

The Manor Academy

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	137158
Local Authority	N/A
Inspection number	385577
Inspection dates	5–6 October 2011
Reporting inspector	David Anstead HMI

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1240
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	160
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Lovell
Headteacher	Jonathon Hickman
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
School address	Park Hall Road Mansfield Woodhouse Mansfield NG19 8QA
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The inspection team saw 45 lessons and seven mentoring sessions taught by 52 teachers. Meetings were held with groups of students, the school council, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at students' books, analysed assessment data and checked policies. The views of 85 parents and carers, 200 students and 27 members of staff, expressed in questionnaires, were taken into account.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Is the achievement of boys, of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and of those known to be eligible for free school meals good enough?
- Is the quality of teaching and assessment as good as the school says it is, and particularly in English and mathematics?
- How effective is the one-to-one mentoring provision in improving outcomes?

Information about the school

The school is larger than the average secondary. Most students are White British. Around 5% of students are from several minority ethnic groups. There is a lower-than-average proportion of students whose first language is believed not to be English and the proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is also average. The school has specialist status in sports and is part of the Mansfield Learning Partnership of local schools.

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: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the education act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

Although attainment has risen over the last four years, it remains low. The school is predicting it will continue to be so on some measures in 2012. Students do not make enough progress which means that they do not as well as they should do across all their GCSE subjects by the end of Key Stage 4. A notable exception is in English where students now make the expected progress and examination results are broadly average. Consequently, the proportion of students attaining five good GCSE grades including English and mathematics rose to 50% in 2011 which is the academy's highest ever result on this measure. Progress in mathematics was weaker though with the result that the academy was still below average on this key measure despite the improvement in 2011. Achievement is inadequate and is not improving quickly enough.

The academy is failing to provide an acceptable standard of education because too much teaching is inadequate leading to low attainment. The learning and progress of students in around one third of lessons seen in the main school was inadequate. Learning was good or better in just under half of the lessons visited, which is insufficient to bring attainment into line with the national average quickly enough. Where learning is inadequate, teachers set work of inappropriate challenge and tend to talk for too long which means students have few opportunities for small group or independent working. Marking of students' work is generally poor, with too many teachers giving just a cursory tick to a page and leaving mistakes in spelling, grammar and in understanding of the subject uncorrected. Teachers do not provide their students with enough written guidance about how to improve their work.

Senior leaders do not know the academy well enough. Monitoring over the last three years has been insufficiently rigorous and therefore senior leaders have not identified some of the serious weaknesses the academy has, and they have been overgenerous in their evaluation of other aspects of provision. Sometimes the information collected about the academy's performance has been patchy or inaccurate. Consequently, improvement work has not necessarily been focused on the right priorities and has been mostly ineffective. Although senior leaders have been successful in improving

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some aspects of the academy's performance that they have specifically targeted, like attendance and achievement in English, vital issues such as overall achievement and the generally unsatisfactory quality of teaching and assessment have not been unpicked and effectively tackled. Despite some very recent changes to make monitoring procedures more robust, the academy's track record shows that there is not enough leadership capacity to sustain improvement.

Other aspects of provision are better. The academy site is attractive and well maintained, and the facilities for sport, partly provided through the academy's specialist status, are excellent. Some innovative ideas underpin the design of the satisfactory curriculum which presents students with a good range of choices. However, the two and sometimes three-hour blocks of learning at Key Stage 3 and the mixed-age classes at Key Stage 4 present a challenge in sustaining high quality learning for some teachers. The care, guidance and support which students receive are satisfactory with some strengths. Care for students whose circumstances may make them vulnerable is good and students say they feel safe at the academy. Students are particularly appreciative of the good arrangements for mentoring.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement and improve the quality of teaching by:
 - ensuring that teachers regularly and frequently mark students' work and correct any mistakes
 - making sure that all teachers provide written guidance to students on how they can improve their work
 - making sure teachers use the information they gain from marking and assessing students' work to plan learning tasks of appropriate challenge
 - providing more opportunities in lessons for students to work collaboratively and independently
 - spreading the best practice in teaching to ensure that teaching and learning are of a consistently good quality.
- Rigorously monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and trends in the school's performance data and take swift and effective action to tackle any signs of underperformance this identifies.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Attainment on entry is broadly average. The general pattern of examination results over the last four years has been significantly below average. Early analysis of the 2011 GCSE examination results shows that attainment in English improved to be broadly average and attainment in mathematics, although better, was still low. The proportion of students making the expected progress in English was in line with the national median but, in mathematics, only half of Year 11 students made the progress expected of them. The academy is predicting that this pattern of inadequate achievement will be broadly the same in the 2012 examinations.

