

Old Hall Drive Academy

Old Hall Drive, Gorton, Manchester, Greater Manchester M18 7FU

Inspection dates

22–23 January 2019

| Overall effectiveness | Good |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Good |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Good |
| Outcomes for pupils | Good |
| Early years provision | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Strong leadership by the executive principal and principal has provided a clear direction and driven improvement.
- Determined actions by leaders mean that almost all pupils are now making good progress across a range of subjects.
- Teachers occasionally do not give work that challenges pupils sufficiently. The proportions of pupils attaining the higher standards and greater depth in English and mathematics are not high enough.
- The curriculum contributes to both the pupils' personal development and the good and improving progress that they make.
- Governors have a wide range of skills. They are supportive of the school and contribute to its continuous improvement.
- Leaders receive effective and consistent support from the trust. This has provided stability and enabled them to make the improvements necessary to raise the quality of teaching and learning.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is improving. These pupils 'grow' personally, socially and academically because of the effectiveness of the support offered by the school.

- Subject leaders who are relatively new to their roles and the early years leader have not had the time to monitor the improvements to the curriculum or their impact on progress and attainment.
- Pupils generally demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning. Strong relationships between teachers and pupils contribute to pupils' growing confidence and the quality of learning.
- Children in the early years make good progress. Increasing numbers of children are attaining a good level of development, but this is still below national averages.
- Leaders have used professional development and training opportunities within the school and in partnership with other schools in the trust to improve the quality of teaching.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported to make good progress from their starting points.
- Attendance rates have improved. Leaders have taken a wide range of actions to improve the attendance of pupils.
- A strong culture of safeguarding exists throughout the school. Procedures for keeping pupils safe are secure and clear. The pastoral support for pupils is a high priority for leaders.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership and management by:
 - continuing to develop the role of subject leaders, to further improve their understanding of pupils' attainment and progress in their subjects
 - further developing leadership of the early years to enable more children to achieve a good level of development.
- Continue to provide greater challenge in teaching, so that more pupils attain at greater depth and higher standards.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management Good

- The executive principal and school principal have driven the improvements needed to improve pupils' overall achievement since the last inspection of the school before it became an academy. Joining the trust in 2016 has provided leaders with stability and consistency in the development of teaching and learning. This has been key to the improved culture and direction of the school.
- Senior leaders know the school well and are accurate in their judgement of where Old Hall Drive Academy is on its improvement journey. Improvements made so far are due to leaders promoting and 'living' the school's RESPECT (respect, empathy, self-awareness, positivity, excellence, communication and teamwork) curriculum.
- Raising expectations and aspirations have been essential to the improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. Leaders have united the staff team so that everyone is determined to achieve the school's vision, 'All different, all equal'. Leaders have high expectations of their pupils. Leaders provide support for pupils to overcome any barriers to learning through an effective pastoral support system. It is clear that leaders know individual pupils and their circumstances well.
- Leadership of teaching and learning in English and mathematics is improving. Leaders use professional development opportunities well to improve the teaching skills and confidence of staff. Although they know their subjects well and use checking procedures to identify improvements, they do not have a clear view of the impact of their actions. However, the quality of teaching in both subjects has improved in recent years.
- Staff feel valued and are very positive about the leadership of the school. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved. This is as a result of the contribution of coaching to develop teaching and leadership skills and the clarity and consistency of the curriculum. This is planned around 'missions' – an enquiry approach to teaching subjects within the curriculum, linked to the exploits of famous explorers and pioneers. Leaders evaluate teachers' performance through robust and supportive procedures.
- Leaders have reviewed how they spend the pupil premium funding. They have become much more adept at identifying the barriers to pupils' learning. They have introduced a range of pastoral and academic support to overcome them. National research on the effectiveness of interventions helps leaders to decide which are most likely to be successful. This clearer focus on disadvantaged pupils' needs and the interventions to meet them is beginning to raise their achievement.
- The funding for pupils with SEND is also used effectively. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is passionate and determined in her role to improve the progress and attainment of these pupils. The SENCo values the support that she receives from the trust. She has developed clear procedures to support and monitor teaching and learning. Through this effective support, most current pupils with SEND are making good progress from their starting points.
- The physical education (PE) and sports funding for primary schools is used very well.

Significant investment in sport has encouraged greater participation rates. Professional development for staff means that they are now more confident about their teaching in this area. There is a wide range of sports and after-school clubs for pupils to participate in. Pupils who spoke with inspectors value these opportunities; attendance at these activities is high.

