

Manchester Enterprise Academy

Inspection report

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 135874 |
| Local authority | Not Applicable |
| Inspection number | 381942 |
| Inspection dates | 12–13 January 2012 |
| Lead inspector | Jane Austin HMI |

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

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|--|-------------------------------------|
| 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 | 525 |
| Of which number on roll in the sixth form | 74 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Julie Armstrong |
| Headteacher | James Eldon |
| Date of previous school inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Simonsway Wythenshawe M22 9RH |
| Telephone number | 0161 4992726 |
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Introduction

Inspection team

Jane Austin
Mary Liptrot
John Leigh

Her Majesty's Inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 28 teachers teaching 27 lessons, of which two were joint observations with members of the senior team. Meetings were held with staff, three groups of students, the Chair of the Governing Body and representatives of the sponsors. Inspectors observed the academy's work and looked at a range of documentation covering areas such as students' attainment, progress, attendance and behaviour; safeguarding and the curriculum. They analysed 81 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, as well as 227 completed by students and those returned by staff.

Information about the academy

The academy, which is much smaller than the average sized secondary school, opened in September 2009 in the buildings of its predecessor school. In September 2010 it moved into its new building and opened the sixth form with a small number of Year 12 students. Almost all of its students are White British and speak English as their first language. Others come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Just over half the students are known to be eligible for free school meals, a proportion that is more than three times the national average. A well above average proportion of students are disabled or have special educational needs. In the main, such students experience behavioural, social and emotional difficulties. The academy did not reach the government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress, in the first year of its operation but crossed this threshold in 2011.

The academy's main sponsor is Manchester Airport: partner sponsors are Willow Park Housing Trust, Manchester City Council and Manchester College. The academy's specialism in enterprise reflects the expertise of its sponsors.

Since the academy opened there has been considerable turbulence in staffing at the most senior levels. In recent months there has been a very large, carefully managed, restructure at other levels resulting in a reduction in the complement of staff. The Principal took up post at the beginning of this academic year.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| Overall Effectiveness | 4 |
| Achievement of pupils | 4 |
| Quality of teaching | 3 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | 3 |
| Leadership and management | 3 |

Key Findings

- In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this academy requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The academy is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to students' attainment, their rates of progress and levels of attendance.
- Overall, students' achievement is inadequate: their attainment is low but rising. The results of GCSE examinations and for other equivalent qualifications improved in 2011, increasing at a faster rate than seen nationally. The pace of students' progress is inadequate over time but also improving, albeit unevenly. It is strongest in English and for students with average or above-average attainment when they join the academy. Overall, the achievement of students with disabilities and special educational needs is in line with that of their peers. Across the academy, communication skills are weak for the majority of students and this hampers their learning.
- The quality of teaching is satisfactory and leading to a gradual improvement in students' progress. However, there is not enough good or better teaching to accelerate students' learning and enable them to make up for previous underachievement. The academy leaders have not established a clear, shared view of the characteristics of good learning. In planning lessons, there is too little emphasis on what students will learn and practical ways to achieve this which will capture their enthusiasm. A coherent system for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is not embedded so levels of accountability are uneven.
- Behaviour has improved and is satisfactory overall. It is better in Years 7-9 where there is the greatest reduction in previously high levels of exclusion. Parents and carers, students and staff all indicated that behaviour has been a concern. However, in the main learning is not disrupted by inappropriate behaviour. Although there has been a rise in the rate of attendance for students in Years 7-9, bringing it much closer to the national average, it remains low in Years 10 and 11, adversely affecting the progress of some students.

