

# Mossley Hollins High School

Huddersfield Road, Mossley, Ashton-Under-Lyne, Tameside, OL5 9DP

**Inspection dates** 18–19 November 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Students make outstanding progress whatever their circumstances, and the standards they achieve are very high compared with national figures. The progress which the most able students make in English is exceptionally high, but not quite as impressive in mathematics.
- Disadvantaged students benefit significantly from attending this school. Achievement gaps between these students and their non-disadvantaged peers nationally have been eradicated. Indeed, disadvantaged students generally make better progress and attain higher standards than other students nationally.
- The relationships between staff and students are very strong and built on mutual respect. This creates an environment where students feel valued and confident, and in which outstanding learning takes place.
- Over time, the quality of teaching leads to students making outstanding progress. Every individual student matters and teachers and support staff ensure that their needs are met, to enable them to learn effectively.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well. As a result, students are thoroughly prepared for life after they leave school.
- Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about all that the school provides for their children.
- The headteacher is driven by a determination to improve the life chances of every student. He has the highest expectations of all his staff and students and leads with both rigour and humanity. Outstanding leadership at all levels is a hallmark of the school.
- Leaders are quick to identify any areas of underperformance and deal with these effectively. This unswerving commitment to improvement leads to exceptional student achievement.
- Governors are highly committed and know the school well. Members of the governing body bring a wealth of experience, skills and knowledge, which enable them to help drive further improvements in the school.
- The school and the successes it achieves are very much a result of a team effort. Pride in the school is shared by staff, governors, students and their families.
- Excellent behaviour in classrooms and around the school means that students get on very well together. They are courteous and friendly towards one another, staff and visitors.
- The work that the school does to keep students safe is exemplary. One of the many strengths of this school is the way it meets the pastoral needs of its students, particularly those who are vulnerable.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 32 lessons taught by 31 different teachers. One observation was undertaken jointly with the headteacher.
- Four groups of students met with inspectors. Discussions were also held with staff, including senior and middle leaders. A meeting was held with the Chair of the Governing Body and four other governors. A meeting was also held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 33 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and of the 58 questionnaires completed by staff.
- Inspectors read a range of documents. These included information on the school’s own view of its performance, the school improvement plan, achievement data, and policies and records on safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

## Inspection team

Anne Seneviratne, Lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Colin Mason	Additional Inspector
Peter McKay	Additional Inspector
Bernard Robinson	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Mossley Hollins High School is a smaller than average 11 to 16 school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students, those known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional government funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority), is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is below average and only a very small proportion speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled students or those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.
- A small number of Key Stage 4 students access alternative off-site provision for one day a week at Tameside College.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the most able students make the same exceptional progress in all subjects, particularly mathematics, as they do in English.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are outstanding