- A broad range of opportunities for enrichment contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils elected to the school council respond positively to the responsibility for sharing the views of their classes. Those elected as head boy and girl, and their deputies, carry out their roles with a deep sense of responsibility and pride. Pupils enjoy the opportunity to support charities and to develop their musical talents. They have a clear understanding of fundamental British values. The school environment promotes the school's values effectively through motivational quotes.
- Leadership of subjects other than English and mathematics is developing. Subject leaders have identified the key skills and knowledge to be taught to each year group during the year. However, these subject leaders are relatively new to their roles. They have not had time to monitor the improvements to the curriculum or to evaluate the impact of their actions on pupils' attainment and progress.

Governance of the school

- Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are regular visitors into school. They have improved their understanding of information on pupils' achievement, including that of different groups. Governors share in the drawing up of plans to address any areas for improvement, including how they will monitor the impact of leaders' actions. This supports governors to carry out their functions effectively.
- Clear lines of accountability and communication between governors and the trust ensure that leaders are held to account for the effectiveness of the education provided to the school's pupils. Governors were fully involved in the decision to review the pupil premium funding strategy. Their monitoring is now even more focused on the impact of this funding on the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils.
- Good relationships exist between the governing body and school leaders. The governing body comprises a group of committed people who have the skills and expertise to monitor the standard of education provided. The school benefits from a wide range of effective support from the trust. This includes the identification of additional governors with the skills and expertise to complement those already within the governing body.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding in which pupils feel safe and valued. The school's procedures and practices are fit for purpose. Safer recruitment processes are secure, ensuring that only suitable people are recruited to work with pupils. Leaders provide effective training and regular information updates to ensure that all staff are well aware of their responsibilities to safeguard pupils.

- Parents, carers and pupils feel that the school is a safe place to be. Leaders, including governors, ensure that staff receive high-quality training. As a result, staff know how to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse. Staff are very clear about the school's procedures for reporting and recording any concerns that they have regarding the safeguarding of pupils. Leaders are tenacious and also sympathetic in their work to protect vulnerable pupils.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. Leaders have implemented clear programmes to teach pupils about personal and internet safety. Teachers discuss the danger associated with class visits outside school, so that pupils understand their role in keeping themselves safe.

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| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
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- Leaders have taken successful action to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Most pupils now benefit from effective teaching that allows them to make good progress in a range of subjects.
 - Pupils are improving their fluency and speed of recall of important mathematical facts. Consequently, they can deal with larger and more complex numbers with increasing confidence. They are gaining a better understanding of calculation strategies through the opportunities provided to reason and explain their thinking. However, teachers do not challenge pupils to deepen their mathematical understanding sufficiently well. Pupils therefore draw on a relatively narrow mathematical vocabulary in their explanations. The proportion of current pupils attaining the school's higher standards is increasing, but nevertheless remains too low overall.
 - In English, teachers have raised their expectations of the standards that pupils can reach in their writing. Teaching has been adapted to focus even more on vocabulary and the content of pupils' writing. Pupils are also encouraged to improve their own writing. These actions have helped to ensure that current pupils across the school are making good progress and producing better pieces of writing. However, the application of phonics to spelling and the consistency of tense remain weak for some pupils in Years 4 and 5. Improvements to writing made independently by pupils in some classes are too superficial to improve the quality of their writing.
 - The teaching of reading is effective. Year 2 pupils read well and have an accurate understanding of what they have read. Year 3 pupils understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. Older pupils enjoy a wide range of books by a variety of authors. They read with intonation and expression and have an improving understanding of what they have read.
 - Leaders have employed several teaching assistants across the school, who work effectively to support pupils with SEND. Teachers make accurate assessments of pupils' learning needs. Teaching and learning is well matched to these identified needs, so that pupils are beginning to make good progress from their starting points.
 - The 'missions' approach to planning and teaching the curriculum allows teachers to develop English and mathematics through other subjects. Pupils in key stage 2 appreciate the chance to apply their knowledge of writing structures and what they have read, to an historical context. Mathematical charts and tables are used well to

record and explain geographical and scientific findings.

