School report

Inspection of Golborne High School

Lowton Road, Golborne, Warrington, Cheshire WA3 3EL

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 January 2023

Overall effectiveness	**Outstanding**
The quality of education	**Outstanding**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Outstanding**
Personal development	**Outstanding**
Leadership and management	**Outstanding**
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Golborne High School aspire to achieve highly because leaders and staff expect the very best of them. Pupils live out the 'Golborne Way' through their actions each day. They listen attentively to their teachers, follow instructions diligently and treat one another with respect. For example, pupils explained to inspectors that they can speak openly to their peers about how they are feeling.

Pupils are determined to be successful, and they are keen to be the best versions of themselves. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve exceptionally well. They take great pride in both their personal and academic accomplishments. Pupils delight in celebrating these achievements in school.

Pupils benefit from highly supportive relationships with teachers. This helps pupils to feel happy and safe in school. For example, pupils in Year 11 spoke highly about the help that they had received from staff about looking after their mental health during recent examinations. Leaders deal swiftly and appropriately with any incidents of bullying or hurtful language.

Pupils and staff care deeply about their local community. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work to support projects in the surrounding area. For example, pupils told inspectors that they are proud to support a local miners' association.

Pupils benefit from a plethora of extra-curricular activities such as drama club, basketball practice, debate club and singing club. Older pupils readily take on leadership roles such being a house captain or a prefect. Other pupils value being able to speak on behalf of their peers as members of an active school council.

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

Leaders have ensured that subject curriculums are highly ambitious, carefully thought out and designed well. This supports pupils to build securely on what they have learned already. Leaders ensure that teachers are clear about what pupils need to know and when this content should be taught.

Teachers are experts in their subject fields. They use their considerable knowledge and expertise to design high-quality learning for pupils. For example, staff are adept at choosing appropriate activities and techniques to present new concepts with clarity. As a matter of routine, they help pupils to understand and remember the knowledge that will be the most useful for future learning.

Teachers use assessment strategies well to identify any misunderstandings or misconceptions that pupils may have. For example, they regularly check on pupils' learning and revisit those concepts that some pupils may have struggled to grasp initially. Pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Leaders have designed effective systems to identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND. Leaders ensure that staff are equipped well to provide appropriate support for this group of pupils. For instance, teachers have the guidance that they need to adapt how they deliver the curriculum to meet these pupils' needs. Pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum as their peers. They are fully involved in, and value, the wider aspects of school life.

Leaders place a strong focus on ensuring that all pupils can read fluently and confidently. Those pupils who arrive at the school having struggled with reading in the past receive appropriate support from highly skilled staff. This is ensuring that these pupils can catch up with their reading quickly and access the wider curriculum.

Any disruption to pupils' learning is rare. The small number of pupils that struggle to manage their own behaviour receive the support that they need from the accomplished pastoral team. Pupils learn to be confident, resilient and independent learners.

Pupils are taught how to be responsible and respectful citizens. For example, they are informed well about the features of healthy relationships and the protected characteristics. Leaders afford pupils opportunities to learn about the importance of equality, diversity and tolerance. Pupils are prepared well to take their place in a modern society.

Leaders have designed a well-structured careers programme. This helps pupils to understand the wide variety of options available to them when they leave school and motivates them to succeed.

Staff are highly positive about the training opportunities on offer, including further opportunities for them to develop their subject-specific knowledge and hone their craft. While leaders want the best for pupils, they remain cognisant of staff workload and well-being.

Members of the governing body have the knowledge that they need to hold leaders to account for the quality of education that pupils receive. Governors are informed well about leaders' priorities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established effective systems to keep pupils safe. Staff receive appropriate and regular safeguarding training. This ensures that staff are knowledgeable and alert to the signs that a pupil may need help.

Staff know the systems to follow if they have concerns about a pupil's welfare. They report their concerns in a timely manner. Leaders work together with external partners to secure the right support for vulnerable pupils and their families.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online. For example, they learn about the importance of consent and the negative effects of sexist language.

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' 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	106525
Local authority	Wigan
Inspection number	10241296
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,061
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Byrne
Headteacher	Alison Gormally
Website	www.golbornehigh.wigan.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	4 and 5 December 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders currently use two registered and two unregistered alternative providers for a very small number of pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause , which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information 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.

- This was the first routine inspection that 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.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders and other groups of staff. An inspector spoke with representatives of the governing body, including the vice-chair of governors and five other governors.

- As part of this inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, English, science and history. Inspectors met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work, spoke with teachers and spoke with pupils about their learning.
- Inspectors met with pupils across all year groups. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour at social times.
- Inspectors checked on leaders' safeguarding procedures, including recruitment checks made on new staff. Inspectors met with those responsible for governance, leaders, staff and pupils to evaluate the culture of safeguarding.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, development plan and documents relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff and pupils. Inspectors also considered the views of the parents and carers who responded to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text comments.

Inspection team

Phill Walmsley, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Christine Veitch	Ofsted Inspector
Sally Kenyon	Ofsted Inspector
Stephen Cox	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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