

Manchester Health Academy

Inspection report

Unique reference number	135875
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	381943
Inspection dates	17-18 January 2012
Lead inspector	John Young HMI

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	11-19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	418
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	44
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Cain
Headteacher	Barry Burke
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Moor Road Wythenshawe Greater Manchester M23 9BP
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Introduction

Inspection team

John Young	Her Majesty's Inspector
Mary Liptrot	Additional inspector
Peter Mather	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors visited 31 lessons and observed 30 of the 38 teachers at the academy. Inspectors sampled learning in every subject taught at the academy and listened to students read. Academy senior staff and the lead inspector carried out nine joint lesson observations. Inspectors held meetings with academy staff, groups of students, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the academy's main sponsor. Inspectors observed the academy's work, and looked at a range of other evidence, such as development plans, safeguarding arrangements and self-evaluation documents. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They also evaluated questionnaire responses from 32 parents and carers, 95 students and 62 staff.

Information about the school

Manchester Health Academy opened in September 2009, close to the original site of the predecessor school. The main sponsor is the Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. Manchester City Council and the Manchester College are co-sponsors. The academy has a specialism in health and sports science. The academy opened a sixth form in September 2010. Four courses are offered which are linked to the academy's specialism.

The academy is smaller than the average-sized secondary school. The majority of students are White British and few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs, including the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is higher than average. These needs range from physical disabilities, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties to speech, language and communication needs. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is much higher than the national average. A small number of students in the academy are looked after by the local authority. The academy provides a range of extended services, such as family learning programmes, community access to academy facilities, study support and a range of activities during the school holidays based around sport. The academy is also part of the Children's University. In each of the past two years the academy's results for the proportion of students gaining 5 A*-C grades, including English and mathematics exceeded the current government floor target.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- The overall effectiveness of the academy is securely satisfactory and improving strongly. This represents significant improvement from the serious weaknesses of the predecessor school.
- Leadership is good. The improvements secured have been masterminded and driven by an experienced and highly effective Principal and the very capable team of senior and middle leaders he has built. Underpinning these improvements are hardworking and talented staff, increasingly ambitious and responsive students, and astute and influential governance, together with the strong support of the main and co-sponsors.
- Attainment is rising and students' overall achievement is satisfactory and improving securely and quickly. There is room for further improvement because certain subjects have underperformed and some strategies require more time to embed and demonstrate their full impact.
- Teaching has a satisfactory and improving impact on students' learning and some outstanding, and much good, practice was evident during the inspection. However, there are some inconsistencies in planning, delivery and impact.
- Behaviour and safety are satisfactory and improving as a result of effective systems and structures and major changes in the atmosphere and ethos in the academy. Students' attendance is also rising. Nevertheless, there is room for more improvement.
- The sixth form is good. It is a niche provision that effectively meets students' needs. This is reflected in: students' good and outstanding progress when set against their starting points; wide-ranging enrichment opportunities; exemplary leadership and management of the courses; and strong retention rates.
- The contribution of the specialist subjects is strong and their wide sphere of influence impacts positively on teaching and learning, curriculum, leadership and management and strengthening local community links.

- Inspectors have asked the academy to address the concerns a small minority of parents and carers have about how it deals with poor behaviour and bullying.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise students' attainment and increase the amount of progress they make during their time in the academy so that they all make at least good progress relative to their starting points and capabilities by:
 - embedding the literacy and study skills improvement strategies
 - ensuring a higher proportion of students make at least three levels of progress during their time in the academy
 - improving the attainment and achievement of students in subjects that have historically underperformed.
- Improve the impact of teaching on students' learning so that it is consistently good throughout the academy by:
 - eradicating the remaining inconsistencies in delivery, marking and guidance, to ensure consistently good practice in line with academy policy
 - ensuring teaching consistently focuses sharply on improving students' knowledge, understanding, and ability to apply key concepts and skills.
- Improve students' attendance and behaviour and address the negative perceptions that a small minority of parents and carers who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire hold about the way the academy deals with bullying and poor student behaviour by:
 - further reducing the proportion of students that are persistently absent
 - further reducing the rate of exclusions
 - communicating to parents and carers more effectively the improvements that have been made to students' behaviour at the academy, and increasing the confidence parents and carers have in the academy's behaviour management and anti-bullying strategies.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