- A strength of teaching across the school is the use of questioning to encourage pupils to think for themselves or to clarify misconceptions. Pupils of all abilities recognise the importance of this strategy in helping them to become independent and confident learners. Effective questioning allows pupils to understand how well they are acquiring knowledge, skills and understanding in a range of subjects.
- Teachers use assessment with increasing effectiveness to ensure that pupils are learning and making progress. When teachers observe any misconceptions, they use a range of strategies to work with individuals or groups to address them. Consequently, pupils are confident that they will get the support that they need to learn successfully. However, this is not always the case across the school. Occasionally, teachers do not provide sufficient challenge to the most able pupils.
- Teachers have an improving subject knowledge. They mainly use it well to plan learning that engages pupils' interest and provides sufficiently challenging work for most pupils. In some subjects, such as science and computing, this results in high-quality pieces of detailed work. However, this is not consistent across all subjects.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare, particularly through the RESPECT curriculum, is good. Pupils feel safe in school and understand how to keep themselves safe. They recognise the many different strategies that leaders use to keep them safe, including, for example, lessons on road safety and cyber-bullying.
- A typical comment, endorsed by the group of pupils spoken to during the inspection was: 'I love my school more than anything else.' Pupils value the support and encouragement that they receive from their teachers. They are developing the self-confidence and independence to be successful learners. Pupils are particularly appreciative of the clarifications and reminders from staff about past learning. They described lessons as 'fun'. Presentation in their books is sometimes untidy, but as they move through the school, pupils show a growing sense of pride in their work.
- The Kiwi Club (organised to give disadvantaged pupils opportunities to participate in activities outside school that they otherwise wouldn't experience) develops social and financial management skills effectively and raises aspirations and self-confidence. Pupils who have participated in this club praise the work of staff. Pupils spoke positively about the impact it has had on their personal development.
- Pupils benefit from several clubs and visits that the staff provide. Pupils appreciate the range of sports clubs and the trust-wide sports day. These activities, along with regular opportunities to support various charities and to learn about other faiths, enhance and enrich pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- There are many opportunities for pupils to take on positions of responsibility in the school. These include becoming a member of the school council. Pupils elected to these roles carry out their duties with pride and to good effect.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are attentive in class and learning is rarely disrupted by poor behaviour. Pupils generally conduct themselves well around the school. They are welcoming to visitors and are polite and friendly to adults and to each other.
- Inspection evidence shows that the rare incidents of bullying and poor behaviour are well managed by leaders and usually involve discussions with parents. Pupils involved in any incidents are guided to change and modify their behaviour.
- Pupils spoken to during the inspection stated that there is no bullying in the school. They are clear about the school's systems for promoting good behaviour. They have confidence in the staff to deal with the rare incidents of poor behaviour.
- Pupils' attendance last year continued to rise towards the national average due to leaders taking effective action. The attendance leader has established a series of robust and rigorous systems and procedures to address attendance, punctuality and persistent absence. Discussions take place with parents to support them to understand the importance of regular attendance. Staff celebrate good attendance in weekly assemblies.

| Outcomes for pupils | Good |
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| ■ Leaders and governors took decisive action in 2016 to improve outcomes. This was because achievement across the school in reading, writing and mathematics was below national averages for pupils' progress and attainment. Their actions included joining the trust, which provided stability and consistency. New leaders were appointed to monitor and improve the quality of teaching and learning. These measures resulted in improvements in progress and attainment in 2017 and 2018 in the national assessments in key stages 1 and 2. However, despite these improvements, the combined reading, writing and mathematics attainment for key stage 2 pupils and writing attainment for key stage 1 pupils remain below national averages. Attainment at the higher levels in writing and mathematics is also below national averages at key stage 2. | Good |

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| ■ Work in books and the school's own assessment information indicate that most current pupils now make good progress across a range of subjects, including English and mathematics. This is because of the improvements in the quality of teaching resulting from appropriate training and coaching and the appointment of new staff. While many current pupils achieve well, some of the most able pupils do not achieve the higher standards of which they are capable. | Good |
| ■ Work in pupils' mathematics books and school records show that most pupils are making good progress. Pupils' knowledge and skills are improving, and they are developing a deepening understanding of calculation processes. However, opportunities to say how they came to their answers and develop their reasoning skills are less well developed. Pupils across the school are beginning to draw on their increasing mathematical knowledge and understanding to explain their thought processes, especially in Years 5 and 6. Elsewhere in school, though, pupils' | Good |

explanations lack sufficient detail.

