

# Manchester Creative and Media Academy for Girls

300 Victoria Avenue East, Blackley, Manchester, M9 7SS

## Inspection dates

12–13 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
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 an academy that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- Girls' achievement is not as good as that of girls nationally, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Middle and higher-attaining girls make less progress than their peers.
- Teaching is not of a consistently high quality to accelerate girls' progress. Some lessons are undemanding or not suitably tailored to the abilities of different students. Not all teachers are confident in improving girls' literacy skills or developing their ability to work independently.
- Teachers do not consistently challenge students to attend lessons punctually, do their best and take pride in their work.
- Some students do not have positive attitudes to learning and on occasion lateness to lessons and low-level disruption impedes their progress.
- When subject leaders identify weaknesses in teaching, they do not always take prompt actions that are designed to bring about improvement.

### The academy has the following strengths

- Girls' attendance has risen and is now approaching the national level. Their behaviour in lessons and around the site has improved; most students enjoy being members of the academy and want to succeed.
- Teaching has improved as a result of carefully considered professional development and support. Teachers' planning and marking are better and there are some examples of outstanding practice that is accelerating girls' progress so that it is approaching national levels.
- The academy's governors and leaders evaluate its performance accurately and are working effectively with their partners to secure improvements.
- Students and their parents agree that the academy is safe, harmonious community.
- Pastoral care is of a high quality; staff work hard to support students who are experiencing difficulties and build their self-esteem.
- The academy's sixth form is good. It provides courses that meet the needs of its students and prepares them well for their next steps in education, employment or training. Students make good progress in response to ambitious teaching and sensitive support.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspections of Manchester Creative and Media Academies for boys and for girls were undertaken as a single event because the two academies have a single Trust and governing body, leadership team and staff. They share premises and girls and boys are frequently taught in the same classes.
- Inspectors observed 41 lessons, taught by 39 different teachers. Five of these observations were conducted with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also visited an assembly, and several tutorial sessions. They observed students' behaviour around the site at social times.
- Discussions were held with the Principal, senior leaders, heads of department, staff, two governors including the Chair of the Governing Body, a local primary headteacher and an adviser from the Schools Partnership Trust Academies (SPTA) who has quality assured the work of the academy.
- Inspectors held meetings with five groups of students and spoke to others informally. One inspector toured the academy with two students. Inspectors listened to a number of students reading during lessons.
- The inspection team observed the academy's work and looked at a range of documentation, including the academy's self-evaluation, improvement planning, monitoring records, analysis of students' achievement, performance management information, behaviour logs and safeguarding arrangements. They considered information provided on the academy's website.
- There were insufficient responses to the on-line questionnaire, Parent View, for consideration during this inspection. Inspectors took account of the academy's own surveys of parents' opinions.

Shirley Gornall, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Patrick Geraghty

Her Majesty's Inspector

Drew Crashaw

Her Majesty's Inspector

Kathleen Harris

Additional Inspector

Lyn Field

Additional Inspector

## Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

### Information about this academy

- Manchester Creative and Media Academies for Girls and Boys opened in September 2009. In September 2012 they moved to a single purpose-built site. The academies are led and managed by a single governing body and senior leadership team and are generally referred to as Manchester Creative and Media Academy. Boys and girls are taught by the same teachers, sometimes in co-educational groups and sometimes as single sex groups.
- Manchester Creative and Media Academy has applied to be recognised as a fully co-educational institution with effect from September 2014. The girls' academy is smaller than the average sized high school and the boys' academy is much smaller. Together, girls' and boys' academies form one average-sized high school.
- The academy's lead sponsor is The Manchester College and its co-sponsors are Microsoft and Manchester City Council. The Trust arrangements are being re-established to include SPTA, which provides educational support.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is very high, at over twice the national figure. The pupil premium is additional funding for those students who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- A much higher than average proportion of students is from minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest of which are Pakistani and African. A higher than average proportion of students speaks English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students registered as disabled or with a statement of special educational needs and those supported at school action plus is average. The proportion of students supported at school action is much higher than average.
- There is a small co-educational sixth form that offers a range of BTEC courses.
- The proportion of students joining or leaving the academy at other than the usual times is broadly average.
- A small number of students are educated at Manchester Pupil Referral Unit. A few study vocational courses at Community Service Volunteers, (CSV) a charity which provides vocational learning, or attend The Manchester College.
- In 2012, the academy's performance was below the government's floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- When it was inspected in March 2012, the academy was given a notice to improve.