The very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire feel that their children are making good progress at the academy. Inspectors meticulously considered all of the available performance indicators. They spent most of their time in classrooms evaluating the quality of teaching, assessing students' work and talking to students about their learning and progress, and discussing students' progress with their teachers. Inspectors also analysed students' prior attainment and progress over time and compared and contrasted this with the latest in-school tracking information which they deemed reliable. Inspectors concluded that the evidence clearly demonstrated that the achievement of students, including

disabled students and those with special educational needs, those known to be eligible for free school meals, and groups of minority ethnic students is securely satisfactory overall and improving quickly. They make at least the progress expected of them relative to their well below average starting points. In particular, students are making better progress in English and mathematics because of better teaching in these subjects.

Although, students' attainment by the time they leave the academy is currently lower than national averages it has improved considerably over time and the deficits are closing for all groups of students, particularly in English and mathematics. Results in sport and health-related subjects, the academy's specialism's, are excellent. However, subjects such as history, design and technology, Spanish and science underperform. The academy's latest tracking information and the observation of all of the subjects taught at the academy indicate that the large majority of students are currently on track to meet their respective targets. The raft of improvement strategies in place are effectively enabling large numbers of older students to recover much of the previously lost ground in their learning and progress, while younger students are getting off to a 'flying start'. Nevertheless, there is further room for improvement in the proportion of students making the expected three levels of progress by the end of Year 11, and for even greater impact from the on-going support and intervention packages offered to students.

Quality of teaching

The very large majority of parents and carers believe their children are well taught at the academy. Inspectors see merit in this view but conclude that the impact of teaching on students' learning is currently satisfactory but improving strongly, which is reflected in their predominantly satisfactory but improving progress. There is some outstanding and much good practice in the academy at present, but this has not yet translated into consistently good and outstanding outcomes because it has not had sufficient time to demonstrate its full impact. Underpinning this improving profile are the positive relationships that exist between staff and students. Very good subject knowledge, high-quality planning, clear success criteria and focused delivery are the hallmarks of successful teaching in the academy. This is reinforced by good levels of support from teachers and teaching assistants, demanding, engaging, and often practical activities, together with a number of opportunities for students to take responsibility for their own learning. In lessons, students develop resilience when problem-solving and the ability to confidently discuss their ideas. They can also learn to work effectively in groups and independently. In the most effective lessons, students are inspired by staff to produce their very best efforts. Precise explanations and expert questioning enables them to extend their knowledge of key concepts and skills, and to demonstrate and apply their understanding confidently. Very high expectations of students' written and oral responses, personalised resources and effective sequencing of teaching really deepen students' learning. Less effective aspects of provision included, requiring students to complete a set task but insufficiently equipping them with the necessary skills to be successful. Inevitably this left them over-exposed and affected their confidence. On occasion, inspectors also saw a lack of adherence to agreed academy principles, such as low expectations, a lack of urgency and focus, and a disregard for the quality of students'

handwriting, presentation of their work and engagement in the lesson. The use of assessment to support learning is growing in impact. Marking and feedback is generally sound but some inconsistencies still persist. Through the curriculum students gain key life skills and personal attributes that will help them in the next stage of their education. This is evident through business and enterprise activities which require them to design, make and sell jewellery. Charity work, acting as ambassadors for the academy and a range of visits and visitors enable students to gain insights and experiences from beyond Wythenshawe.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The parents and carers, and students who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire hold mixed views about the quality of behaviour, how often lessons are disrupted by bad behaviour and how well the academy deals with bullying. Inspectors conclude that students' behaviour and safety is satisfactory overall, noting that it has improved significantly over time from a very low base line. Historically, there have been exceptionally high rates of exclusions, negative referrals and incidents, and a hard core of students who refused to adhere to academy codes of conduct. Attendance was also exceptionally low and persistent absence was very high. Over the past two years, staff and students have come to better understand and endorse what constitutes acceptable and good behaviour. This, together with a more consistent, holistic and coordinated approach to tackling and managing poor behaviour and bullying, has led to some remarkable improvements. Exclusions, negative referrals and the number of incidents have fallen substantially. There has also been a tangible improvement in students' attitudes to learning and the general ambience on corridors and in classrooms, which are generally orderly and harmonious. Year-on-year rises in attendance has seen the deficit between the national and academy average narrow. Persistent absence has also fallen sharply. Staff deserve credit for these successes but accept they need to further raise attendance and improve students' behaviour. They also acknowledge that they must challenge and change parents' and carers' negative perceptions by illustrating to them how much things have improved.