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There are marked differences in the performance of different groups of students. In 2010, the achievement of lower-attaining boys, of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and of students known to be eligible for free school meals was poor. The academy was aware of this and succeeded in reducing the gap between the performance of boys and girls in 2011 and in raising the attainment of students with special educational needs and /or disabilities to be close to the comparable national average. However, the quality of learning and progress for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities was seen during the inspection to be inadequate and the improvements in attainment in 2011 were not being sustained. The achievement of students known to be eligible for free school meals improved in 2011 but their attainment remains low.

Where learning was best, teachers' planning took account of assessment information about students' prior learning and their understanding of subject content, and timescales for activities were established beforehand. Learning proceeded at a fast pace with students having plentiful opportunities to work in pairs or in small groups to consider key questions or to work on open-ended tasks. In a Year 10 mathematics lesson, for example, higher attaining students enjoyed being challenged to find out and explain what is meant by a 'surd' in fractional calculations. A well-planned and swiftly executed sequence of learning activities ensured these bright students were stretched and made outstanding progress. Weaker learning was characterised by activities being overly dominated by the teacher, meaning that students were reduced to playing a passive, listening role for lengthy periods. Some instances were observed of students merely copying out work, which was boring and wasteful of their time. Lower attaining students say that it is in lessons like these that learning is more likely to be disrupted although inspectors did not see any instances of such misbehaviour. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is satisfactory.

Senior leaders have worked hard to improve students' attendance and with some success. Overall attendance is now above average and persistent absenteeism has been reduced. However, the attendance of a sizeable group of students known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average and this is clearly contributing to the continuing underachievement of this group. For this reason, attendance remains inadequate.

Students have good opportunities to contribute to academy life and the community. They were involved in decisions to change the school uniform and in designing the anti-bullying policy. Older students plan their own social events and Year 9 students organised an 'Olympics' for local primary school children. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory but with notable strengths in students' cultural development. Students learn to appreciate abstract painting in art lessons, the academy has links with the Royal Ballet and a school in China and there is a 'Confucius classroom' funded by the Chinese government. The classroom enables students to experience Chinese culture and also to converse with Chinese students through a video conferencing link.

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These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils’ behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Where teaching is good, assessment information is used well to plan appropriately challenging activities which are delivered at a fast pace. Students are engaged by the tasks, including in the lengthier lessons of two hours or more. Opportunities for students to speak, think and work together are frequent. Questioning is used to challenge students to think deeply rather than to just recall facts and so helps consolidate their learning. Setting work with inappropriate challenge was a common feature of inadequate and satisfactory teaching. In an information and communication technology (ICT) lesson, for example, higher attaining Year 11 students who are predicted to attain grades A* to B in their English and mathematics GCSEs, were set work pitched at grades D to F. The tasks they were set were far too easy for them and failed to help them progress beyond what they could already do. Other common weaknesses include teachers talking to the whole class for lengthy periods and providing the same learning resources and activities to the class despite students’ wide range of different needs. A group of students with dyslexia, who spoke to an inspector, expressed concern that their special educational needs and/or disabilities were not met because, for instance, their teachers failed to adapt learning resources for them.

The curriculum is enhanced by the many partnerships which the academy has established and by its specialist sports status which enables the academy to offer a very wide range of subject choices. Similarly, the number and range of lunchtime and after-school clubs and sports activities is excellent, although the proportion of

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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students choosing to participate at lunchtimes is low and particularly so for girls. The academy recognises that, in redesigning the curriculum to provide a more primary-school-like experience for Year 7 students, and mixed-age classes for Years 9 to 11, the previous emphasis on the cross-curricular promotion of literacy and numeracy has slipped. Students make little use of ICT to improve their learning when working in other subjects. Parents and carers of Year 7 students say the transition from primary school was managed well but a few parents expected more provision for those students identified as gifted and talented. The one-to-one mentoring arrangements at the end of each school day mean that the aspirations and needs of individual students are well known by an adult at the academy who facilitates them getting the personalised support they require. Mentoring is increasingly enabling the academy to better engage with parents and carers, and has been effective in improving attendance.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders are ambitious but have not been effective in securing satisfactory teaching. Quality assurance procedures have not accurately diagnosed the professional development needs of teachers because, until very recently, they focused too much on what teachers were doing and not enough on the quality of learning that was taking place. Consequently, some strategies aimed at improving the quality of teaching have been misdirected and some have been unsuccessful with the same issues reappearing.

