

Chapel-en-le-Frith High School

Long Lane, Chapel-en-le-Frith, High Peak, Derbyshire SK23 0TQ

Inspection dates 3–4 February 2016

Overall effectiveness **Outstanding**

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| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Outstanding |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Outstanding |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Outstanding |
| Outcomes for pupils | Outstanding |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Good |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Pupils make outstanding progress in a range of subjects including English and mathematics.
- Pupils' outcomes have improved year on year since the last inspection.
- Attainment, in a large number of subjects, is consistently above the national average, despite pupils' starting points being only broadly average.
- Disadvantaged pupils often make better progress in English and mathematics than other pupils nationally from their different starting points.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make above-average progress. They are exceptionally well supported.
- All groups of pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education and learning.
- Pupils' behaviour, conduct and attitudes are exemplary. Incidents of poor behaviour are very rare and pupils have high rates of participation and engagement in school life.
- The school's inclusive culture provides excellent conditions for all pupils, regardless of their needs or abilities, to thrive and achieve. Their social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding is well developed, supported by a well-thought-out curriculum.
- Leaders and managers at all levels show high levels of commitment towards pupils. Their high expectations and caring approach have led to the school becoming not only high performing but also oversubscribed.
- The headteacher, ably supported by the senior team, has been pivotal in charting the success of the school. His high ambitions and his caring and inclusive ethos are shared by all members of the school community. Staff, parents and pupils overwhelmingly support the leadership team.
- The governing body is knowledgeable and experienced. Its members hold leaders to account very effectively; they provide support and challenge in equal measure. This has secured the school's outstanding achievement to date.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve the already high levels of pupils' achievement by sharing specific existing best classroom practice, in order to more fully stretch pupils, especially the most able.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- The headteacher has provided a simple but effective mission for the school: to achieve the highest possible standards in education for every child within a caring and inclusive ethos. His aims have been successful yet he and the senior leadership team believe the school can achieve even more. Leaders' expectations and ambitions are high. Their self-evaluation of the school is accurate, sharp and incisive.
- The headteacher has successfully addressed any weak areas, especially those identified in the previous inspection. Previously weak subjects, especially mathematics and geography, are now beacons of high performance because leaders have rectified leadership and teaching problems.
- Locally, the school is highly regarded and oversubscribed. It has steadily built up its reputation for helping all pupils to achieve, especially those who are disadvantaged, have challenging behaviour or have complex additional needs. The school's excellent enhanced resource provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs makes a real difference to the life chances of those young people who attend. The work carried out in this area of the school is very effective, and well led and managed by the special educational needs coordinator.
- Disadvantaged pupils are very well supported. Pupil premium government funding provided to support this group is wisely spent. A range of specialist support staff and extra learning opportunities have contributed to the remarkable achievement of this group of pupils. Disadvantage is no barrier to achievement in this school.
- Pastoral leaders are vigilant and monitor the progress of each pupil carefully. They intervene early when pupils are off-track to achieve their targets. They maintain good lines of communication with parents and oversee a simple but effective behaviour policy.
- Subject leaders share the same ambition for high standards as senior leaders. They drive improvements in their departments through careful analysis of pupils' assessment information. In addition, they are relentless in their pursuit of improvements in classroom practice. They develop their teams well and share the good practice from practitioners both in and out of school. They, like the teachers in their departments, do not give up on anyone.
- Teachers' performance is monitored well. Teachers who do not achieve their challenging targets are supported well to improve their practice. A carefully thought-out continuous professional development programme is effective. Newly qualified teachers receive excellent support and guidance.
- The curriculum is well thought out. The wide range of subjects on offer, both in and out of normal lesson time, allows pupils to develop their musical, artistic, sporting and creative skills and talents. Pupils achieve well in these. The school uniquely offers Latin and astronomy after school. There are high participation rates to extra-curricular clubs, despite the fact that over half use the school bus to and from school. For example, 94% of pupils have attended extra-curricular clubs in the past year.
- Leaders are passionate about developing the whole child and broadening their horizons; pupils' social and emotional skills are developed well through their subjects and their everyday interactions with adults. Consequently, pupils are confident and in tune with current, local and national issues. Leaders use designated days in the calendar well to expose pupils to a wide variety of cultural, political and moral issues. Debate is valued and encouraged by teachers. Recent visits and school activities around Holocaust Memorial Day have raised important debates about racism and tolerance. Pupils have listened to visitors to the school talk about the dangers of being drawn into extremist groups. As a result, pupils are prepared very well for life in modern Britain and have a very good grasp of British values.
- Work to ensure that pupils' transition from one stage of education to another is as easy as possible is highly refined and effective. Leaders work with feeder primary schools well to ensure a smooth transition for pupils in Year 7. A detailed record of each child's strengths and weaknesses and any additional needs is compiled so that teachers are well prepared to receive each child. Year 7 pupils feel safe and well cared for. Guidance for pupils to choose their GCSE options and post-16 courses at other providers is carefully planned. The success rates at GCSE and at post 16, especially for disadvantaged pupils, are testament to the school's excellent careers and information guidance. A locally produced employability framework is used to develop the identified ten employability skills through the curriculum from Years 8 to 11.
- School leaders play a significant role in developing leadership practice in local schools. The headteacher is chairperson of the Peak 11 Federation of local rural secondary schools and more recently the school has developed a formal collaborative partnership, the Blackbrook Group of Schools, with seven local

