

# The Cheadle Academy

Station Road, Cheadle, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST10 1LH

## Inspection dates

21–22 March 2017

|  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>                 | <b>Inadequate</b>    |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management   | <b>Inadequate</b>    |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | <b>Inadequate</b>    |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare  | <b>Inadequate</b>    |
| Outcomes for pupils                          | <b>Inadequate</b>    |
| 16 to 19 study programmes                    | <b>Good</b>          |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Requires improvement |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an inadequate school

- Leaders have been too slow to address low standards of teaching, progress, behaviour and attendance.
- Pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, underachieve considerably across a range of subjects, including mathematics and science.
- Governors and leaders have, until recently, held an overgenerous view of the school's and teachers' performance. This has resulted in them not being focused enough to bring about rapid improvements.
- Leaders do not rigorously monitor the effect of the steps they take to improve the school. As a result, several strategies have been implemented which fail to have an impact on pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders have not correctly evaluated the quality of teaching in the school. They do not tackle underperformance effectively enough.
- Teaching over time has been ineffective. When planning lessons, teachers do not make good use of information about pupils. Consequently, many pupils underachieve.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils' achievements are inaccurate, especially at key stage 4. This has led to interventions being implemented too late to have an impact on pupils' learning.
- Leaders' work to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy across subjects is not effective. It fails to improve pupils' basic skills.
- Pupils' poor behaviour disrupts too many lessons. Teachers do not consistently apply the school's behaviour policy.
- Pupils say that many of their lessons and social times are disrupted by poor behaviour. They have come to accept low standards of behaviour. Leaders have not successfully established a culture of safeguarding.
- Attendance, especially for disadvantaged pupils, is low and not improving.

### The school has the following strengths

- The school's sixth form is good and is well led. Students are keen to do well and they receive personalised support that ensures that they make good progress.
- The effective leadership of the school's 'Inclusion Hub' is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' outcomes.

## Full report

In accordance with sections 44(1) and 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

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

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management so that there is rapid improvement in the achievement of pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils, by ensuring that:
  - leaders systematically evaluate which improvement strategies are effective and which are not, so that the school can move forward quickly
  - governors have the skills and understanding to analyse school performance information independently and so effectively hold leaders to account
  - leaders monitor the quality of teaching rigorously, so that well-focused support can be put in place to tackle any identified underperformance
  - the curriculum meets the needs of pupils and promotes their progress
  - teachers across the school actively promote and develop pupils' understanding and acceptance of fundamental British values
  - teachers' assessments of pupils' progress are reliable and accurate
  - literacy and numeracy catch-up funding has a positive impact on those pupils in Year 7 who need to improve their basic skills.
- Improve the quality of teaching, so that all pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils, make rapid progress from their starting points by ensuring that teachers:
  - use assessment and other information to plan activities that are well matched to pupils' needs
  - have consistently high expectations of pupils' progress and what they can achieve
  - plan activities and use resources that engage pupils and move their learning forward.
- Improve pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning in lessons and around school by ensuring that:
  - leaders establish a culture of safeguarding that permeates all the school's work
  - all staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and consistently apply the school's behaviour policy
  - teachers manage pupils' challenging behaviour by consistently applying the school's behaviour policy.
- Urgently improve attendance, especially of disadvantaged pupils, by fostering strong

relationships with parents, to involve them in the process of getting their children to attend school regularly.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Inadequate