The governing body is well organised and has effective procedures for knowing the strengths and weaknesses of the academy. However, the information it has received from monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning and the progress students make has been unreliable and so the governing body believed the main school was performing better than was actually the case. The governing body is aware that the sixth form is ineffective and has been actively challenging the academy to improve sixth form outcomes. The effectiveness of the governing body is satisfactory and they exercise good oversight of financial planning and the management of the site.

The promotion of equality of opportunity is inadequate because there are important differences in the participation and performance of different groups of students. The participation of girls in lunchtime and after-school clubs, for example, is about half that of boys. Furthermore, the gap between the attainment of students known to be

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eligible for free school meals and their counterparts nationally has not narrowed enough. Changes were made to some safeguarding procedures during the inspection so that they were satisfactory by the time inspectors left the academy. The promotion of community cohesion is inadequate because senior leaders have not formally evaluated the academy’s context and used the outcomes to inform planning.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	4
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	4
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Sixth form

The proportion of students successfully completing their sixth form courses is low and the attainment of those that do complete them has been exceptionally low for the last four years. This is partly because some students have been allowed to start courses which are at too high a level in comparison to the grades they obtained at the end of Year 11 and partly because attendance in Year 12 is low. Consequently, a higher proportion of students than usual leaves during or at the end of Year 12 or continues into Year 13 to attain low grades.

Some of the best teaching at the academy is in the sixth form. Several outstanding lessons were seen and all teaching was at least satisfactory. Despite this strength in its provision, sixth form outcomes are inadequate because the curriculum does not meet all students’ needs and because the academic guidance and support students receive is not good enough. The leadership of the sixth form has failed to act effectively in response to evidence provided annually by the government showing alarmingly low success rates. The improvements that have been made have not been made quickly enough.

These are the grades for the sixth form

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Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	4
Taking into account:	4
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	4
The quality of provision in the sixth form	4
Leadership and management of the sixth form	4

Views of parents and carers

Only a small proportion of parents and carers returned questionnaires. The responses received were most positive about the leadership and management of the academy. It was evident from comments and conversations with parents and carers that the headteacher is held in high regard. However, the impact of leadership and management within the academy, which includes other senior and middle leaders, is inadequate.

Parents and carers were most concerned about the extent to which the academy helps their children lead healthy lifestyles and about behaviour. Although a few students complained of their learning being disrupted in lower attaining groups, behaviour generally is satisfactory. There is a wide range of sporting activities which students can participate in but the take-up rates are lower than is usually seen and particularly so for girls. The proportion of students choosing to eat healthy school meals is lower than average.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Manor Academy to complete a questionnaire about their views of the academy.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the academy.

The inspection team received 85 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1240 pupils registered at the academy.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	34	40	45	53	4	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	26	31	51	60	3	4	2	2
The school informs me about my child’s progress	28	33	47	55	7	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	29	48	56	8	9	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	17	20	50	59	3	4	1	1
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	18	21	47	55	12	14	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	18	53	62	12	14	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	18	21	50	59	5	6	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	25	29	47	55	4	5	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	26	44	52	10	12	3	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	22	44	52	4	5	3	4
The school is led and managed effectively	36	42	38	45	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	32	38	42	49	4	5	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and 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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.

7 October 2011

Dear Students



Inspection of The Manor Academy, Mansfield, NG19 8QA

Thank you for your friendly welcome when we inspected your academy. Some aspects are good, like the opportunities you have to contribute to academy and community life and you told us that you like the one-to-one mentoring you receive. Too much though, of what the academy provides for you is not good enough. Some of your teachers talk to the whole class for too long or set you work to do that is too easy or too difficult for some. Teachers do not mark your work often enough or set out how you can improve. Consequently, the academy's examination results have been low for a number of years. Although attendance is better than average overall, the attendance of some of students is still far too low. We found the overall effectiveness of your academy to be inadequate.

We have asked the governors, headteacher and senior staff to improve learning at the academy by making sure teachers do the following.

- Mark your books more often and explain to you how you can improve your work.
- Use assessments of your work to set you tasks at the right level of difficulty.
- Give you more opportunities in lessons to work together or on your own.

We have also asked the headteacher and other academy leaders to check carefully on your learning in lessons and the progress you are making, and to take swift action when any of you fall behind.

The headteacher will check carefully that this is happening and look to see that it is helping to make your examination results better as time goes on. We have judged your academy to require 'special measures'. This means the academy will receive additional help and other inspectors will visit regularly to check it is improving rapidly enough. You can help by improving your attendance, if you know it is lower than it should be, and by always trying your best.

With best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Anstead
Her Majesty's Inspector

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