

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Madeley High School

Newcastle Road, Madeley, Crewe, Cheshire CW3 9JJ

Inspection dates:

25 and 26 February 2025

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that the school's work may have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The principal of this school is Lee Nixon. The school is part of the Shaw multi-academy 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), Jo Heard-Jones, and is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Andrew Meehan.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils speak highly about their close-knit school community. Pupils understand and meet the school's high expectations, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged. Pupils are motivated and resilient. They are committed to their studies. Pupils know that these qualities matter to their future success. The school's drive for all pupils to succeed is inspiring. Pupils' achievements exceed expectations.

Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They follow the school rules as expected and without question. Pupils work hard and take pride in their learning. Pupils feel safe because staff prioritise their well-being. If bullying occurs, pupils know that staff will work hard to resolve it. Pupils feel honoured when asked to represent their school. They ooze confidence as ambassadors of Madeley High School. They greet adults warmly, striking up conversations with ease. As a result, they have a myriad of rich opportunities available to them after Year 11.

Pupils are eager to take part in a wealth of extra-curricular activities. They compete in sports and visit cities in this country and abroad. Many take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. These experiences provide invaluable opportunities to enrich their well-being, health and enjoyment of learning.

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

The school has designed an ambitious, exciting curriculum that inspires pupils. For them, this curriculum is essential for their success both now and in the future. Pupils work hard and secure excellent exam results. Where this is not the case for a small group of pupils, the school takes decisive action and provides additional support to help them catch up. For example, those who missed important learning during the time of COVID restrictions, including those who are disadvantaged, now achieve well.

The school makes bold choices when needed. For example, a reduction in the uptake of GCSE modern foreign languages, lowering English Baccalaureate (EBacc) entries, resulted in an overhaul of the languages curriculum. Opportunities for frequent retrieval practice has helped to build pupils' confidence and fluency. As a result, there has been a significant increase in pupils now studying a language and therefore broadening their knowledge and options for the future.

Teachers' strong subject knowledge drives high-quality teaching. Their careful design of learning tasks challenges and inspires pupils. Teachers' probing questions and checks address misconceptions and deepen understanding. As a result, pupils remain focused and ever hungry for more knowledge.

Provision for pupils with SEND is superb. The school identifies these pupils' needs with precise clarity. This helps teachers to make personalised adaptations for them. The school builds strong communication with the pupils' families. These approaches work very well, enabling these pupils to be happy and thrive.

The school's relentless drive to support struggling readers is very effective. Bespoke interventions result in rapid progress through the reading curriculum. For instance, pupils grasp subject-specific vocabulary with ease. As a result, they are eager to read aloud with confidence and commanding clarity.

The school requires excellent conduct from pupils. In response, pupils' behaviour is impeccable. Pupils have strong, mutually respectful relationships with each other and staff. These positive attitudes are further reflected in their solid commitment to learning. Disruption is rare. Hence, these very driven pupils make substantial gains in knowledge in their lessons.

The school's personal development offer is exceptional. Pupils gain a deep awareness of what matters, including supporting those less fortunate. They also gain useful knowledge about managing mortgages, energy bills and investments. Consequently, they learn how to be responsible, thoughtful and considerate young people.

The school prepares pupils for life after Year 11 very well. Pupils engage with employers and visit post-16 colleges. They receive clear, impartial careers advice. These meaningful experiences ensure pupils make informed choices about their next steps.

Staff too, flourish here. Their well-being and workload are a top priority. Trustees and trust leaders are sharply focused in holding the school to account. The school's strengths are clear. Its priorities are accurate. As a result, the school continues to prosper.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be outstanding for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the third ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school to be good for overall effectiveness in January 2013.

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	140154
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10377051
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	767
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andrew Meehan
CEO of the trust	Jo Heard-Jones
Principal	Lee Nixon
Website	www.madeleyschool.org/
Dates of previous inspection	3 and 4 December 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Madeley High School joined the Shaw Education multi-academy trust in January 2017.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.
- 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

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education.
- 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.
- 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.

- The inspectors held meetings with the principal, senior leaders, other staff and pupils. Inspectors also met with the trust director of education, regional director and deputy CEO.
- The lead inspector met with the vice-chair of trustees.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents provided by the school, including leaders' self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also took into consideration the responses to the confidential staff and pupil surveys, as well as speaking to staff and pupils throughout this inspection.

Inspection team

Antony Edkins, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Trudi Young

Ofsted Inspector

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