

New Charter Academy

Broad oak Road, Ashton-Under-Lyne, OL6 8RF

Inspection dates 5–6 March 2013

| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory | 3 |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------|
| | This inspection: | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Quality of teaching | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Requires improvement | 3 |
| Leadership and management | | Requires improvement | 3 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The majority of students make the progress expected of them from starting points that are generally well-below average. However, not enough students make better progress than this for achievement to be good.
- Although the amount of good and better teaching has improved since the previous inspection, there is still too much teaching that requires improvement.
- Although behaviour in lessons and around the academy has improved since the previous inspection, the academy's behaviour policy and procedures are applied inconsistently in some lessons
- Leaders and managers do not allocate pupil-premium funding well enough, or check closely enough on the progress of these students, especially those who are known to be eligible for free school meals. Consequently, the gap with other similar students, although narrowing, remains too wide. Leaders have not ensured that teaching is consistently good.
- The sixth form requires improvement because the quality of teaching is inconsistent and this leads to variability in achievement.

The school has the following strengths

- The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection; much teaching is now good or better.
- Many disabled students, those who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make better than expected progress because of the effective support that they receive.
- Attendance is above average because its importance is given a very high profile and students are enjoying their learning more.
- The principal provides the academy with strong and purposeful leadership that is setting much higher expectations.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 43 lessons. Two observations were carried out jointly with members of the academy leadership team.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders and managers, groups of students and staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the academy sponsor.
- Inspectors looked carefully at a wide range of documentation including: self-evaluation summaries; the academy improvement plan; information about students' achievement; students' work in their books; policies and procedures relating to behaviour, attendance and safety; and analyses of examination results.
- Inspectors took account of 25 online responses from parents on Parent View, questionnaires returned by staff and a summary of an academy questionnaire sent recently to parents.

Inspection team

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Stephen Wall, Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Gary Kelly | Additional Inspector |
| Osama Abdul Rahim | Additional Inspector |
| Andrew Henderson | Additional Inspector |
| Johan MacKinnon | Additional Inspector |