- Until very recently, leaders and governors held an inaccurate and overgenerous view of the school's performance. This has not allowed them to tackle the areas for improvement from the previous inspection quickly enough. For example, leaders have not effectively tackled low outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in science and mathematics. Consequently, these pupils are still underperforming in these and other subjects.
- The current leadership team of the school does not yet have the capacity to bring about sustained and rapid improvements. This is because several senior leaders have recently left the school and others are new in post. The appointment of new leaders from the middle management level of the school is beginning to have a positive effect on school improvement but it is too early to see an impact on pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders are not able to monitor pupils' progress in key stage 4 efficiently. They have not yet created an effective mechanism which allows them to identify underperformance quickly and reliably in order to put intervention in place where it is needed most urgently. Consequently, inspectors saw many classes where predicted outcomes were far too low and large numbers of pupils were underachieving. In key stage 3, the tracking of pupils' progress is far more focused and effective.
- Senior leaders have introduced a large number of improvement strategies, but have not evaluated these initiatives against pupils' progress rigorously enough. This has led to the implementation of many different policies that are confusing to staff and that do not improve outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders have an overgenerous view of the quality of teaching. This is because they have not monitored teaching effectively. Leaders have not done enough to identify any underperformance quickly and put well-targeted support in place where and when it is needed.
- Recent teacher training is beginning to improve the quality of teaching. Teachers have begun to share strategies and best practice more frequently. Leaders now match school priorities more closely to teachers' performance targets in order to raise standards. It is too soon to see the effects these strategies will have on pupils' progress.
- Leaders have recognised that pupil premium funding was not being used effectively. An external review of the use of the pupil premium was recently undertaken. Leaders have successfully implemented some of the recommendations in the review, including the opening of the new 'Inclusion Hub'.
- Funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those who are disadvantaged is now beginning to have an impact on outcomes. This is because the recently opened 'Inclusion Hub', for example, gives underachieving pupils much-needed and expertly delivered intervention in science and mathematics.
- Year 7 catch-up funding is not yet having an impact on pupils' literacy or numeracy skills. For example, many pupils do not understand what they have read. The school does not actively create a reading culture. The school's library is mainly unused. It

does not hold literature that pupils find appealing and includes out-of-date information sections, such as the 'career wall' with prospectuses from 2011.

- The school's curriculum does not take full account of the many varying needs of pupils. Therefore, several pupils in Year 11 drop subjects from their timetable because they have taken on too much. This practice does not support the learning of the pupils concerned.
- The range of extra-curricular opportunities does not actively promote pupils' personal development and progress. Pupils are not able to broaden and deepen their learning during extra-curricular activities. Less than half of the pupils who completed the pupil survey said that they regularly attend any activities on offer. However, pupils spoke very positively about the many varied sporting activities on offer after school.
- The promotion of fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, liberty and respect for others, is not yet fully embedded in the school's curriculum. However, inspectors observed British values being successfully taught in some tutor-time lessons. In these tutor groups, pupils demonstrate a better appreciation of the importance of tolerance and acceptance of others' differences.
- Leadership of the sixth form focuses effectively upon students' achievement and well-being. Consequently, students make good progress across a range of academic and vocational post-16 qualifications.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors, although dedicated and proud of their school, have not been effective in holding school leaders to account for pupils' low academic outcomes, the weak quality of teaching and pupils' poor behaviour. This is because they are over-reliant on senior leaders to provide information and performance analysis for them. Governors do not analyse published data and school information for themselves in order to challenge school leaders effectively.
- Governors now have a mostly accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. In discussion with inspectors, they highlighted the areas in which the school needs to improve most urgently. However, governors are not skilled enough in areas of current educational practices, such as the new, more demanding GCSE examinations and grading, to provide adequate levels of challenge to school leaders about pupils' progress.
- Governors are fully engaged in the work of the school. For example, link governors meet with teachers and discuss pupils' performance. In addition, governors with expertise in the field of social work mentor pupils.
- Governors have not ensured that the school's website contains all the required information.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective. Although all statutory requirements are met, leaders have not successfully established a culture of safeguarding.

- Pupils are not safe because they do not have a deep and well-focused enough understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe in an environment where poor behaviour is frequent.
- Many pupils, especially in key stage 3, do not know, or are vague about, how to keep themselves safe from radicalisation or extremism.
- School leaders have ensured that all statutory safeguarding duties, including recruitment checks, policies and training, are in place. They keep accurate records and liaise well with other agencies as and when required.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils who responded to the pupil survey said that they know who to talk to if they have a problem or concern at school. Bullying is rare in the school but pupils are confident that staff deal with it appropriately when reported.
- A large majority of parents who completed Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, felt that their child is safe.
- When spoken to by inspectors, pupils showed an acceptance of low standards of behaviour because it is 'normal in a school'. This shows pupils' lack of understanding of the possible dangers of boisterous and 'silly' behaviour around corridors, stairways and public spaces.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **Inadequate**