- The sixth form is satisfactory, providing a bespoke curriculum carefully tailored to the needs of students and the local economy. Along with satisfactory teaching, this enables students to make satisfactory progress. Sixth-form students have opportunities to gain leadership skills including through paid roles in the academy. The academy's sponsors provide valuable support that enables students to remain in education.
- In a very short period the new Principal has successfully articulated an ambitious vision for the academy, encapsulated as 'A Fantastic Future for All', and gained wide-ranging support for this. He has quickly injected self-belief into the academy, about which students spoke warmly. His dynamism has driven the rapid development of a number of key systems to deliver the necessary improvements. Combined with rising attainment and attendance, improving teaching and learning and the expert strategic support of the strong governing body, this means that the academy demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the pace of students' learning and progress to raise attainment by:
 - focusing sharply on learning in the planning and delivery of lessons
 - fostering positive attitudes to learning by enabling students to participate actively in lessons
 - implementing coherent strategies for improving students' communication skills.
- At all levels, improve the leadership of teaching and learning by:
 - developing an academy-wide, consistently held view of what constitutes good learning
 - embedding a systematic approach to the monitoring and evaluation of learning
 - holding staff fully to account for the progress made by students.
- Raise rates of attendance, particularly for students in Years 10 and 11.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

When students join the academy their attainment is low. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 was low in the first two years of the academy's operation although there was a marked rise in 2011 on all the main measures. The academy's own robust data indicate that GCSE or equivalent results are likely to rise again this year, at least in line with the demands of the increased floor standard.

Students' achievement is inadequate because their progress over time has not been good enough. However, the academy's data and inspection evidence show that progress is gradually increasing. Newly revised targets reflect national expectations of students and are raising demands in terms of both progress and attainment. Detailed analysis of students' progress is enabling the academy to target specific support to individual students, particularly in Years 10 and 11.

As a consequence of improvements in the quality of teaching, as well as in students' behaviour and attendance, students' learning in lessons is satisfactory overall. It is not, however, rapid and secure enough to make substantial inroads into their significant levels of underachievement. Students' enthusiasm for learning is most evident when they are engaged in practical activities. They respond well to teachers' high expectations and clear routines, as was evident in a very successful Year 8 food technology lesson. Where a stimulus for learning captures students' imaginations, for example, when Year 7 students were challenged to write an exciting ending for a play, they work quickly and eagerly. However, in many lessons students are passive learners, lacking in confidence and reluctant to make contributions. Students demonstrate little pride in their work: across the academy standards of presentation are low. The capacity of the majority of students to engage successfully in learning is restricted by the low level of their communication skills.

At Key Stage 5 the academy provides for students whose attainment is lower than typical for a sixth form. A careful match of courses to students' needs and aspirations, along with satisfactory teaching, enabled the academy's first cohort to make satisfactory progress and achieve an average pass rate in the limited range of qualifications they pursued.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is satisfactory, although it is evident from students' rates of progress that this represents an improvement. In better lessons, there is a good variety of activities that help to sustain students' interest and maintain a brisk pace. Assessment criteria are used well to help students understand what they are aiming for. Learning is logically built up step by step. For example, in a Year 10 art lesson the teacher carefully modelled skills for portraiture in bite-size chunks, helping to overcome students' lack of confidence. Independent learning is fostered effectively, for instance through careful questioning that supports students to develop their own ideas. Self- and peer-assessment are employed well to help students reflect on their learning and how to improve. This was exemplified very well in a drama lesson where Year 11 students showed rigour in evaluating their classmates' moving performances. Such experiences contribute well to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Where learning is less successful teachers' expositions are too long, restricting the time for students to engage in activities. Expectations are too low resulting in a lack of challenge for many students. Consequently, some lose interest and, on occasion, time is wasted. Although learning objectives are regularly shared with students, there is more emphasis on the tasks students are to complete than on what they are to learn from them. There is limited use of interactive technologies to capture students' interest and develop their skills.

Support for students with special educational needs is variable in quality in lessons, but is very effective for those with the greatest needs who attend the Lifelong Learning Centre. There is some good practice in marking where students' successes, and the next steps to improvement, are clearly identified. However, this is not uniformly the case across the academy.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Students and staff agree that behaviour has improved this year, and this is borne out by the reduction in the level of exclusions. Nonetheless these remain too high, particularly for students in Year 10. The academy works extensively with a broad range of agencies to

support students whose special educational needs are behavioural, emotional and social and those whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. Behaviour observed in lessons was satisfactory overall. Students appear to get on well with each other at break and lunch times which are well-supervised. Students understand the academy's behaviour management system and those who spoke with inspectors feel that it is fair, although not always consistently implemented. Students expressed confidence that the few incidents of bullying that occur are dealt with in timely and effective ways. They are well informed about the dangers of cyber-bullying.