Full report

Information about this school

- New Charter Academy opened in September 2008 and is much larger in size than the majority of secondary schools nationally.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium (students known to be eligible for free school meals, students looked after by the local authority and those from armed service families) is very high. There are no students from service families currently in the school. In 2011 and 2012 there were no students in Year 11 who were looked after by the local authority and no GCSE results for this group of students.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is above average. Most of these students are of Pakistani heritage.
- The proportion of students that speak English as an additional language is well-above average.
- The proportion of students that are supported through school action is well-above average, as is the proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of students who join the school at other than normal times is well-above average.
- In 2012 the school did not meet the current government floor standards that set minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- A very small number of students attend courses at Tameside College.
- The school moved into new, purpose-built accommodation in September 2011.
- The sixth form was opened in September 2010 and is much smaller than most sixth forms nationally.
- Following a reorganisation of the senior leadership team, many new leaders have been in post since September 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make all teaching in the main school and the sixth form at least good to improve the rate of students' progress by:
 - making sure that all teaching uses information about students' progress and abilities to set tasks at the right level that are neither too hard nor too easy
 - raising expectations of what students are capable of achieving, especially for the more able
 - providing students with more opportunities to work by themselves and reducing their reliance on the teacher
 - ensuring that all teaching uses questioning effectively to deepen students' understanding and develop their speaking skills
 - making sure that marking is consistent in showing students clearly the steps that they need to take to improve their work.
- Improve behaviour further by making sure that all teachers are consistent in applying the academy's behaviour policy and procedures in lessons.
- Ensure leaders rapidly improve the achievement of students eligible for the pupil premium by:
 - making sure that plans to allocate pupil-premium funding are more carefully targeted at meeting the students' needs and accelerating their progress
 - evaluating more effectively the impact of actions on the progress that these students make.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Students join the academy with attainment that is generally well-below average.
- In recent years attainment by the end of Key Stage 4 has been on an upward trend, although still remaining below average. In 2012, however, attainment dipped to just below the government floor standards because a large number of students did not achieve at least a grade C at GCSE in English, despite the academy's expectations and predictions, which had been previously accurate.
- Academy data, confirmed by inspection evidence, show that the upward trend in attainment in English is set to be restored in 2013.
- Attainment in mathematics is improving rapidly because leaders have taken decisive action to tackle and eradicate inadequate teaching and improve the quality of subject leadership and management.
- In recent years, most students have made the progress expected of them given their starting points. However, the proportion of students making better progress than this has not improved rapidly enough. Academy data, again confirmed by inspection evidence, show that students are now making progress at a faster rate because the quality of teaching is improving securely.
- Achievement in the sixth form shows some variation across different subjects because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching that does not always give students opportunities to work on their own.
- The average GCSE points score of students known to be eligible for free school meals is below the average score attained by similar students across the country. Students known to be eligible for free school meals attain approximately a grade lower in English and mathematics than other students in the school at the end of Key Stage 4. The gap is starting to close but leaders and managers accept that a sharper focus on meeting these students' needs is necessary to close it at a faster pace.
- Academy data for pupils who are eligible for the Year 7 catch-up premium show that this group of students make good progress in developing their basic skills in numeracy and literacy because of the effective provision and support that they receive.
- Most disabled students or those with special educational needs make the progress expected of them and a growing number are making better progress than this because of the increasingly effective support that they receive.
- Similarly, most students from different minority ethnic groups, including those of Pakistani heritage, those who speak English as an additional language and those who join the academy at other than normal times also make at least the progress expected of them because their needs are met effectively.
- The progress of the very few pupils who attend courses at Tameside College is checked meticulously. Academy data show that nearly all make the progress that is expected of them.
- The academy does not enter students early for GCSE examinations.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The proportion of good and outstanding teaching is growing because leaders check its quality rigorously to diagnose and then rectify any weaknesses. Despite this, too much teaching still requires improvement and this acts as a brake on accelerating progress at a faster pace.
- Where teaching requires improvement it is characterised generally by:
 - a failure to use information on students' needs and abilities to set tasks that are appropriately challenging with the result that activities are too easy for some students and too hard for others
 - expectations that are too low for what students are capable of, especially the more-able