primary schools. The school's leaders play key roles in developing leadership systems and structures in both of these partnerships and in supporting local authority initiatives. The school works with Sheffield Hallam University in a Department for Education (DfE)-funded Science Learning Partnership that delivers science professional development to schools across north Derbyshire and provides science intervention and support in DfE priority schools. In his role as chairperson of the Peak 11, the headteacher has also made a difference to local schools' work with disadvantaged pupils. He has set up a local peer support group which aims to raise achievement for disadvantaged pupils, which, even in its early stages, has seen impact.

■ **The governance of the school**

- Governors take their duties and responsibilities very seriously. They are experienced and ensure that their skills are developed through regular training and development. They have ensured high standards are kept by school leaders. They hold leaders to account effectively through their committee structures, where they respond to and challenge departments and leaders' reviews of the effectiveness of the work.
- They ensure that additional government funding is spent well. They ensure that work to improve the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils, those who need to catch up and pupils who have special educational needs or disability are kept under close review.
- The headteacher is managed well. Governors have a high degree of confidence in the senior leadership team because of its strong track record of success and impact. Governors have made wise and effective recruitment decisions. They monitor the effectiveness of teaching regularly.
- Governors receive detailed and accurate information about pupils' achievement. While they do not receive analysed information about types of behaviour incidents by pupil group from leaders, they have a very good understanding of the very few individual incidents that do occur.
- Governors keep sound oversight of the school's finances. Due to prudent spending decisions, the budget is in surplus.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Governors ensure that policies are in line with latest legislation and guidance. They regularly review safeguarding arrangements. A recent local authority review confirmed the high standards the school has for safeguarding. The designated safeguarding leader is diligent and thorough when dealing with safeguarding matters. She has ensured that multi-agency support is used effectively and all referrals are made in a timely way. All concerns of pupils are recorded and monitored well. Staff are trained well to be vigilant for the signs of abuse. The curriculum supports pupils' understanding of all safety matters, including e-safety, very well.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

- Teachers 'go the extra mile'. They make a difference to pupils' learning and progress. Pupils overwhelmingly praise teachers for the care and support they provide them.
- All subject teachers know and understand their subject area well and prepare interesting and thoughtful resources to stimulate pupils' imagination. As a result, pupils make excellent progress in the large majority of subjects.
- Teachers have developed excellent conditions for learning in the classroom. Relationships between pupils and between adults and pupils are consistently cooperative and respectful. Pupils work well together and use each other as support before approaching the teacher. These good learning behaviours have encouraged pupils to think through problems and develop confidence.
- Pupils who have special education needs or disability are taught well. The enhanced resource provision provides supported pupils with excellent learning opportunities. Teaching assistants are experienced and committed. Their high expectations have contributed to these pupils' good engagement and progress. Parents understandably praise this facility.
- The school provides effective support for pupils at risk of falling behind. Small-group lessons are successful in helping pupils to get back on track.
- High expectations characterise teaching across the school. One pupil said, 'Teachers help you to step up'. Pupils' academic targets are aspirational and teachers expect pupils to reach them.
- Pupils are encouraged to develop their creative skills well. The extensive displays of art and design work throughout the school are of an exceptionally high standard.
- Pupils have a developed understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. The successful philosophy and ethics department teaches these issues well, but teachers in other subjects also take

