger than average 11 to 16 mixed comprehensive school. The proportion of students entitled to free school meals is below the national average, but 20% of students live in areas of social and economic deprivation. Most students are of White British heritage. The number of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average. However, the proportion of those students who have statements of special educational need is above average because the school is a Designated School for Physical Disabilities and Auditory and Visual Impairment. Fifteen students are in the care of the local authority. The school is a well established Specialist Language College and Training School.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Cheadle Hulme High School is a good school and provides its students with a good education. The school offers a happy and purposeful learning environment which supports the personal development and well-being of all its students. Students respond well to this caring atmosphere which encourages their confidence as learners. Relationships are very positive. One pupil said, 'The teachers treat us like individuals. We aren't just people who get taught and go home.'

Specialist languages status promotes students' cultural development and outlook through international days, extra-curricular visits and lunchtime clubs. Students are excited about the wide opportunities to learn a range of languages and the rapid progress that most of them make. Students mature into responsible and confident young adults because of the outstanding range of opportunities offered to them and that allow them to take on real responsibilities. Students act not only as peer mentors and members of School and Year Councils but as associate governors and Training School Delegates, contributing to trainee teachers' understanding of teaching and learning. As Language Ambassadors, they actively promote language learning in the local community.

Achievement and standards are good overall and have been rising steadily over the past three years. Students enter the school with broadly average attainment and reach average standards in the Year 9 national tests. They reach above average standards in GCSE examinations, including the proportion of students who gained five grades A* to C including English and mathematics. These outcomes represent good progress from students' starting points over the five years from Years 7 to 11. Any pockets of underachievement are quickly tackled and students brought back on target. Attendance is satisfactory and improving, through an improved system of rewards and better analysis of the patterns in students' absence.

Students' behaviour is good in lessons and around the school and students say that they are free from bullying, although a small minority of parents expressed concerns about disruptive behaviour. The school's very clear focus on teaching and learning has raised its quality to good. Lessons are generally well prepared, lively and challenging. Effective questioning encourages students to think independently and in most lessons they participate actively in their learning. Recently improved quality assurance and tracking procedures have begun to allow early identification of any students who may not meet their targets. Students therefore generally know how well they are doing but there is some inconsistency across subjects in the quality of marking and monitoring of students' progress. This means that students do not always know precisely what to do in order to improve their work.

Parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire are very supportive of the school and in particular of the good leadership and management of the headteacher. She and the other senior leaders have brought about many significant improvements over the last three years. The school sets itself very challenging targets and all staff share the senior team's commitment to improve the life chances of students, particularly

those who are most vulnerable The school's determination to remove any barriers to learning is illustrated by many individual success stories. The school maintains most of its most vulnerable students in full-time education and helps them towards subsequent employment. The school has successfully tackled all the issues from the last inspection and the good leadership and management that exists throughout the school demonstrates good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the monitoring of students' progress is consistent across all subjects.
- Improve the quality of marking so that students know exactly what to do in order to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement and standards are good overall. Students enter the school with standards that are broadly average. In 2005 Key Stage 3 test results in the core subjects were broadly average indicating satisfactory progress for all groups of students. The school's own data for 2006 shows a dip in progress mainly due to the underachievement of a small group of lower ability students in English. The school has tackled this very effectively and these students are now back on track to achieve their target grades.

Standards at Key Stage 4 improved significantly in 2005 and 2006. The proportion of students achieving five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C was above average, as was the proportion who gained five passes at grades A* to C including English and mathematics. Passes at the higher grades, at A and A*, were also above average and the vast majority of students gained at least one GCSE qualification. Results improved further in 2006. Most vulnerable groups of students make similar progress to others.