students

- teachers doing too much in providing explanations when students would learn more effectively by being left to find things out for themselves
- questioning which does not make pupils think deeply enough or develop their speaking skills by insisting on extended answers.
- Where teaching is good or better, however, students enjoy rising to challenging tasks and make rapid progress. They tackle problems enthusiastically and are encouraged to explain their answers with extended responses to probing questions. Lesson planning takes students on a step-by-step route of progress so that students know what is expected of them and can see the progress they are making. Activities are varied so that students are kept engaged and 'on their toes' at all times.
- For example, in an outstanding Year 7 Spanish lesson on food and drink, teaching drilled students expertly in new vocabulary and then extended the challenge by encouraging the students to use the new words in increasingly complex sentences to give likes and dislikes with the more-able students giving reasons for their preferences with excellent pronunciation and impressive confidence. Students were engrossed in their learning and made excellent progress as a result.
- Teaching assistants play an effective role in supporting classroom teaching and in supporting groups of students in smaller withdrawal groups, especially students who require extra support with their English and those who are disabled or have special educational needs.
- Students who have weaker reading and numeracy skills are supported effectively in Key Stage 3. Their progress is checked on meticulously and school data show that most make rapid progress.
- Most pupils say that they enjoy reading. The majority of young students take out books regularly from the school library and talk knowledgeably about their favourite books and why they like them so much.
- Teachers mark students' written work regularly but the quality of their written comments are inconsistent and too few show students clearly enough what they need to do to improve their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Students say that behaviour is improving. However, they say that low-level disruption still happens sometimes when lessons are not very interesting or when teachers do not follow the system for sanctions to deal with bad behaviour. Inspection evidence confirms students' views. Increasingly, however, the academy is succeeding in encouraging students to behave well.
- Parents are generally satisfied with the standard of behaviour at the academy.
- Students say that they are enjoying learning more because teaching is improving. This is reflected in their attendance, which is above average. Around the academy students are generally respectful to each other, the adults working with them and to visitors.
- Students say, and academy records show, that bullying of any sort is rare and that, if it happens, it is dealt with effectively. Students feel safe in school. They know what constitute dangerous situations and how to avoid them or deal with them. Students know the potential dangers posed by using internet sites inappropriately.
- The academy checks meticulously on the attendance and personal welfare of the few pupils who attend courses off-site.
- The school cares very effectively for potentially vulnerable students and those who are in the care of the local authority. Their circumstances and needs are identified and every step is taken to make sure that they receive full pastoral and academic support.
- Students of differing backgrounds and abilities get on well together. Students who join the school at other than normal times, often speaking little or no English, are 'buddied up' successfully with other students to ease their induction into their new surroundings.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management requires improvement as leaders do not produce plans that have a sharp enough focus on allocating pupil-premium funding to meet students' needs. Nor is the impact of pupil-premium spending assessed with enough rigour to give an accurate evaluation of the value for money it gives.
- The principal provides the school with strong and purposeful leadership. There is a sharply focused view of how successful the academy should and can be. At the heart of the quest for improvement lies a firm belief in improving the quality of teaching. The proportion of good and outstanding teaching has risen since the previous inspection which shows the growing success of turning the vision into reality and the academy's ability to carry on improving. However, most other leaders are too new in their roles and it is too soon to see the full impact of their work on raising achievement.
- Leadership has added rigour to procedures for checking on the quality of teaching and learning. The outcomes of observations of teaching are used astutely to set targets for improvement. Professional development of high quality is provided to give effective, individual support for teachers.
- Aspirations for students' progress and achievement have been raised. Targets are increasingly demanding and performance management holds staff accountable against these more challenging targets. There is a clear link between salary progression and performance management that is clearly understood by staff.
- While equality of opportunity is mostly strong across the academy, leaders accept the need to raise the achievement of students eligible for pupil-premium funding.
- Students in the main school and the sixth form are provided with a curriculum that meets their different needs and abilities, helps them to develop their skills and prepares them well to live in a diverse society. There is an impressive range of popular enrichment activities that makes a strong contribution to students' personal development and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Strong links with parents have been forged.
- Policies and procedures for safeguarding students are fully in place and give no cause for concern.
- The academy sponsor provides effective support in the drive to improve teaching and achievement, especially through financial support for training for staff and in advising on personnel issues.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body holds the academy effectively to account. It knows how well the academy is doing and about the quality of teaching and where it could do better. It has not shirked difficult decisions in supporting the principal to tackle weak teaching and improve its quality. Governors understand information about the school's performance against similar schools across the country and use it to ask relevant questions to hold the academy to account. The governing body has a firm grasp on the academy's finances although the allocation of pupil-premium funding lacks some focus. The governing body understands fully performance management and, in conjunction with the principal, uses the outcomes to take decisions about staff salary progression. The governing body keeps itself up-to-date through regular training.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
|---------|----------------------|--|
| Grade | Judgement | Description |
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 2 | Good | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

School details

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| Unique reference number | 135508 |
| Local authority | Tameside |
| Inspection number | 406605 |

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

| | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Type of school | Academy sponsor-led |
| School category | Non-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 | 1,360 |
| Of which, number on roll in sixth form | 52 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Ian Munro |
| Principal | Stephen Ball |
| Date of previous school inspection | 16 June 2011 |
| Telephone number | 0161 241 9555 |
| Fax number | 0161 344 2629 |
| Email address | admin@newcharteracademy.org.uk |

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

