

Inspection of Stockport School

Mile End Lane, Stockport, Cheshire SK2 6BW

Inspection dates: 10–11 December 2019

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a well-run and oversubscribed school. Leaders have high expectations of their pupils. Leaders aim to provide a first-rate and all-round education. They want to set pupils up for life.

Pupils study an academic and ambitious curriculum. Parents, carers and pupils say that they like the curriculum. Parents say the curriculum meets their children's needs.

Pupils achieve well, across most subjects, in national examinations. In 2019, pupils did not achieve the same high standards in a small number of subjects as they did in English, science and mathematics.

Pupils understand and embrace each other's differences. They say that they can be themselves. Bullying is rare. Staff deal with any issues well.

Pupils arrive to lessons on time. They are ready to learn and try hard in lessons. They usually behave well around school. Pupils say that they feel happy and safe at school. They say this school is a good place to make friends and to learn.

Staff are trained well to support those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff encourage and help these pupils to learn well. Parents appreciate the time staff take to get to know their children. Pupils with SEND also benefit from a highly ambitious curriculum.

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

Senior leaders, including governors, lead the school well. They are clear about where things are going well and where any improvements are needed. They were not surprised by inspectors' findings during the inspection.

The headteacher's and deputy headteachers' actions are guided by pupils' best interests. These leaders have also won the support of the staff. Teachers and other staff work well to do the best that they can for pupils.

For the most part, pupils in key stage 3 enjoy a broad and ambitious curriculum. They learn what they need to know to prepare them for their GCSE courses and for their lives beyond school. However, in a small minority of subject areas the key stage 3 curriculum is not ambitious enough. In these subjects some pupils do not cover fully the subject knowledge that they need in key stage 3.

Pupils follow an ambitious and academic range of courses at key stage 4. About nine out of every 10 pupils study academic courses at key stage 4 that are offered by the English Baccalaureate. Overall, pupils produce high-quality work in these subjects. Teachers check on pupils' understanding well. They make sure that

pupils build on their learning in a logical way. This means that pupils are confident to tackle more challenging and bigger ideas. This is especially the case in English, mathematics and science. This helps pupils to achieve well in their GCSE examinations in these subjects.

Pupils' conduct in lessons and around school is typically good. Senior leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils know what is expected of them and, on the whole, staff support these high expectations well.

Pupils' attendance has improved since the last inspection, including that of disadvantaged pupils and those pupils with SEND. However, the number of pupils who are regularly absent from school has been slower to improve.

Pupils are offered a wide range of additional activities and clubs. These include opportunities for pupils to develop their interests and expertise in the arts, technology and sport. Leaders are acting to support all pupils to be fully involved in the wider aspects of school life. This is especially the case for disadvantaged pupils and those pupils with SEND.

Senior leaders take pupils' personal development seriously. Pupils are provided with a meaningful personal development curriculum. Pupils get the opportunity to think about important local and global issues. They are involved in both community and charitable activities. This benefits pupils' preparation for life in modern Britain.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know pupils well and they are highly vigilant. Safeguarding training for staff is regular and up to date. Staff know what to look out for if pupils are at risk. Staff also know how to deal with any concerns about pupils' safety.

Pupils have a clear understanding of risks or threats when online. Pupils say that they can talk to staff if they are worried or unhappy. Leaders consult parents and refer cases to social care or to the police when necessary.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Despite pupils' good and improving attendance, there remain some pupils who are regularly absent from school. This is especially the case for disadvantaged pupils and those pupils with SEND. Leaders should renew their strategies to improve the attendance of these groups, so that they attend school regularly.
- In a small minority of subjects, the key stage 3 curriculums are not ambitious enough. This leads to some pupils having gaps in their knowledge, and

weaknesses in the cultural capital that they need in later life. Leaders need to review the curriculum plans in these subjects to ensure that pupils can know more and remember more across all areas of the curriculum.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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're 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	106135
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	10087881
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,231
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Maloney
Headteacher	Ian Irwin
Website	www.stockportschool.net
Date of previous inspection	6–7 November 2013

Information about this school

- A small number of pupils attend alternative provision at Highfields Inclusion Partnership.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We held meetings with the headteacher, senior and subject leaders, governors, and a representative from the local authority.
- Leaders' records of safeguarding checks and referrals to the local authority were reviewed. We spoke with staff about how they help to keep pupils safe. We also asked pupils about how they keep themselves safe and what they should do if they have concerns.
- We considered the views of the 21 pupils who responded to Ofsted's confidential, online questionnaire for pupils.
- We considered the views of staff from meetings with groups of staff and from the 75 responses to Ofsted's online, confidential questionnaire for staff.

- We considered the views of 131 parents who completed Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, including the 84 free-text responses.
- In considering the quality of education, we focused deeply on art, English, history, languages and mathematics. We discussed the arrangements for the curriculum and teaching with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders and teachers. We visited lessons and then talked with pupils about what they had been learning. We looked at pupils' exercise books and folders in these subjects.

Inspection team

Stephen Ruddy, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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Tuesday Humby	Ofsted Inspector
David Woodhouse	Ofsted Inspector
Erica Sharman	Her Majesty's Inspector

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