

Inspection of Woodhey High School

Bolton Road West, Ramsbottom, Bury, Lancashire BL0 9QZ

Inspection dates:	15 and 16 July 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Dean Watson. This school is part of Shaw Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the interim chief executive officer (CEO), Kerry Inscker, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Andrew Meehan.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school has been transformed since its last inspection. Pupils and staff say there has been a palpable change in culture across all areas of school life. Pupils are now proud to belong to a school that is central to its community. They have responded positively to the many changes that have taken place. Pupils value the strong, supportive relationships that they develop with staff. Pupils feel safe and know who to approach if they are worried or upset.

Everything at Woodhey is guided by the school's two core values: respect and excellence. These principles shape pupils' behaviour, learning and their personal development throughout the school. In lessons, pupils listen respectfully to teachers and each other. They move calmly between classes and wear their uniforms smartly, meeting the school's high standards.

The school's high expectations and relentless drive to help pupils succeed ensure that pupils achieve well. Staff are determined that pupils gain the knowledge and skills that they need to thrive in their future lives.

The work to prepare pupils for life beyond school is exemplary. The 'pledge' system encourages pupils' wider involvement in school and community life. Pupils enthusiastically take on leadership roles. A plethora of enrichment opportunities, such as sports, music, drama and art, fosters pupils' confidence and talents.

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

The curriculum is well designed. It ensures that pupils acquire knowledge in clearly ordered steps. This structured approach enables pupils to build a secure understanding before progressing to more complex concepts. Teachers demonstrate strong subject expertise and typically present new subject content clearly and confidently.

The school has carefully thought about the best way for teachers to check pupils' learning. However, the impact of this work is variable in a small number of subjects. This means that gaps in pupils' knowledge are sometimes not identified or addressed quickly enough. As a result, some pupils do not get enough opportunities to apply new knowledge sufficiently well.

The school has developed a structured approach to identifying pupils who find reading difficult. Well-trained staff provide these pupils with the help that they need. As a result, pupils become confident and fluent readers.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs accurately identified. However, the information that teachers receive to help them to meet these needs is sometimes not clear enough. This means that some pupils with SEND are not supported consistently well. Those pupils who attend the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision) are supported well and integrated fully into school life.

Pupils' behaviour, attendance and manners are commendable. If, on the rare occasion that pupils' behaviour falters, they receive effective, well-tailored support. Pupils' strong attitudes to learning mean that they show exceptional engagement in lessons. This contributes well to their positive achievement.

Pupils value the school's thoughtfully designed and comprehensive personal development offer. Recent lessons have addressed important real-life issues, such as financial literacy, gender equality and violence. These topics are explored during supportive form group sessions where pupils feel comfortable asking questions and expressing their opinions. Pupils appreciate the chance to engage in such discussions, which contribute to their growing maturity and enhance their respect for others.

The school's careers programme is exemplary and provides rich and diverse opportunities. Pupils attend careers fairs and visit employers. Some sample careers, such as in the military. This broad offer prepares pupils very well for their next steps.

Trustees, members of the local governing body and senior leaders collaborate effectively to set clear priorities for the school's future development. Staff feel well supported and recognise leaders' careful attention to managing workloads and promoting well-being. Teachers value the extensive professional development opportunities available. Staff take great pride in being part of the school community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The impact of teachers' assessment strategies is variable across a small number of subjects. This means that gaps in pupils' knowledge are sometimes not identified or addressed quickly enough. The school should ensure that teachers use the information from their checks on learning to help pupils secure and apply their subject knowledge effectively.
- The information that teachers receive about how best to support pupils with SEND sometimes lacks specificity. The suggested support strategies lack detail or are not appropriate. This means that some pupils with SEND do not progress through the school's curriculum as well as they should. The school should strengthen the information that teachers receive, so that they understand precisely how to support pupils with SEND.

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	148097
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	10348376
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1102
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andrew Meehan
CEO of the trust	Kerry Inscker (interim)
Headteacher	Dean Watson
Website	www.woodhey.bury.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	18 and 19 October 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been significant changes to the leadership of the school since the previous inspection.
- 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.
- The school currently uses two registered and three unregistered alternative provisions.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with autistic spectrum conditions.

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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders and a selection of staff during the inspection.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, science, geography, history, physical education and computer science. 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.
- The lead inspector met with the members of the local governing body, trustees and central team leaders, including the CEO.
- Inspectors analysed the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils during lessons and social times. They met with staff who oversee the personal development and behaviour of pupils, including reviewing relevant documents related to how behaviour incidents are reported and followed up.
- 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.

Inspection team

Rebecca Sharples, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Rochelle Conefrey	Ofsted Inspector
Thomas Fay	Ofsted Inspector
Claire Hollister	Ofsted Inspector
Gaynor Roberts	Ofsted Inspector
Jenny Jones	His Majesty's Inspector

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