opportunities to draw out these themes regularly. Pupils are asked to consider their views on subjects like suicide, capital punishment and how we should remember the Holocaust. Pupils' oracy skills are good, as they are encouraged to debate and discuss issues in many lessons.

- Teachers successfully engender the school's inclusive ethos. As a result, pupils accept differences and challenge stereotypes. The physical education (PE) department bucks the stereotype that certain sports are only for one gender. Mixed PE is encouraged. British values are taught in a variety of creative and thoughtful ways, including through trips and visits and bringing in visitors from other cultures and backgrounds.
- The literacy strategy is strengthening across the school. Teachers develop pupils' writing skills in the lower school across a range of subjects well. Teachers encourage reflection on learning and many teachers insist on high standards for spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPAG) and use the school's 'SPAG targets' to reinforce literacy expectations. Pupils' numeracy skills are promoted well; most pupils have sound mental arithmetic skills.
- New simple and effective assessment systems are used consistently throughout the school by teachers. The feedback teachers give to pupils is helpful. Pupils understand their new targets as well as the criteria used to assess them. This helps them to improve their learning.
- Homework is a high priority in school. Pupils say that it is set and marked regularly. Parents are kept informed of all homework set, through software applications which can be viewed on most phones.
- Many teachers use a range of strategies to stretch and challenge the most-able pupils. For example, they use questioning skilfully to deepen these pupils' understanding and improve their thinking skills. Some teachers are less successful in providing these opportunities on a regular basis. Consequently, the most-able pupils do not always make as much progress as other groups of pupils in some lessons. Leaders are aware of this and are implementing a comprehensive plan to address this relative weakness in teaching.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils are extremely well cared for, and parents and pupils overwhelmingly agree with this.
- Teachers are diligent about following up concerns about pupils. There is a wide range of adult support in the school. Consequently, pupils feel safe and have a high regard for their teachers. Pupils in the enhanced provision are extremely well looked after. As a result, they thrive and enjoy their education.
- Pupils understand how to keep safe online and can recognise risks they may face, including grooming behaviours and the risks of being drawn into extremism. The Learning for Life and the philosophy and ethics programme of study contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.
- There are few incidents of bullying, but those that do occur are dealt with robustly. Pupils understand the impact of derogatory language, such as racist and homophobic comments.
- The pupils' leadership programme is well regarded by pupils because their voice is heard by school leaders. Charity work and fundraising is wholly planned and carried out by pupils. Last year, several thousand pounds were raised through a range of fun activities.
- Pupils are encouraged to reach ambitious targets. As they become older, they become more resilient to failure and cope with the pressures of closed examinations well because teachers give them practice and teach them how to deal with stress.
- Pupils are encouraged to be aware of their emotional and mental well-being. Lessons and support groups have helped many pupils to recognise symptoms and seek help early.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils' conduct and attitudes are excellent. They relate well towards each other and adults, including visitors. Parents and staff agree that good behaviour is a very strong feature of the school.
- Low-level disruption is rare because learning is valued by pupils. Teachers model respectful behaviour in their everyday interactions with pupils. As a result, inspectors heard no derogatory language, including swearing, even at lunch and breaktimes.
- Pupils respect the behaviour policy and feel that teachers follow the simple systems consistently well. Rewards are used by teachers effectively to motivate and reinforce expectations.