## What does the academy need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in Key Stages 3 and 4 so that a greater proportion is at least good, leading to more rapid progress and raised attainment, for middle and higher-attaining girls, especially in English, mathematics and sciences by:
  - planning lessons that are tailored to the different attainment levels of students
  - providing more opportunities for students to develop their independent learning skills
  - ensuring that tasks are engaging and challenge students
  - using questioning more effectively so that students develop their reasoning and extend their thinking by giving more developed answers
  - fostering good literacy skills in subjects across the curriculum
  - challenging students to present their work carefully.
- Improve behaviour to be good by:
  - ensuring that the academy's code of conduct is consistently applied in all lessons and around the academy
  - improving punctuality to lessons so that learning time is not wasted.
- Improve leadership by:
  - ensuring that all staff who are returning to the academy from maternity leave, as well as those new to post, receive appropriate induction, including with regard to co-educational teaching, so that their contribution to achievement is immediate
  - strengthening the role of subject leaders in improving the quality of teaching
  - ensuring that swift action is taken by subject leaders to address areas of underperformance in teaching apparent through monitoring.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Girls enter the academy with standards that are typically below those found nationally. In 2012, their achievement rose in mathematics but stalled in English, so that the proportion leaving with five or more good GCSE qualifications including these subjects was low. Students currently attending the academy are making better progress from their relative starting points. Results of tests and validated teacher assessments show that the gap between the academy's performance and the national average is closing, although fewer girls make exceptional progress than is nationally the case in English, mathematics and science. Girls with middle or higher attainment when they leave primary school make less progress than their peers.
- Girls who are supported by the pupil premium do less well than their peers. In 2012, their GCSE results in English were about half a grade behind their peers. The gap between these groups of students is starting to close because of good quality mentoring and tuition that this funding provides.
- Girls from minority ethnic groups made better progress overall than their peers in 2012. The academy's data for students currently on roll indicates that the progress of students from different groups, including white British, is improving.
- The achievement of disabled students and those with special educational needs requires improvement. Students' achievement is boosted by specialist support in individual or small group situations, but not all teachers are confident in adapting work in lessons to meet the needs of different groups of students. In 2012, attainment was particularly low for students with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties who were educated offsite. The academy has reviewed and restricted its use of offsite provision and students who access it are now making better progress.
- The academy enters students early for GCSE in both English and mathematics. Students are re-entered at the end of Year 11 so that they can boost their grades. This policy is kept under review, with careful thought given to which examinations are most appropriate for individuals.
- Achievement is good for the relatively small numbers of students who study modern foreign languages to GCSE level, and in courses relating to the academy's creative and media specialism.
- The achievement of the small group of girls who attend the sixth form is good. They make strong progress in their BTEC courses in response to high quality teaching and individual support.
- Some students' progress, including some of those with special educational needs, is hampered by poor literacy skills and weaknesses in the accuracy and presentation of their writing. Their skills as team-workers are stronger and they enjoy the challenge of cooperative learning.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching has improved. Inadequate teaching has largely been eradicated, but there is too much variability in consistency in quality between and within subjects.
- In weaker lessons, teachers tend to talk too much, resulting in girls becoming passive and, as one put it 'switching off or messing about.' There is insufficient challenge in some lessons, shallow questioning and few opportunities for students to work collaboratively or independently. Some teachers' planning indicates that they intend different students to achieve different outcomes, but they provide them all with the same tasks and do not adjust the pace or nature of the work for high or lower-attaining girls. This results in a slow pace of learning.
- The better lessons are characterised by pace, energy and challenge. This was exemplified in an outstanding drama lesson in which girls mimed the introduction of Alice in Wonderland to the Mad Hatter's tea party with great skill and concentration. In a highly effective Spanish lesson, girls decided on the dishes characters would select from a Spanish menu after translating their

profiles. They calculated costs, using their numeracy skills to apply currency exchange rates and showed enjoyment of learning in a real-life, practical context.

- Teachers' marking has improved. The best marking celebrates students' achievements and provides clear advice on the next steps to be taken. Some teachers identify literacy errors and expect students to make corrections. This practice is not consistently followed across the academy and some marking is infrequent and uninformative. Teachers do not routinely insist that students present their work neatly.
- There is a drive in the academy to improve students' literacy standards. Literacy workbooks have been produced for use during tutorial sessions. These are helping to secure students' understanding of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Reading and mathematics are not systematically developed across all subjects, although there are examples of good practice in individual lessons. Opportunities for these basic skills to be developed across the curriculum are not strong enough.
- Specialist teaching in the sixth form is good, enabling students to apply practical skills and plan elements of their own learning.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils**