- The ethos of this school is built on the belief that every student will make outstanding progress, regardless of their circumstances or prior attainment. The headteacher is uncompromising in the high expectations he has of all his staff and students. His rigour is blended with humanity which means that students and staff feel valued and they are proud of their school community and its achievements. There was an overwhelmingly positive response in the staff questionnaires, with several staff commenting on how they feel both supported and challenged in a way that is helping them to improve their practice.
- Outstanding leadership at all levels is at the heart of this school's success. Highly effective senior and middle leaders are complemented by the many students who are in roles of responsibility throughout the school. These students demonstrate a range of skills and qualities, for example as reading mentors, or being part of the anti-bullying team.
- All members of the senior leadership team lead their areas in an exemplary manner and their skills and qualities complement each other very effectively. They are united in their tireless focus on improving standards in all areas of the school. The quality of middle leadership across the school is strong. Appropriate training and support are provided so that subject leaders have the necessary skills to ensure high standards in their curriculum areas.
- There is an ongoing commitment to improve the quality of teaching and learning further by harnessing the expertise of staff and sharing this outstanding practice. Senior leaders have a very accurate grasp of teachers' strengths and areas for development. Individual coaching and training leads to teachers improving their practice.
- Performance management procedures are used very well to reward success and support improvement. Arrangements for teachers' performance management are extremely thorough and robust. There is clear evidence that the headteacher and governors use this process very effectively to determine teachers' salary progression.
- Disadvantaged students benefit enormously from attending this school. Leaders have used the pupil premium funding very effectively and the exceptional achievement of the students this money supports is clear evidence of its impact. This is testament to the philosophy of the school which has equality of opportunity at its heart.
- The curriculum provides very well for students' needs and contributes to the outstanding progress which they make. It puts the individual student at its heart, raises aspirations and broadens horizons. This rich and varied curriculum, both in and beyond the classroom, plays a significant part in students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This aspect of students' development underpins the school's values and culture. As a result, students are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- There are very strong relationships with partner primary schools. Staff from the respective schools work collaboratively in a variety of ways. For example, the most able students in Year 6 come up to the school for a series of mathematics lessons.
- Effective transition at the end of Year 11 is a high priority. There is a close collaboration with the sixth form college to which the vast majority of students go. Students receive very effective careers guidance which is underpinned by a philosophy of high aspirations.
- Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school and everything the staff do to support their children. It is clear from letters of thanks written to the headteacher and conversations during the inspection, that parents are particularly impressed by the focused individual care that their children receive and the impact this has on their development and happiness. As one parent said, 'Staff are wonderful and willing to go the extra mile.'
- The school's view of its own performance is robust and accurate. The school improvement plan outlines the key priorities which are driving the school further forward.
- Robust policies and procedures for safeguarding students are fully in place and well established. They fully meet requirements.
- There is a positive relationship between the school and the local authority. The head of school performance and standards in the local authority has delivered training for middle leaders and a session on effective questioning for the whole staff. The school is already sharing its outstanding practice with a range of partners, but the headteacher is keen to extend this work further to have a wider impact across the local area.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is highly skilled, well informed and insightful. Governors are acutely aware of the school's strengths and priorities, and offer both support and challenge to secure further improvement.

They are knowledgeable about standards and rigorously check on the school's actions. Individual governors are linked to subject areas where they take an active role in checking standards. Governors have a clear understanding of the impact of the pupil premium funding on the achievement of those students supported by it. They are knowledgeable about the quality of teaching and work closely with the headteacher to make decisions about pay progression.

## **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Students behave extremely well in all areas of the school. They are courteous and welcoming. Students relate to each other, staff and visitors in a respectful, kind and friendly manner. These habits of good behaviour have clearly been developed over time and represent what is typical in this school.
- The systems which support the development of good learning habits create a community ethos which permeates all aspects of the school. Older students have a range of responsibilities, such as peer mentors and reading mentors. They are very willing to give their time to help the younger students. Students wear their uniforms smartly and with pride. Students are appreciative of the school environment and facilities which are in as good a condition as when they moved into the new building nearly four years ago.
- Students spoken to during the inspection say that bullying is rare and on the few occasions when it does happen, then it is quickly sorted out. Students feel that the anti-bullying team is very effective. Leaders are aware that there is more work to be done to eradicate the casual use of homophobic language. However, the Year 10 students were unanimous in their view that this was a safe environment for students to be open about their sexual orientation. Any incidents of prejudice-based bullying are recorded, including details of the follow-up action.
- The vast majority of students of all abilities and ages show very positive attitudes to learning. They relate well to staff, showing impressive levels of maturity. Students are confident learners, and classrooms throughout the school are very positive learning environments.
- The work to develop good learning habits over recent years has led to a decline in the number of fixed-term exclusions to well below the national average for all student groups. Overall absence and persistent absence figures have been well below national averages for the last four years with an improving trend.

### **Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. A strength of the school is the way it meets the pastoral needs of its students, particularly those who are vulnerable. Members of the pupil development team work in a highly effective way with individual students, providing a range of focused support in safe learning environments. Evidence shows that this work has a positive impact on students' attendance, behaviour, well-being and achievement.
- All adults who work in school have had the appropriate safeguarding training. All the necessary arrangements have been made to ensure the physical environment is a safe place. All students are taught about internet safety. Safeguarding procedures are clear and well documented, including for those students who are educated off site.

