

Inspection of an outstanding school: Levenshulme High School

Crossley Road, Levenshulme, Manchester, Greater Manchester M19 1FS

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 June 2022

Outcome

Levenshulme High School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very proud of their school and the opportunities that are provided for them. Pupils and staff have very high expectations of themselves and each other. Pupils feel safe and happy at school. Their behaviour is exceptional and they have a very positive approach to learning. Pupils know that the rare incidents of bullying will be dealt with quickly.

Pupils appreciate the school's values of solidarity, equity, democracy, self-help, equality and self-responsibility in all aspects of their school life. They are determined to earn the school's badges which recognise their commitment to these values in all that they do.

Independence is an important life skill for all pupils at this school. Pupils are keen to take on responsibility. This includes applying to be leaders in a wide range of academic subjects, as well as in wider skills such as promoting the well-being of others.

Pupils develop an extremely strong sense of community. They value the support that they are given by teachers and other school staff. Reading is promoted well, with the library at the heart of the school. Pupils enjoy the reading challenges and other competitions.

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

Leaders have planned an extremely well-thought-out curriculum. It is carefully ordered and ambitious for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers regularly review the curriculum to make sure it is refined for the individual needs of pupils. This has helped leaders and teachers to develop a very reflective approach to the delivery of the curriculum. Leaders have encouraged a collaborative approach to curriculum development. Subject leaders work together to identify useful links to pupils' learning in different subjects. The exceptional curriculum allows pupils to achieve highly in their learning across all subjects.

Leaders have created an assessment system which is used consistently well across the school. The system enables staff to check that pupils have learned the curriculum. It also allows pupils to review their own progress through the subject curriculums effectively. Staff use assessment information successfully to identify gaps in pupils' learning and knowledge. Teachers then successfully refine the curriculum to help pupils to overcome misconceptions.

Leaders have placed a high priority on reading across all curriculum areas. There is a very rigorous system in place to identify pupils who struggle with reading. Pupils who join the school speaking English as an additional language are supported well. Leaders have established an effective phonics curriculum for pupils who require support to catch up. They have also built a culture in school where pupils develop a love of reading. Pupils confidently select books which help with their learning and also allow them to read for pleasure.

Leaders have a very systematic approach to identifying pupils with SEND. This is a continuous and reflective process throughout the time that pupils spend at the school. This means that pupils with SEND are very well supported to access an ambitious curriculum. This enables them to achieve exceptionally well.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Staff use the behaviour policy successfully to quickly resolve any rare issues of poorer behaviour. There are very few occasions where pupils repeat poor behaviour.

The personal development programme is exceptionally well structured and provides a range of consistent and rich experiences for pupils. For example, the leadership programme is open to all pupils. There is representation from pupils with SEND and those who are disadvantaged. The pupils who are chosen as leaders run activities for their peers and support others. Pupils take this role seriously and gain experiences which will help them in the future.

Leaders have an extremely clear and ambitious vision for the school. This is shared by staff, pupils, parents and carers. Leaders consider the workload and well-being of staff, without compromising the experience for pupils. Governors are very supportive of the school. They make sure that decisions are always made in the best interests of pupils. Leaders in the trust provide strong support and challenge to school leaders to enable ongoing school improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created an extremely strong ethos of safeguarding which is threaded through all activities in school. Staff are regularly updated about local and national issues by leaders. All staff know how to identify when a pupil might be at risk from harm. They also know how to manage any disclosures from pupils. Staff use recording systems well to note any worries. This allows leaders to identify any ongoing concerns. Leaders work well

with a wide range of external agencies. This means that pupils and their families receive the support that they need.

Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe through a detailed personal development programme.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged Levenshulme High School to be outstanding in October 2016.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	141196
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10226384
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	1003
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andrew Mullen
Headteachers	Donna Johnson and Neil Johnson
Website	www.levenshulmehigh.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	5 and 6 October 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, two co-headteachers have been appointed.
- The school uses five registered alternative providers.
- The school is a part of the Education and Leadership Trust.

Information about this inspection

- 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.
- As part of this inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited some lessons, spoke with pupils and teachers, and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work in other subjects.
- Inspectors met with the co-headteachers, other senior leaders, the special educational needs team, subject leaders and teachers. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative from the local authority and a representative from the trust.

- The lead inspector met with trustees and governors, including the chair of the governing body and the chair of the trust.
- Inspectors checked safeguarding procedures, including the recruitment checks made on staff. Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding leader, staff and pupils to discuss wider aspects of safeguarding. They scrutinised a range of documentation in relation to safeguarding. They also considered survey responses from staff, parents and pupils on safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation, including that relating to the curriculum, pupils' behaviour, improvement plans and leaders' self-evaluation summary.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in a range of situations, including in corridors, at breaktimes, at lunchtimes and in lessons. They also spoke to pupils about behaviour and bullying.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils about their programme of wider personal development.
- Inspectors considered the responses from parents to Ofsted Parent View. This included the comments submitted via the free-text facility.
- Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and staff survey.

Inspection team

Elaine Mawson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Fiona Burke-Jackson

Ofsted Inspector

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