- Teaching over time is inadequate and pupils do not make the progress they should from their starting points. Consequently, they underachieve in several subjects, including mathematics and science. The progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils are especially low. Teaching in English is much better and leads to strong outcomes.
- Teachers do not effectively use the available assessment information to plan effective lessons. This results in work being either too hard or too easy. Some pupils lack pride in their work, which is evident in books that are covered with graffiti or doodling.
- Teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils. They fail to challenge them effectively in class to attempt more difficult work. Equally, in some lessons, low-ability pupils are not given sufficient support to access the work set. They then give up, engage in off-task behaviour or participate in low-level disruption.
- Weak teaching and pupils' poor behaviour reduce the progress that pupils make, especially the progress of pupils who are already behind and need to catch up. This is particularly true for disadvantaged pupils. As a result, they continue to achieve lower standards than pupils nationally.
- The structure of the curriculum means that pupils fall behind in some subjects. For example, in conversations with inspectors, Year 11 pupils said that they have not been fully prepared to sit examinations in science and mathematics. They had very limited understanding of the new and more demanding GCSE examination content. Pupils are worried that they will not catch up or will perform poorly in examinations.
- The school's limited work to promote literacy is evident in pupils' reading. In some cases, pupils are not able to fully understand what they have read, or able to read at a

level appropriate to their age. School leaders acknowledge that this is something they need to address quickly.

- Some teaching is effective, especially in key stage 3. When this is the case, teaching is characterised by strong relationships, high expectations, skilful questioning and teachers taking account of pupils' abilities. When teaching is strong, pupils respond very well and make good progress.
- The teaching in the school's 'Inclusion Hub' is strong. Pupils speak very highly of the standard of teaching they receive. During a visit to the hub, inspectors observed high-quality intervention with pupils who had previously been disengaged in their learning. Information provided by the school and the work in pupils' books show that these pupils are beginning to catch up.
- Teaching in the sixth form is much stronger than elsewhere in the school. Classes are small, behaviour is exemplary and teachers give students individual attention and high-quality support with their work. As a result, students make good progress.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Inadequate

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- A few pupils, including in the sixth form, have limited knowledge of fundamental British values and are not able to discuss values such as the rule of law or democracy confidently.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning vary across the school. When pupils are disengaged in their studies, they demonstrate low standards of behaviour. As a result, lessons are disrupted and learning time is wasted.
- Parents, pupils and staff who responded to the online questionnaires are overwhelmingly positive about the pastoral care the school provides. Pupils state that teachers and support staff care about them.
- A very small minority of pupils who responded to the online questionnaire raised bullying as an issue. However, all pupils who spoke to inspectors said that, when bullying occurs, their teachers deal with it well. The majority of pupils who responded to the online questionnaire said that they enjoy going to school and attending lessons.
- Pupils were able to tell inspectors how they keep themselves safe online. They were eloquent about the risks and the preventative steps they have taken on numerous social media platforms to ensure their safety.
- The vast majority of pupils who completed the online survey agreed that the school encourages them to respect people from other backgrounds and to treat everyone equally. An assembly during the inspection highlighted pupils' awareness of the different rates of death during childbirth depending on where in the world one lives. Pupils told inspectors in detail about the assembly and what they had learned from it.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate.
- Poor behaviour, either low-level disruption or off-task behaviour, results in many lessons being disrupted and learning time being lost. In some lessons, inspectors observed behaviour that was very disruptive and pupils being removed from the classroom in order for the learning of others to carry on.
- Most of the parents, pupils, teachers and non-teaching staff who spoke to inspectors or responded to the online questionnaires identified pupils' behaviour as a concern. Inspectors noticed that pupils, especially younger pupils in key stage 3, have accepted low standards of behaviour around the school as normal.
- In discussions with inspectors, pupils said that most of their lessons during a normal week are disrupted by poor behaviour. They said that 'silliness', 'pushing and shoving' and 'pranks' during breaktime and lunchtime can get 'pretty bad'. Some pupils are not able to manage their own behaviour during unsupervised times and only behave when teachers are present to supervise them.
- A significant minority of boys in key stage 4 are not engaged in their learning. As a result, they misbehave and get excluded from school. The school's 'Inclusion Hub' is beginning to reduce the number of these fixed-term exclusions. This is because pupils are effectively reintegrated into the school rather than being excluded and missing valuable learning time.
- Leaders have adopted a policy whereby staff remove misbehaving pupils from their lesson and put them into another class. Removed pupils complete work that is unrelated to their learning and is left unchecked. Teachers and pupils who spoke to inspectors said that this strategy is not working. It is ineffective because pupils often cause disruptions to the lesson they have been placed in.
- School leaders have implemented several different behaviour strategies recently. As a result, staff do not respond to pupils' misbehaviour consistently and pupils are unclear about the school's behaviour expectations.
- Attendance is low, especially for disadvantaged pupils, and continues to remain so. Leaders have not effectively engaged with parents of low attenders to seek their support in re-engaging pupils and getting them to attend school regularly.
- Leaders appropriately check the behaviour and attendance of pupils at the alternative educational provision. Pupils' behaviour and attendance at this provision are good.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Inadequate