Although attendance has risen at Key Stage 3, and seen some improvement at Key Stage 4, it remains low. It is much better in Years 7-9 than for students in Years 10 and 11. The academy has worked hard to improve the attendance of those who are absent most frequently and consequently there has been a reduction in the proportion of students who are persistently absent. However, not all approaches to promoting good attendance are strategically targeted where they are most likely to garner success.

Leadership and management

The Principal's palpable commitment to driving improvement for the academy has injected a very considerable momentum into its development. This is coherent, demanding and well-directed, founded as it is on a realistic appraisal of the academy's strengths and weaknesses. Although changes have been rapid, they are being integrated effectively into the academy's operation, contributing successfully to the academy's satisfactory capacity to improve.

The roles and responsibilities of senior and middle leaders have been redrawn with clear lines of accountability. Although not fully consistent in operation, line-management arrangements are resulting in increased levels of challenge and the more effective distribution of leadership responsibilities. The development of a thorough and detailed system for tracking students' progress is supporting this well. A review of target setting has set sights higher, recognising that students are entitled to the same opportunities as their peers nationally. The regular monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are being established, although the absence of an agreed academy view of good teaching and learning is hindering consistency. The leadership and management of the sixth form are satisfactory.

Key changes have been made to the satisfactory curriculum to promote improvement. More time has been allocated to core subjects in Years 7 and 8, recognising deficits in students' basic skills. However, there is not a coherent academy-wide approach to improving students' communication skills. Year 9 students are enthusiastic about the opportunities they have to follow a vocational option and begin GCSE study. The opportunities for Year 10 students to gain qualifications have been increased and better arrangements put in place to secure provision in the core subjects for those pursuing vocational options off site. Students pursue a qualification in enterprise, reflecting the academy's specialism and contributing to their satisfactory spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The sixth-form curriculum matches the individual needs of students well.

Governance is strong. The governing body is highly committed, ambitious and tenacious in providing strategic direction for the academy. In seeking the best for students, governors have tackled weak performance rigorously. They are very well informed about all aspects of the academy's performance and provide a high level of challenge to the Principal and senior

leaders. The governing body has ensured that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

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. |
| 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.



16 January 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Manchester Enterprise Academy, Wythenshawe, M22 9RH

Thank you for contributing to the recent inspection through completing questionnaires and talking to inspectors. I know you will not be happy to hear that we have decided the academy requires a notice to improve. This is because GCSE results are much lower than the national average and your progress has not been rapid enough. Attendance is low for many of you, especially in Years 10 and 11.

A notice to improve means that inspectors will visit the academy again to check that things are getting better. It also means that we have confidence in your Principal, staff and governors to make the improvements needed. This is because we can see that some things have already changed for the better and that improvement has accelerated this year. The sixth form is satisfactory. GCSE results rose in 2011 and are likely to rise again this year, especially if Year 11 students work hard and attend as much as possible. Attendance has improved, particularly in Years 7-9. Behaviour is getting better so that exclusions are decreasing. As you can see, by working hard, attending as often as possible and behaving well, you all have a part to play in making the academy a better place to learn.

We have asked the Principal and staff to make sure that:

- regular checks are made to see that teachers focus sharply on what you are learning so that you make more progress and gain better examination results
- you have more opportunities to learn in practical ways so that you enjoy lessons more
- opportunities to improve your communication skills are built into all your lessons
- your attendance increases.

I hope you will all play your part in improving the academy so that everyone benefits from a better education.

Yours sincerely,

Jane Austin
Her Majesty's Inspector

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