Leadership and management

Leaders and managers at all levels are astute, proactive and effective. They are well served by a cohesive staff body who endorse the academy's vision of becoming the first choice for local families because of the high-quality educational experience it offers. The academy understands it is still on a journey towards excellence but it has already come a long way over the past two years. Standards have risen sharply, the atmosphere and ethos has improved, teaching is having a far greater impact on learning, and students' behaviour has improved significantly. Students' attendance is also rising. The new sixth form is also functioning successfully and numbers have grown. These accomplishments are testament to the strategic thinking and shrewd implementation of a series of effective improvement strategies, which are showing increasing evidence of impact as they become more embedded. These successes indicate strongly that the academy has a good capacity to improve further. Leaders' rigorous monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of the academy's work and their effective mentoring, training and professional challenge has been particularly

effective in raising standards and improving the quality of teaching. The curriculum is satisfactory and improving. It is relatively well-balanced and matched to students' needs and interests, when set against the constraints of the small numbers of students in some year groups. Excellent use is made of an extended daily tutorial period to alternately deliver religious education, personal, social health and citizenship education. This, together with various enrichment and extra curricular opportunities helps to ensure that the development of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The academy's specialism maintains a high profile and has a far-reaching impact on almost every aspect of academy life. It continues to lead the way in raising standards and developing the academy as the hub of the local community. Staff also act as lead learners sharing best practice throughout the academy and are developing new curriculum pathways for students. The transition and learning links with primary schools are a strength of their work.

The collective expertise, experience and commitment of members of the governing body and the main and co-sponsors ensure that they discharge their responsibility to robustly challenge, support and strategically influence the development of the academy assiduously. Their education, social care, and business and training acumen continues to be instrumental in brokering partnerships and commissioning a range of human and physical resources that are widening the academic, vocational, personal well-being, sport and health-related opportunities available to students. The main sponsor has been particularly prominent in utilising the range of resources it has to aid the academy's development. The academy is effectively promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination which is reflected in the improving performance of different groups of students and a zero tolerance approach to instances of bigotry or racial abuse. Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements with sound procedures for child protection, risk assessment, the safer recruitment of staff and site security. Parents and carers and students are largely positive about the work of the academy. Inspectors investigated the concerns of the small minority that were not and advised the academy to demonstrate to parents and carers that the prevalence of poor behaviour and bullying has reduced substantially. Inspectors have also asked the academy to illustrate how they have improved the effectiveness with which they handle poor behaviour and bullying, as means of allaying parents and carers fears, and changing their negative perceptions.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



19 January 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Manchester Health Academy, Wythenshawe, M23 9BP

Thank you for being polite and helpful to the inspectors when we visited recently. We learned a lot from observing your lessons and talking with you. We read with interest the views you, and your parents and carers expressed in the questionnaires.

After studying the evidence, we found that the overall effectiveness of the academy is satisfactory, but improving strongly. You told us that things have improved a lot over the past two years and we agree. We believe that this is because more and more of the improvement strategies introduced by the academy's leaders are taking root, and as a result you are benefitting from the improved teaching, a more appropriate curriculum and more effective support and guidance. These changes have had a positive impact on your attendance, behaviour, attainment and achievement which are much improved. We found that you are developing lots of personal and social skills which will help you in the future and that your horizons are being broadened by the enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities available to you. While most of you feel safe and acknowledged that behaviour has improved significantly, you did raise some concerns about bullying and poor behaviour, recognising that it could improve further and the extent to which teachers were interested in your views. We found that students in the sixth form are doing really well on their courses and are provided for well.

We conclude that the academy is improving but that there is room for further improvement in a number of areas which we have asked senior leaders to address. These include: further raising your attainment and improving your learning and progress; further improving the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good; further improving standards of behaviour and rates of attendance; and challenging and changing the negative views some of you and your parents and carers have about the amount of poor behaviour in the academy and the ways staff deal with poor behaviour and bullying.

You can all play your part by continuing to work hard and attending school regularly.

Yours sincerely,

John Young
Her Majesty's Inspector

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