In languages, GCSE results at grades A* to C improved significantly in 2006, especially in French. Languages make a significant contribution to achievement across the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Enjoyment and positive relationships are evident amongst students and staff at the school. Students say that their views are taken seriously and acted upon. The school promotes healthy lifestyles very well, for example, in its strong stance against smoking. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and older students are very supportive of younger ones. Students of all ages are proud to contribute to the school and local community through charity fundraising and as ambassadors for languages, participating in Christmas concerts and markets, language taster courses and running language clubs. Students are well prepared for their future economic well-being through the school's clear focus on improving achievement in English and mathematics and through good guidance on careers.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall and this leads to good achievement. Since the last inspection the school has placed a strong emphasis on improving the quality of teaching and learning and rigorous monitoring and evaluation give senior leaders a very accurate overview of its strengths and weaknesses. Lessons are well planned and offer a good emphasis on literacy development. Levels of enjoyment and engagement are usually high. In most lessons students know their targets but there is some inconsistency across subjects in the quality of marking and monitoring of students' progress. This means that they do not always know precisely what to do in order to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and improving. The revised curriculum for languages at Key Stage 3 is contributing to increased enjoyment of, and engagement in, language learning. This has had a significant impact on standards and achievement, with most students making better progress in languages than that seen nationally in this age group.

Key Stage 4 students have responded well to new curriculum arrangements at Key Stage 4 which offer courses that are better matched to the needs of all learners. This, together with better tracking of progress, is having a significant impact on the achievement of vulnerable students in the current Years 10 and 11.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care and support for students are good. Arrangements for child protection and staff training in this area are in line with recommended practice. Vetting procedures and risk assessments are robust. All students say that there is always an adult or older student available to help them when they need it. Students are very satisfied with the quality of guidance and advice they receive on future study and career options. There is good cooperation with external agencies for the support of vulnerable students. Individual Education Plans set clear targets for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and there is good communication between all staff who need access to information about students' academic and pastoral progress. There are good systems for monitoring students' progress although there is some inconsistency in the use of information gained to intervene early on underachievement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The school is well run despite the need to manage an inherited budget deficit. The school offers good value for money in terms of outcomes for students. The headteacher has established very clear roles and responsibilities, which are well understood by leaders at all levels. Self-evaluation is good. It is informed extensively by the views of stakeholders and gives the senior leadership team and governors an accurate knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. School development plans are rigorous and establish appropriate priorities for improvement, with a central focus on teaching and learning to increase achievement. Recently introduced quality assurance procedures hold middle managers to account and support them through effective line management. Systems for tracking students' progress have shown impact at Key Stage 4 and are now being extended throughout the school although such systems are not yet routinely used in all departments. Governors are well informed and supportive of the school but also provide a robust challenge when necessary.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Following our visit to inspect your school I would like to tell you about the things we found out. Cheadle Hulme High School is a good school which helps you to reach good standards and achieve generally well over your five years in school.

Teaching overall is good and we saw some lessons that encouraged you to think for yourselves and take an active part in your own learning. We were pleased to hear that teachers and other advisors offer you good guidance on options so that almost all of you progress to the further study, training and employment of your choice when you leave the school. We found that the care and support that you get when you have personal problems is good. We think that the school has good systems to let them know how well you are doing in your work, but information about your progress could be used earlier in some subjects, to give you the help that you need. Also, marking does not always tell you exactly what you need to do in order to improve your work. We know that you enjoy the wide range of enrichment activities that you can get involved in. You told us how much you value taking responsibility for others, especially for younger students. We know that they are grateful for your help as peer mentors and in helping Year 7 and new students settle down well in school. You told us that these things mean that you do not worry about bullying and feel happy and safe in school.

We thought that the range of real responsibilities that you take on, such as associate governors and Training School delegates, is outstanding. The fact that the school takes your views so seriously helps you to become mature and confident and this in turn helps you in your studies.

The school has made a lot of improvements since the last inspection. For example, the school has worked hard to improve teaching and learning to its present good standard. Changes to courses in languages are helping you to make above average progress in Years 7 to 9 and get good GCSE results in the examinations you enter in Year 9. New courses in a number of subjects in Years 10 and 11 make sure that the interests of students of all abilities are catered for well. We think that the school should:

- make sure that your progress is checked regularly in all subjects so that teachers can help you as early as possible with any problems in your work
- make sure that teachers show you in their marking exactly how to improve your work.

I would like to thank those of you who talked to me and my colleague to let us know what you think of the school. We found this very helpful.

I would like to wish you all every success for your future at Cheadle Hulme High School.