## **The quality of teaching** is outstanding

- Over time the quality of teaching leads to students making outstanding progress. Teachers know their individual students well which means they are able to respond to and anticipate their needs. This enables the students to learn more effectively.
- There are very strong relationships between staff and students based on mutual respect. This creates a positive environment where students feel valued and confident, and in which outstanding learning takes place. Students respond positively when their teachers encourage them to take risks and challenge themselves. They value the support they get from their teachers and other adults.
- There are high expectations of students, and they respond accordingly, producing a high standard of work. Skilful questioning is used to check and develop understanding.
- In many lessons across the school, teachers' expertise and passion for their subjects motivates students exceptionally well and promotes a real love of learning. This was particularly evident in a Year 7 English lesson where the teacher's enthusiasm was infectious. The students were using their senses to write descriptively. The teacher responded with genuine encouragement to their contributions but did not miss any opportunity to move their learning forward.

- In the vast majority of subjects, students receive high quality written feedback. Teachers give clear next steps for improvement and student responses show that this is helping them to make progress.
- The school sees it as a high priority that all students have strong literacy and numeracy skills. This was evident in many of the lessons observed during the inspection. Twice a week, students spend their tutor time reading for pleasure. During this time trained peer readers from Year 10 and 11 read with a number of Year 7 and 8 students. Year 7 students spend a proportion of their weekly tutor time involved in activities which develop their literacy, oracy and numeracy skills. The Year 7 catch-up funding is used to enhance the literacy and numeracy support given to individual students. This made a significant impact on the rates of progress made by those students who benefited from this extra support last year.

### The achievement of pupils

### is outstanding

- Over the last three years the proportion of students gaining five or more A\* to C grades, including English and mathematics, has been significantly above the national average and improving. In 2014, the rate of improvement in this attainment measure to 82% is particularly impressive as this cohort entered the school with attainment which was broadly in line with the national average. This reflects the outstanding progress students make at this school.
- The progress that students make across their subjects and in English and mathematics has been significantly above average for the last three years. The number of students who made more-than-expected progress in English in 2014 is particularly impressive and well above the national figure.
- Disadvantaged students achieve exceptionally well. The proportion of disadvantaged students attaining five or more A\* to C grades, including English and mathematics is above other students nationally. In 2014 in English, disadvantaged students attained about a third of a grade higher than other students nationally. In mathematics they attained the same grade as other students nationally. Although this is very impressive, the priority for leaders now is to close the within-school gap of approximately a grade which exists in this measure. In both English and mathematics, disadvantaged students made better progress than other students nationally.
- Students who are disabled or who have special educational needs are very well supported. Rigorous systems and procedures are in place to monitor the quality of provision for these students and the impact that this is having on their learning. As a result of this very strong provision, these students achieve very well and the proportion who make and exceed expected progress is very high. The leadership of this area is a significant strength of the school.
- In 2014, the proportion of students attaining the English Baccalaureate was, for the second year running, significantly above the national figure. In 2014, the proportion of students attaining A\* or A grades in English, separate sciences, business studies, dance, music and religious studies was high. The key priority for leaders is to replicate this performance across all subjects, particularly in mathematics. Ensuring that the most able are challenged more effectively is a key focus area for the whole school.
- The students who access alternative provision off site for one day a week are following accredited courses which lead to qualifications which are appropriate for their ability. These students who attend college are very positive about their experiences. One student has shown a remarkable improvement in his attendance as a result. The school's arrangements for and policies in relation to this alternative provision are rigorous and effective.
- Evidence gathered during the inspection, and the school's robust achievement tracking data, show that students in both key stages are continuing to make outstanding progress from their respective starting points.

## What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106266
<b>Local authority</b>	Tameside
<b>Inspection number</b>	446899

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	773
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Denton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Drew Duncan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 January 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01457 832491
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