- Current pupils are not being equipped with the skills they require to succeed in the new and more challenging GCSE examinations. This is because teachers do not plan and deliver lessons that meet pupils' needs. Teachers spend too much time managing pupils' poor behaviour. In addition, pupils' poor attendance limits the progress they make.
- The progress over time made by disadvantaged pupils is poor. At the end of key stage 4 in 2016, progress for these pupils was in the bottom 10% of schools nationally when

compared with other pupils with similar starting points. These differences are not diminishing for current cohorts of pupils.

- Pupils' progress in science and mathematics at key stage 4 is weak, and markedly so for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders and teachers acknowledge that this is because of previous poor teaching and high staff turnover. Interventions have recently been put in place to target this underperformance. However, it is too early to see an impact on pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders do not have a clear view of pupils' progress in key stage 4 because teachers' assessments are not reliable. However, evidence gathered by inspectors in lessons suggests that, in key stage 3, pupils' progress is beginning to improve, especially in Year 7.
- The school's assessment information for pupils in Years 9 to 11 suggests that progress is improving across subjects and for some groups of pupils. However, teachers' forecasts were inaccurate in previous years and the evidence from learning seen in lessons and from pupils' work does not support this optimistic view. The school's systems for assessment and for measuring pupils' progress in Years 7 and 8 are new and provide more compelling evidence of improving progress.
- The school's recently opened 'Inclusion Hub' provides targeted and well-focused intervention in mathematics and science for underachieving pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Sessions are very well received by pupils and they speak highly of the support on offer. As a result, inspectors observed improved learning for those who attend the hub. In contrast, when disadvantaged pupils are taught in regular classes, they achieve less well.
- Provision for independent careers information, advice and guidance is successful. Pupils receive information about options available to them, especially in key stage 4, and learn how courses lead to possible career pathways. The school's library does not, however, offer suitable literature to support this advice. Most of the material is out of date.
- The quality and quantity of work that pupils produce in lessons vary greatly. In many lessons and in many books, especially in key stage 4, it is evident that pupils are not making as much progress as they should. In key stage 3, this picture is improving and pupils are developing more pride in their learning. For example, pupils keenly collect rewards and achievement points.
- The progress and attainment of pupils in English are strong. Pupils achieve highly in lessons and, as a result, do well in their GCSE examinations. Leaders are aware of this and are planning to use this expertise to improve the teaching in other subjects across the curriculum.

## 16 to 19 study programmes

**Good**

- The school shares its 16 to 19 provision with two other secondary schools in an off-site centre called The Moorlands Sixth Form College. The Cheadle Academy has a smaller-than-average cohort of 58 sixth-form students.
- Safeguarding procedures in the sixth form are effective. School and college leaders

communicate effectively about students and put support and intervention in place when and where they are needed.

