

Inspection of Malbank School and Sixth Form College

Welsh Row, Nantwich, Cheshire CW5 5HD

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 June 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, and students in the sixth form, are happy at this school. They feel safe and have warm relationships with staff. They enjoy the calm atmosphere and welcoming ethos of the school.

Pupils know that staff have high expectations of their behaviour. They behave well in lessons and around the school. Staff deal with any incidents of poor behaviour effectively. Pupils are confident that teachers will deal with any rare incidents of bullying effectively.

Leaders and staff also have high expectations of pupils' achievement. Teachers support pupils and students effectively in most subjects. Consequently, they achieve well across the curriculum.

Pupils benefit from a range of opportunities that advance their personal development. Pupils and students value these opportunities. They learn how to keep themselves healthy and safe, and about the value of diversity. Pupils and students understand and respect the differences between people.

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

Leaders have ensured that the curriculum, including for students in the sixth form, is broad and ambitious. They strive to increase the proportion of pupils who gain qualifications in the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects. Leaders have provided some additional support to pupils in Year 9, so they are better prepared to study modern foreign languages at key stage 4.

Leaders have improved the quality of education that pupils receive. In most subjects, leaders have identified the knowledge and skills that they want pupils and students to learn. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and they present learning clearly to pupils. They plan regular opportunities for pupils and students to recall what they have learned in previous lessons. In most subjects, teachers use assessment systems well. Teachers identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and quickly address any misconceptions. As a result, pupils and students achieve well in most subjects. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

In a small number of subjects at key stages 3 and 4, leaders have not identified the knowledge that pupils need to learn clearly enough. As a result, in these subjects, teachers do not ensure that pupils build their knowledge step by step. This means that some pupils do not progress through the curriculum as well as they should in these subjects.

Leaders accurately identify pupils with SEND. They make sure that teachers and staff are well informed about how to best meet pupils' needs. Pupils with SEND progress through the same ambitious subject curriculums as their peers.

Most pupils read well. Leaders identify pupils who have gaps in their ability to read. Staff provide effective additional support for these pupils to develop their reading knowledge.

Pupils and students behave respectfully to staff, visitors and to one another. Leaders have strengthened the systems for managing behaviour. Pupils and students understand these systems and respond well to them. As a result, lessons are rarely disrupted by poor behaviour.

The personal development curriculum meets the needs of pupils and students, including those with SEND. They revisit important and sensitive topics over several years to build their knowledge over time. Leaders have acted on feedback from pupils, parents and carers. The curriculum now has an increased focus on mental health, healthy relationships and online safety.

Pupils receive timely careers advice and guidance so that they can make appropriate choices for the next stage of their education, employment or training. All students in the sixth form benefit from a week of well-planned work experience. Students told inspectors that they feel well prepared for life beyond school.

Leaders have established a popular house system. Pupils said that they value the sense of community it gives them. Pupils and students benefit from a range of opportunities that help to develop their leadership skills. For example, students can become reading mentors. There is an active environmental group, the 'green team'.

Governors take their responsibilities seriously. They know the school well and focus on its continued improvement. Staff told inspectors that leaders carefully consider their workload and well-being. Teachers and staff value the opportunities they have to work with, and learn from, one another.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained to identify pupils and students who may be at risk of harm. Leaders' systems for reporting concerns ensure that actions to help pupils happen swiftly when required. Leaders work in partnership with external agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils receive the support that they need.

Pupils learn how to keep safe when not in school, including online. They know that there is someone to talk to if they have a concern.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not identified the knowledge that pupils need to learn clearly enough. This means that some pupils do not build their knowledge over time as well as they should. Leaders should revisit these subjects to ensure that there is greater clarity about the knowledge pupils must gain so that they learn more effectively.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	111419
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	10216072
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,144
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	152
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Scott Harding
Headteacher	John Harrison
Website	www.malbank.com
Date of previous inspection	27 and 28 November 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders make use of three registered alternative providers for a small number of pupils.
- Since the previous inspection there have been changes to the leadership of the school. This includes the appointment of a new headteacher.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause. This means that pupils in Years 8 to 13 receive information about the full range of education and training options open to them. This includes opportunities for a range of education and training providers to speak to pupils about technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, other senior leaders, including the designated safeguarding lead, the special educational needs coordinator, the head of sixth form, middle leaders, teachers and members of support staff.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also spoke with the local authority school improvement officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English, history, mathematics, modern foreign languages, physical education and science. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils and students about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' and students' work.
- Inspectors also looked at the curriculum and spoke to leaders about some other subjects. They visited a sample of lessons in a range of subjects.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for safeguarding. They reviewed a range of documentation in relation to safeguarding, including the school's pre-employment checks on staff. They spoke to staff, students and pupils about wider aspects of safeguarding. They also considered survey responses from staff and parents about safeguarding.
- Inspectors observed pupils' and students' behaviour during breaktimes, lunchtimes, in corridors and during lessons. They spoke with pupils and students about bullying, behaviour and leaders' expectations of their behaviour. Inspectors also discussed pupils' and students' programme of wider personal development.
- Inspectors considered the responses from parents to Ofsted Parent View. This included the comments submitted via the free-text facility. Inspectors also reviewed the responses to the staff, student and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Stephanie Gill, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Phil Smith	Ofsted Inspector
Deborah Bailey	Ofsted Inspector
Craig Yates	Ofsted Inspector

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