- Levels of attendance are consistently above the national average. Persistent absence for certain groups, like those who are disadvantaged, girls and those in receipt of education, health and care plans, who had previously poor attendance, has improved quickly. Staff monitor attendance well.
- The proportions of pupils excluded from school are low. The school's inclusive ethos and success means that it receives many more pupils with challenging behaviour from other schools than any others locally. High levels of specialised support and positive behaviour strategies ensure that these pupils make the progress they should.

Outcomes for pupils

are outstanding

- Pupils make progress well above average from broadly average starting points. Progress and attainment reached in a range of subjects, including English, mathematics, languages, humanities and science, is consistently high. The progress pupils make in vocational subjects is good and improving.
- Low- and middle-attaining pupils make exceptional progress. Pupils who have special educational needs or disability are well supported and expectations are so high that they make well above average progress. Pupils who have previously failed at other schools achieve well.
- Disadvantaged pupils, including those eligible for pupil premium funding, make more progress than other pupils nationally. The gap between their progress and others in the school is narrowing quickly.
- Work to improve the outcomes of the most-able pupils is ongoing and has been largely successful. The progress they make is consistently above national averages, but is not as high as other ability groups in the school. However, this picture is improving for pupils currently on roll.
- Attainment in the majority of subjects at Key Stage 4 is high and is often above national averages, including English and mathematics.
- Pupils' progress at Key Stage 3 towards their aspirational targets is good and improving quickly. All groups of pupils are on track to achieve outcomes expected for their age and prior ability.
- The school has ensured that pupils read widely and regularly. Pupils with reading ages lower than their chronological age are supported well to make progress quickly. As a result, many reach their expected reading age often in a matter of months. The library is well used.
- Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their learning. They leave with qualifications and learning behaviours suited well to the demands of further education studies. Of those who start post-16 courses, 94% stay on to complete them. The proportion of pupils who continue into education or training is higher than the national average, especially for those pupils who are disadvantaged.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 112932 |
| Local authority | Derbyshire |
| Inspection number | 10003354 |

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

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| Type of school | Secondary comprehensive |
| School category | Maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 11–16 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 929 |
| Appropriate authority | The local authority |
| Chair | John Hind |
| Headteacher | Simon Grieves |
| Telephone number | 01298 813118 |
| Website | www.chapelhigh.org.uk |
| Email address | enquiries@chapelhigh.org.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 23–24 February 2012 |

Information about this school

- Chapel-en-le-Frith is a slightly smaller than average secondary school.
- The vast majority of its pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is just over half of the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding given to schools for those known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is about the same as the national average. The proportion in receipt of education, health and care plans is nearly four times the national average.
- The school has an enhanced resourced provision for pupils with special education needs. It provides 40 places for pupils with statements of special educational needs.
- The headteacher is chairperson of the 'Peak 11', a soft federation of eleven rural schools in the High Peak region.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Key Stage 4.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was originally carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, a short inspection of schools judged good at their most recent section 5 inspection. Inspectors converted the inspection to a section 5 inspection in order to gather more secure evidence about the quality of education at the school.
- Inspectors carried out 34 short observations of lessons across both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 in all years and two learning walks in which 15 classes were visited. In addition, inspectors observed small-group sessions in the enhanced resource centre, one assembly and four tutor sessions. Inspectors also visited the library.
- A scrutiny of pupils' workbooks in both key stages was undertaken and pupils in Year 8 and Year 10 were formally interviewed. A number of pupils were also spoken with informally during break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors met with a range of school leaders including the headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteachers responsible for behaviour and teaching. Inspectors also interviewed the special educational needs coordinator, the designated safeguarding leader, the student support centre manager, the leaders of careers, pastoral leaders, subject leaders for key subjects, and a group of new and experienced teachers. Three governors were also interviewed including the Chair of the Governing Body.
- A range of documentation was examined, including the school's self-evaluation, pupils' performance information, the governing body minutes of meetings, behaviour logs, curriculum plans, and school policies in relation to safeguarding, behaviour, the curriculum, and teaching and learning.
- Seventy-eight responses to the staff questionnaire and 207 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, were evaluated.

Inspection team

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