- The behaviour of students in the sixth form is exemplary. Their attendance is high and leaders ensure that students use their unsupervised study time effectively. In lessons, sixth-form students are engaged in their studies and, as a result, make good progress.
- All requirements of the 16 to 19 study programmes are met. Academic and vocational subjects are available and staff guide students onto courses that match their interests, aspirations and academic ability. The provision for students in the sixth form is good. Pupils benefit from strong teaching and personalised support. As a result, students thrive and achieve good outcomes. The leadership of the sixth form is good. Leaders have high expectations and aspirations for students and support them well through the transition from secondary school to sixth form.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good and leads to students' strong progress. Across a range of subjects, teachers use a range of strategies to embed students' learning. Students learn concepts in greater detail and explore a wide range of topics and issues that interest them. This leads to high levels of engagement and motivation.
- All learners who start the sixth form without a GCSE grade C or above in English and/or mathematics are required to follow a course to improve their standard. There are currently no learners requiring this course.
- Careers information, advice and guidance in the sixth form are good. Leaders ensure that students understand the range of choices available to them, and provide visits to a range of universities and employers. Work experience is offered to all students and is well matched to their career aspirations. As a consequence, all students who left the sixth form in 2016 went on to higher education, apprenticeships or employment.
- Students speak highly of the out-of-lesson support they receive when needed. The highly effective enrichment programme 'Masters at Moorlands', which offers opportunities for students to visit universities, engage in work experience, provide community support and complete non-qualification activities, is very popular among the students. This programme supports them very well for life after sixth form.
- Students are very proud of their sixth form and would recommend it wholeheartedly to their younger peers. Almost all students complete the courses they start in Year 12.
- In discussion with inspectors, students were vague about what fundamental British values are. Students say that they would like more in-depths studies around this topic.

## School details

|                         |               |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| Unique reference number | 136959        |
| Local authority         | Staffordshire |
| Inspection number       | 10025165      |

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

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Type of school  | Secondary  |
| School category                                       | Academy converter  |
| Age range of pupils                                   | 11 to 18   |
| Gender of pupils                                      | Mixed  |
| Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes         | Mixed  |
| Number of pupils on the school roll                   | 541  |
| Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes | 58   |
| Appropriate authority                                 | The governing body   |
| Chair   | Mrs Irene Welford  |
| Principal   | Mr Neil Jamieson   |
| Telephone number                                      | 01538 483 900  |
| Website   | <a href="http://www.theheadleacademy.co.uk">www.theheadleacademy.co.uk</a>       |
| Email address   | <a href="mailto:office@theheadleacademy.co.uk">office@theheadleacademy.co.uk</a> |
| Date of previous inspection                           | 15–16 January 2015   |

## Information about this school

- The Cheadle Academy is a smaller-than-average secondary school. It has falling pupil numbers.
- The school converted to become an academy in August 2011.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about GCSE examination outcomes on its website.
- The school does not comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish about the school's contact details, the curriculum, pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 4 and sixth-form students' outcomes.

- Most pupils are White British and speak English as their first language.
- The proportions of disadvantaged pupils and of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are both average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations set for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A very small number of pupils attend alternative provision. No reference is made to these pupils or the provider in this report as doing so would risk identifying pupils.
- Sixth-form provision is at The Moorlands Sixth Form College, which is an off-site college. The centre is run jointly by The Painsley Catholic College, The Moorside High School and The Cheadle Academy. It offers a wide range of academic and vocational courses for students.
- The school intends to change its post-16 provision at the end of this academic year. Sixth-form students will be educated on the school's premises as opposed to The Moorlands Sixth Form College from September 2017.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in lessons, and observed some lessons with senior leaders. They observed pupils' behaviour between lessons and at breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors evaluated the work in pupils' books and folders in lessons across a range of subjects and year groups. They listened to pupils of different abilities read.
- Inspectors held meetings with governors, senior and middle leaders and teachers, including those who are newly qualified.
- The views of parents were considered through the 30 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, as well as the 20 written comments parents provided.
- Inspectors considered 35 responses to a staff questionnaire carried out during the inspection.
- Pupils met formally with inspectors through three separate focus groups and inspectors had numerous informal discussions with pupils. Inspectors also considered pupils' views from the responses to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation. This included the school's self-evaluation and action plans, minutes of governing body meetings, school policies, school information about pupils' academic outcomes, behaviour and attendance, information about the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and the pupil premium review that the school had commissioned.

## Inspection team

|                              |                  |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| Bianka Zemke, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Wendy Tomes                  | Ofsted Inspector |
| Julie Griffiths              | Ofsted Inspector |

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