

# Inspection of Lymm High School

Oughtrington Lane, Lymm, Cheshire WA13 0RB

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Inspection dates: 5 and 6 March 2024

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Sixth-form provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Gwyn Williams. This school is part of a single academy trust. The trust is run by the headteacher and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Elizabeth Green.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils, including students in the sixth form, do well academically in this school. They live up to the high expectations that the school sets for their achievement. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), benefit from an ambitious and well-structured curriculum.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They value the care and support that they receive from their teachers. This helps them to feel safe. Pupils forge strong relationships with each other. They are polite and well-mannered. Students in the sixth form have an exceptional attitude towards their learning.

The school's 'leadership ladder' incentive encourages pupils to take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. For instance, the charity leaders relish the opportunities to motivate their peers to raise money for the local community. This helps them to build their confidence and also develops their social skills.

Pupils benefit from a vast range of trips and visits that enrich their knowledge beyond the curriculum. Students in the sixth form cherished the opportunity to deepen their geographical knowledge on their visit to Iceland. They also enjoyed their visits to universities, theatres and cities to further expand their knowledge and experiences of the world.

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

The school has made substantial improvements to the design of the curriculum. Pupils, including those with SEND, study a broad range of subjects. The programmes of study in the sixth form are exceptional. This allows students to prepare well for their future career choices.

The structure of the curriculum enables pupils to revisit prior learning over time. Teachers know what knowledge pupils should be taught and when this learning should take place. They use their strong subject knowledge when shaping learning activities. Most of the teachers, especially in the sixth form, enable pupils to make meaningful connections to their earlier learning. This helps pupils to know and remember more over time.

Most teachers check pupils' understanding of the subject content that has been taught. Teachers provide effective support to address gaps in pupils' learning. Students in the sixth form benefit from the extensive support that is provided by their teachers. Students' misconceptions are identified and addressed swiftly. As such, they gain secure and rich knowledge of the subjects that they study. This explains why the published data for progress and attainment in key stages 4 and 5 is exceptionally high.

Some pupils in key stage 3, and those who are disadvantaged, are not currently making similar strides in learning. In a small number of subjects, especially at key

stage 3, teachers do not remedy pupils' misconceptions quickly enough. At times, this means that some teachers move on to new content when pupils have not secured earlier learning. This hinders a small number of pupils, particularly in key stage 3, from achieving as well as they should.

The systems to identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND is effective. Clear information is shared with teachers about the different needs of pupils with SEND. This equips teachers with the knowledge and skills that they need to adapt their teaching successfully for these pupils. As a result, pupils with SEND access the full curriculum and achieve well.

Most pupils respond well to the routines and high expectations of behaviour set by the school. Lessons in the sixth form foster an atmosphere of curiosity and high-quality learning. Students are highly motivated in their lessons. As such, lessons typically proceed without interruption.

The school has effective strategies to identify and support pupils in Year 7 and Year 8 who find reading difficult. These pupils receive substantial support from expert staff to help them to overcome gaps in their reading knowledge. However, older pupils do not benefit from similar opportunities. While the school does identify specific gaps in reading for older pupils, the support in place for addressing these gaps is not as well developed as that for younger pupils. As such, these pupils do not receive the targeted support that they need to help them to read competently.

Pupils gain a strong insight into healthy lifestyles and personal safety through the schools' 'Life programme'. In addition, pupils, including students in the sixth form, develop an age-appropriate understanding of relationships and sexual health. Nevertheless, pupils in key stage 4 do not receive sufficient opportunities to learn about different faiths and cultures. These pupils do not understand the commonalities of different beliefs. As such, pupils in key stage 4 are not prepared as well as they could be for life in modern Britain.

Pupils in Years 7 to 13 take part in a wide range of 'Hall' competitions, sporting events and charitable projects. Such experiences foster a sense of community, belonging and teamwork. Pupils, especially students in the sixth form, receive extensive guidance about their next steps in education, employment or training. The school raises students' aspirations through their 'Gateway programme'. They are well equipped with the knowledge and skills that are needed for future success.

Trustees gain a strong insight into the needs of the school. They maintain regular engagement with pupils, staff, parents and carers. This enables the trustees to offer well-informed support and challenge to the school. Moreover, staff value the extensive support and consideration that the school places on their well-being. The school reduces unnecessary workload. This allows staff to give more time to work on tasks which have a positive impact on pupils' education.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teachers do not use assessment strategies effectively to remedy pupils' misconceptions in their learning. As a result, some pupils' misunderstandings and gaps in their knowledge go unrectified. At times, this hinders how well some pupils, especially those in key stage 3, learn new subject content. The school should ensure that teachers check pupils have a secure understanding of what has been taught before moving onto new subject content.
- Older pupils who find reading difficult do not get the targeted support that they need to overcome gaps in their reading knowledge. This limits how well these pupils develop reading fluency and confidence. The school should ensure that gaps in reading knowledge are addressed effectively so that the support that these pupils receive helps them to become competent readers.
- Opportunities for some key stage 4 pupils to expand their knowledge of different cultures and faiths is limited. This means that some pupils do not develop a secure understanding of the differences between people in society. The school should ensure that it develops pupils' understanding and respect of different beliefs so that they are better prepared for life in modern Britain.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138732
<b>Local authority</b>	Warrington
<b>Inspection number</b>	10294369
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,911
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	356
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Elizabeth Green
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gwyn Williams
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.lymmhigh.org.uk">www.lymmhigh.org.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	6 and 7 December 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Lymm High School single-academy trust.
- The school uses two registered alternative providers for a very small number of pupils.
- The school provides after-school care for pupils.
- 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

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- The inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders. Inspectors met with a range of other staff during the inspection.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives of the board of trustees, including the chair of trustees. Inspectors also spoke with a representative of the local authority, school improvement partner and the alternative providers.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during social times and during movement around the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, science, English, design and technology, modern foreign languages and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders and teachers, visited a sample of lessons, reviewed samples of pupils' work and spoke with some pupils.
- Inspectors also met with subject leaders to review other areas of the curriculum.
- Inspectors spoke with the leaders responsible for personal development, pupil premium, behaviour, early careers teachers, sixth form, careers, SEND and reading.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including leaders' self-evaluation, attendance and behaviour records.
- 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 considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

## Inspection team

Amina Modan, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Anne Murphy	Ofsted Inspector
Kevin Sexton	Ofsted Inspector
Christine Veitch	Ofsted Inspector
Scott Maclean	Ofsted Inspector

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