- Pupils' writing includes a variety of sentence structures and phrases to add interest. Pupils in key stage 1 use wider vocabulary and are developing their use of the language of traditional stories. Older pupils include similes and other descriptions effectively to create mood. Teachers have high expectations and include examples from literature to enthuse the pupils. This approach ensures that most pupils are making good progress. Older pupils are producing emotive and cohesive pieces of writing. However, the application of phonics and spelling by pupils in key stage 1 and Years 3 and 4 is weak.
- Pupils read with appropriate fluency and comprehension, considering their age and ability. They are beginning to use their knowledge of phonics effectively to read unfamiliar words. They read widely and for pleasure and enjoy reading. Pupils in Year 1 achieve well in the national phonics check.
- At the end of key stages 1 and 2 in 2018, attainment for disadvantaged pupils was not as strong as that of other pupils nationally. Teachers are devising more appropriate support for these pupils through their teaching plans. Leaders use reviews of progress and attainment each half term to determine the impact of this support on pupils' achievements. As a result, most disadvantaged pupils are now making good progress, particularly in mathematics. They are beginning to attain as highly as other pupils in school.
- Pupils with SEND are making good progress from their starting points. The SENCo manages provision efficiently and identifies pupils' needs effectively. Pupils benefit from carefully planned interventions with well-sequenced lessons and support that helps them to make good progress. Increasing numbers of pupils with SEND are working at age-related expectations.
- Pupils acquire appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills in a range of subjects other than English and mathematics. Work in their books shows that most pupils are making good progress. For example, in Year 4, good teaching in geography enabled pupils to develop their understanding of maps and atlases. However, in key stage 1, the deeper development of pupils' subject-specific skills is less clear. In these classes, pupils have limited opportunities to work independently and challenge their understanding.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter the early years with skills and knowledge that are below those typical for their age and stage of development. Through good teaching, higher numbers of children than in previous years are making good progress and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Leaders' assessment records and work in children's books show that the proportion of children working at age-related expectations is increasing. However, the proportion of Reception children achieving a good level of development remains below the national average.
- Nursery children benefit from high expectations, especially in the development of vocabulary and phonics. Children are beginning to form recognisable letters and

attempt to write their own names. As a result of well-focused teaching activities, increasing numbers of children are working within age-related expectations.

- Children who are disadvantaged are beginning to make good progress. This is because leaders have introduced the RESPECT curriculum to the early years classes. Staff also provide a number of additional adult-led activities which support children's learning effectively. These activities are particularly effective in phonics and also in speech and language development.
- Leaders identify and support children with SEND effectively. Children with speech and language difficulties are quickly assessed on entry into the early years classes and receive additional help from specially trained staff. This effective practice helps to ensure that these children make good progress from their starting points.
- Leaders involve parents in their children's education in various ways. Parents accept invitations to join workshops to explain the school's teaching methods. Staff meet with parents before children start in the Nursery or Reception class to ascertain the children's needs and establish whether any additional support is needed. This ensures that transition into the early years is well managed.
- Children's behaviour and their attitudes to learning are generally good. They are confident in exploring activities indoors and outside, demonstrating that they feel safe. There are no breaches of the welfare requirements. Staff follow and know the safeguarding procedures and policies that are applicable to the whole school well.
- The leader of the early years understands the strengths and weaknesses of the early years provision and is keen to secure improvements. She has identified, for example, that the development of speech and language will lead to improved outcomes. She is determined to raise the proportions of children attaining a good level of development. However, her analysis and accuracy of children's achievement lack the necessary clarity to inform the improvements which will make the most impact.
- Reception children listen carefully to instructions. Staff use questioning and a wide range of experiences to assess and broaden children's knowledge, for example, when learning about planets. Staff intervene to address misconceptions, enabling children to develop their understanding. However, children's thinking is sometimes not challenged.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is typically good. Teachers provide well-planned activities that enthuse the children and are carefully matched to their learning needs. However, time for learning is occasionally lost through low-level disruption and poorly managed transitions between activities.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 142501 |
| Local authority | Manchester |
| Inspection number | 10057888 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 468 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair | Mr John Corcoran |
| Principal | Miss Hayley Brooker |
| Telephone number | 0161 223 2805 |
| Website | www.oldhalldrive.co.uk |
| Email address | head@oldhalldrive.manchester.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy within the Wise Owl Trust in February 2016.
- The trust is responsible for strategic decision-making and provides a range of central services to support the school. The school's governing body is responsible for the monitoring and checking of standards of education in the school.
- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language is much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is broadly at the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is broadly at the

national average.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning throughout the school in all classes and in a range of subjects and scrutinised pupils' work. Some of these activities were carried out jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read.
- Observations were made of pupils' behaviour at the beginning of the day, at lunchtime, at breaktime and in the classroom.
- The inspectors met with pupils, formally and informally, to listen to their views.
- Meetings were held with the assistant principals, senior leaders, subject leaders and teachers, members of the governing body and representatives from the Wise Owl Trust and the local authority.
- The inspection team scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including information about pupils' attainment and progress, and the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan. Inspectors considered minutes of meetings and records relating to teaching and learning, pupils' attendance and behaviour and safeguarding of pupils. A scrutiny of the website was also undertaken.
- Inspectors considered the views expressed by parents through informal meetings. Inspectors analysed 10 responses received through the free-text facility on Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. Inspectors also analysed 20 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

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|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Ian Shackleton, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
| Kathy Nichol | Ofsted Inspector |
| Tina Cleugh | Ofsted Inspector |

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