

Inspection of The Crossley Heath School

Savile Park, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX3 0HG

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 July 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Ofsted has not previously inspected Crossley Heath School as an academy school under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils rise to these expectations. Their behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are polite and articulate. They interact with others in a warm and considerate manner. Staff care for pupils. This makes them feel valued. They are proud to attend the school. Pupils show respect for their peers and their teachers. Pupils learn in a calm and purposeful atmosphere, where their high academic aspirations can be fulfilled.

Pupils know that they are well looked after in this kind and supportive environment. Pupils are confident to raise any concerns with trusted adults. Incidents of bullying are rare. On the few occasions that it occurs, staff deal with it promptly.

Leaders have ensured that pupils benefit from the wider curriculum. There is a focus on developing pupils' characters and resilience. Some pupils and students take part in different leadership opportunities, such as being a sports leader or a house captain. Pupils celebrate each other's achievements. For example, at lunchtime, pupils wait patiently to play musical instruments and praise the performance of their fellow pupils.

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

Leaders have ensured that pupils and sixth-form students benefit from an ambitious curriculum. Subject leaders have highlighted the important knowledge that they want pupils to know and remember. Teaching staff are clear about what to teach and how to teach it. They have strong subject knowledge and give clear explanations in lessons. This helps pupils to make links between new learning and what they have been taught before.

In the majority of subjects, leaders have an accurate understanding of how well pupils learn important knowledge. Teachers identify any gaps in pupils' knowledge and adapt their teaching to address this. Subject leaders use this information to review and strengthen their curriculum. However, in some subjects, teachers are less clear about how well pupils have learned important knowledge. Subject leaders do not have consistently accurate oversight of how well pupils are learning in all subjects.

Leaders have ensured that reading has a high profile across the school. They provide extra support for pupils who are at the earliest stages of learning to read, including pupils who speak English as an additional language. Well-trained staff help these pupils to read with increasing confidence. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) benefit from the same high-quality education as their peers. Leaders ensure that teaching staff have the information and training to meet the needs of pupils with SEND.

Leaders have united all staff in developing a culture where pupils manage their behaviour exceptionally well. Those who join from different schools are warmly welcomed and quickly become part of the school community. Pupils' attendance in school and the sixth form is high. This is a school where pupils want to learn from the varied opportunities on offer.

The curriculum to support pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is well considered. This helps to develop pupils' understanding of important issues, such as protected characteristics, fundamental British values and the diversity of the school community. Sixth-form students learn about the importance of developing independence and aspiration and how to manage relationships. The school has recently been recognised for its work around mental health, securing the Carnegie Bronze Award for Mental Health. Pupils benefit from carefully planned careers advice and guidance.

Staff enjoy working at this inclusive school. They know that leaders take any concerns they have seriously. This includes consideration for their well-being and workload. The strategic approach to quality assurance ensures that senior leaders, including trustees, have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders care about their school community. They make sure that staff are trained well on safeguarding issues. Staff know what to do if they have any concerns about the safety of pupils. They record any concerns about pupils' welfare and work with external partners to get pupils the support they need. Leaders carry out careful checks to ensure the suitability of staff working at the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some areas of the curriculum, subject leaders do not have a clear picture of how well pupils are following the intended curriculum. This limits their ability to identify strengths and areas for development. Leaders should work with subject leaders to help them to better review and enhance the quality of the curriculum in their subjects.
- There is some variation in the use of assessment, and this means that some gaps in pupils' knowledge are not identified and addressed. As a result, some pupils struggle to connect new learning with what they have been taught before. Leaders should improve the use of assessment across subjects to check that pupils are learning the knowledge and skills that they need.

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	139182
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	10290225
Type of school	Secondary Grammar (selective)
School category	Academy converter
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	1,155
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	246
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trustees	Yasmin Ahmed
Headteacher	Lynnette Cassidy
Website	http://www.crossleyheath.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 and 17 February 2011, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- Crossley Heath School is a selective secondary school.
- The sixth form works with other post-16 providers to ensure that pupils can access a broad range of subjects.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school has been awarded the 'Quality Careers Standard' in May 2023 for its work around careers guidance.

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 the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in art, geography, history and mathematics. As part of the deep dives, inspectors visited lessons, reviewed curriculum plans and spoke with curriculum leaders and teachers. They also talked to pupils and students about their learning and looked at the work they have completed.
- Inspectors carried out further lesson visits in modern foreign languages and personal, social, health and economic education.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, reviewed education, health and care plans and support plans for pupils with SEND, visited the provisions the school has in place for these pupils and visited lessons to see how pupils with SEND are supported to learn.
- Inspectors met with the leader responsible for reading to discuss how reading is promoted in the school.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding leads and reviewed a range of documentation, including safeguarding records and policies.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils, parents and staff through Ofsted's surveys.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's records of bullying, reviewed the actions leaders take when bullying occurs and spoke to several groups of pupils, including some single-gender groups, to understand their experience of school.
- Inspectors met leaders to discuss pupils' behaviour and reviewed the school's data on suspensions and internal suspensions.
- Inspectors met with representatives from the board of trustees.
- Inspectors spoke with two providers who were working with the sixth form to increase the post-16 offer.

Inspection team

Andrew Gibbins, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
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Lesley Powell	Ofsted Inspector
Barry Found	Ofsted Inspector
Martin Featherstone	Ofsted Inspector

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