

Inspection of Cheadle Hulme High School

Woods Lane, Cheadle Hulme, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 7JY

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 May 2025

The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Sixth-form provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The headteacher of this school is Dave Brown. This school is part of The Laurus 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), Linda Magrath, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Tony Little.

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since December 2014. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive in this inclusive school. They benefit from a rigorous academic education that propels their learning way beyond the classroom. High aspiration underpins the rich curriculum. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve exceptionally well.

The school's exemplary attention to pupils' wider development is centred on the four 'cornerstones'. The meticulously constructed careers programme helps pupils to make informed and ambitious choices about their next steps in education, employment or training. A plethora of clubs are savoured by pupils, such as ballroom dancing, gardening, 'Shakespeare's unloved plays' and the European film club. These help to develop pupils' interests and curiosity. Intertwined with this is a focus on teaching qualities, attitudes and habits. For instance, pupils are taught how to be socially intelligent and empathise with others.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They cultivate scholarly attributes. Pupils' blazers are adorned with reward badges. Students in the sixth form act as excellent role models. Pupils are wholeheartedly committed to their studies. They aspire to succeed, and they do. Pupils are exceedingly happy in this school. With determination and fervour, pupils embrace the school's belief that 'better is always possible'.

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

The school ensures that pupils and students in the sixth form achieve their best. The school's rich and ambitious curriculum equips pupils with the knowledge they need to succeed. The curriculum is expertly delivered. Teachers adeptly check whether pupils have understood their learning and readily identify and address any misconceptions. Pupils' learning builds securely over time. They develop a rich understanding of the subjects they study, and, as a result, pupils attain highly.

The school has excellent processes in place to identify pupils' additional needs. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are expertly supported to excel. They participate fully in school life. Pupils with SEND make excellent progress through the curriculum.

Across the curriculum, reading is front and centre and skilfully woven through each subject. A love of reading is firmly embedded. Pupils view reading as both a conduit for knowledge and a pathway to pleasure. For pupils who find reading difficult, the school provides effective support, which helps them to read confidently and fluently.

The school sets extremely high standards for pupils' behaviour. It equips pupils with a thorough understanding of how to adhere to those standards. This begins with teachers being excellent role models. For example, teachers engage enthusiastically in a wide range of professional development opportunities and model positive learning habits. Pupils' attitudes to their learning are exemplary. This extends to the sixth form, where students use their study time wisely. They form strong learning behaviours that stand them in good stead for the next phase of their education. Pupils are respectful and polite.

Even so, the school is developing pupils who can advocate for themselves and respectfully challenge others.

The school equips sixth-form students exceedingly well for life in modern Britain. Students are proficient in life skills such as how to arrange a mortgage or pay taxes. The vibrant 'super curriculum' with diverse speakers, trips and visits inspires students. Students achieve exceptionally well, and most go on to aspirational destinations.

The school is highly focused on creating well-rounded individuals. The curriculum for personal, social and health education is well thought out and organised. For example, pupils are confident in recognising the signs of coercive control in relationships. Individuality is highly celebrated. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the 'mother tongue other tongue' poetry competition and the awe of listening to a peer recite their own poetry. Pupils have a developed understanding of different religions. There is an abundance of trips, including residential excursions abroad. Most pupils have enjoyed an overseas visit. The school has carefully thought about what it wants pupils to learn from these activities so that they contribute further to pupils' understanding of the curriculum and wider development. Furthermore, pupils embrace a range of leadership opportunities such as house captains and form representatives. These roles enable them to affect change.

The collaboration, trust and mutual respect between the school and the trust are palpable. Across the school, at all levels, leadership is a strength. Staff share the school's vision that regardless of background or circumstance, all pupils should succeed. This high sense of moral purpose drives them. Those responsible for governance are astute and hold the school to account. Although standards are exceptionally high, there is no complacency. Staff speak positively about their roles. They feel valued. In turn, they value the support and well-established professional development that the school gives them.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	137843
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	10348270
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	1,691
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	299
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Tony Little
CEO of the trust	Linda Magrath
Headteacher	Dave Brown
Website	www.chhs.stockport.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	10 and 11 December 2014, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school is part of The Laurus Trust.
- The school uses two registered and one unregistered alternative provisions 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. 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.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and other members of staff.
- Inspectors met with staff from the trust, including the CEO and trust directors.
- An inspector met with representatives of the board of trustees and the academy committee.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, modern foreign languages, geography 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 discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- An inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- 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 considered the responses shared through Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for pupils and staff.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their experiences of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. They also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at break- and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including academy committee and trust board meeting minutes, the school's self-evaluation and development plan and records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Jenny Jones, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Katie Sharp	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Glennon	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Rigby	Ofsted Inspector

David Roberts

Ofsted Inspector

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