

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: McKee College House

73 Breck Road, Poulton, Lancashire FY6 7AQ

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Inspection dates:

1 and 2 July 2025

## Outcome

McKee College House has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

## What is it like to attend this school?

For many pupils, McKee College House is their last chance. Most have previously had a negative experience of education. For these pupils, the school offers a fresh start. Pupils appreciate staff's kindness and compassion. This helps them to feel safe and well cared for. As a result, most pupils start to enjoy school for the first time in many years.

When they join the school, pupils are asked what they want their teachers to know. Pupils appreciate the efforts of staff to listen to and act on their views. This helps pupils to overcome some of their barriers to learning. The school is ambitious for its pupils. It is determined that pupils will leave McKee College well prepared for their next steps. Many dual-registered pupils return successfully into school or move on to specialist provision. Almost all Year 11 pupils progress on to education, employment or training.

Staff are quick to spot when a pupil is struggling. Pupils learn to trust staff to help them when needed. This means that the school is generally orderly and most lessons proceed without interruption.

Pupils are encouraged to look after their mental health through the outdoor learning and gardening club. The pupils on the military preparation programme are proud to represent the school at community events such as the Remembrance Day parade.

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

The school has improved its curriculum to reflect the different needs of its pupil groups. Pupils in key stage 3 benefit from studying a wide range of subjects. This prepares them well for their next steps, regardless of what those may be. At key stage 4, pupils choose subjects that stand them in good stead for their future lives. The well-thought-out subject

curriculums set out precisely what pupils need to learn and the order in which this should be taught.

Teachers use their subject expertise to deliver the curriculum effectively. They check pupils' understanding routinely. They address any gaps and misconceptions swiftly. This ensures that pupils have the knowledge that they need to make sense of new learning. From their different starting points, pupils achieve well. Almost all pupils in Year 11 gain GCSE qualifications in a range of subjects, including English and mathematics.

The school encourages pupils to read across the curriculum. Pupils can access a wide range of high-quality texts. The school carries out checks on how well pupils can read when they join. It alerts staff to pupils who are struggling readers so that they can adapt lesson activities for them. However, the school does not identify and address the specific gaps in reading knowledge for these pupils. This hinders how well these pupils can achieve across the curriculum.

The school prioritises identifying pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities when they join the school. It works closely with other professionals, parents and carers to understand pupils' barriers to learning. Staff use this information well to help and support pupils. Teachers design lesson activities that enable pupils to access learning alongside their peers.

Many pupils present with challenging behaviour when they join the school. From their starting points, most pupils improve their behaviour, both in lessons and around school. They respond well to the school's reward system. Staff support pupils well when they struggle to manage their emotions. However, these strategies do not reach a few pupils who find it difficult to cope with the day-to-day demands of school. This group of pupils misses out on the opportunities afforded by the school. This hampers these pupils' progress.

Most pupils improve their attendance when they join the school. Some find it difficult to establish regular attendance patterns after long spells out of their previous schools. The school works hard with these pupils and their families to ensure that they are in school on time every day.

The school has designed a well-considered programme for pupils' personal development. It has thought carefully about pupils' needs and interests when designing the personal, social and health education curriculum. Pupils enjoy the different external speakers who share their lived experiences. This helps pupils to understand potential risks, such as knives and gangs. They learn about healthy relationships and understand the importance of consent. Pupils benefit from the wealth of careers information and advice.

The management committee offers support and challenge to ensure that the school has a positive impact on the lives of pupils. Staff value the training and support that they receive to do their jobs. They feel that leaders are mindful of their workload and well-being when making decisions.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The school does not ensure that some pupils who have gaps in their reading knowledge receive the help that they need. This means that these pupils do not learn to read as fluently and confidently as they could. The school should ensure that these struggling readers receive the targeted support that they need to learn to read well.
- The school struggles to re-engage some pupils in education. These pupils do not benefit fully from their placement at the school. The school should further develop its approach to supporting these pupils to improve their attendance and behaviour so that they benefit from the provision.

## **Background**

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in March 2016.

## 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>	134367
<b>Local authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10377989
<b>Type of school</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>School category</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<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>	78
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Local authority
<b>Headteacher</b>	Andrew Murray
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.mckee.lancs.sch.uk">www.mckee.lancs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	3 and 4 March 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.
- The school provides for pupils who are at risk of permanent exclusion, pupils who have been permanently excluded and some pupils who are awaiting places in specialist provision.
- All the pupils have social, emotional and mental health needs. Some of the pupils have education, health and care plans.
- 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.
- The school is located at 73 Breck Road, Poulton, Lancashire FY6 7AQ. It also has additional premises at Breck House, Breck Road, Poulton, Lancashire FY6 7AQ.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- 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.
- The inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher and several other senior and subject leaders.
- An inspector met with the chair of the management committee. An inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- An inspector spoke with a representative of a placing school and the proprietor of the alternative provision used by the school.
- The inspectors met with some staff and considered the views of staff as shared in an Ofsted survey.
- The inspectors reviewed the views of parents through Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.
- 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.

## Inspection team

Pippa Jackson Maitland, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Phill Walmsley

Ofsted Inspector

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