### **requires improvement**

- 'We're not perfect but behaviour is much better than it was and it's easier to learn now.' This view was expressed by a student and echoed by teachers and parents. The poor behaviour identified in the last inspection report has largely been eradicated. Permanent exclusion from the academy is very rare and the number of students receiving fixed-term exclusions has significantly reduced. On occasions, low-level disruption occurs in lessons, sometimes linked to the use of mobile phones. Most girls obey their teachers and concentrate on their work.
- A clear behaviour management policy has been developed. Students are well aware of the consequences of poor behaviour, and they appreciate the rewards they received for good behaviour and hard work. Not all teachers implement the policy consistently; girls are aware that some teachers are 'softer' than others and a few take advantage of this situation.
- Attendance has improved markedly. Younger students' attendance is in line with the national average, although attendance as a whole is still below average. The number of students who are persistently absent from the academy has been significantly reduced. This is due to early intervention and tenacious working by academy staff with students, families and other agencies.
- Punctuality at the start of the day has improved through careful monitoring and the immediate consequence of same-day detention for latecomers. Some girls take too long to move between lessons; this behaviour is not routinely challenged by all teachers and reduces girls' learning time.
- Girls told inspectors that bullying in the academy is rare and that incidents are dealt with quickly. Corridor displays include definitions of all forms of bullying. Sources of advice are clearly signposted and girls have confidence that everyone has 'someone to turn to' to help them resolve problems. A letter from a parent to the academy praised the way in which leaders responded swiftly and effectively to address reported bullying.
- The girls appreciate the opportunities they have to contribute to the leadership of the school, including as council members and reading buddies. They recognise the improvements made to the academy and want to play their part in its future development. They value the 'schools within school' system and the healthy competition this promotes between Bridgewater, Rylands and Whitworth families.

### **The leadership and management**

### **requires improvement**

- The leadership of the academy has encountered significant recent challenges due to required changes in staffing and several maternity leaves. The Principal has retained a strong focus on improvement and has directed the energy of the senior team astutely. The academy's view of its own performance is accurate and based on wide-ranging data, including students' and parents'

perceptions.

- Progress has been made in improving key areas of the academy's work: teaching, behaviour and attendance are all better than they were a year ago. Partly these improvements reflect on the academy's well-targeted use of pupil premium and catch-up funding. The move to making the academy co-educational is beginning to pay dividends; boys and girls want to work together. The most recent academy data indicates that achievement is improving and that girls are striving to reach higher standards. There are good rates of progression from the academy to a range of colleges in Manchester.
- The academy's values: Aspire, Respect, Contribute, Care are emphasised through the assembly and personal development programmes. The academy operates as a harmonious community in which students recognise each other's differences and racist incidents are rare. Equality of opportunity is promoted through the academy's policies. Evidence of narrowing attainment gaps between different groups of students indicates that these policies are beginning to have an impact.
- Subject leaders are developing a better understanding of the ways in which they can tackle underperformance within their areas of responsibility, but have yet to ensure consistency in teachers' management of behaviour or strategies to meet the needs of different groups of students. A well-designed coaching programme has enabled participating teachers to develop their skills but more needs to be done to share the best quality teaching that exists within the academy.
- Senior leaders have an accurate view of the quality of teaching across the academy. Leaders at all levels take part in monitoring that ensures a clear, shared view of the academy's performance. Sometimes actions resulting from this monitoring are not swift or precise enough.
- A good induction programme supports teachers new to the academy. Staff willingly help each other. Teachers returning from absence commented that the academy 'feels like a different place.' Although this comment reflects the positive recent changes in the academy, it also highlights a need for effective induction of the substantial number of staff due to return to or join the academy later this year.
- The academy is effective in developing partnerships to enhance provision, as reflected in its nomination for a prestigious business in the community partnership award.
- **The governance of the academy:**
  - A new Chair of the Governing Body has been appointed. He works very closely with the senior leaders and has a thorough knowledge of the academy's work. Governors bring relevant, varied professional experience and personal skills to their role. The Trust has been strengthened. Sponsorship arrangements and lines of accountability are clearly defined. The governing body receives objective, accurate reports of the academy's performance, asks searching questions and supports leaders in finding practical solutions to problems, including making effective use of pupil premium funding to meet students' needs through a range of programmes, including individual support and mentoring. Governors are rigorous in holding the Principal and senior leaders to account. They ensure that teachers' performance is robustly managed through the review of evidence from lesson observations, students' performance data and scrutiny of students' workbooks in making pay recommendations. Governors undertake their statutory responsibilities assiduously, including ensuring that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.



## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	135905
<b>Local authority</b>	Manchester
<b>Inspection number</b>	408878

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	757
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	23
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	MCMA Trust
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Carter
<b>Principal</b>	Helen Phillips
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 March 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 681 1592
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