

Inspection of The East Manchester Academy

60 Grey Mare Lane, Beswick, Manchester, Greater Manchester M11 3DS

Inspection dates: 11–12 December 2019

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

The people who are responsible for this school have not ensured that it is a safe place for its pupils. Many pupils behave in an unruly and aggressive way, particularly during social times. Pupils say that there are frequent fights. This means that pupils are not physically safe.

Incidents of racism and homophobia are commonplace. The culture of the school is not kind or accepting of people's differences. This means that many pupils do not feel happy, valued or safe. There are high levels of bullying, and most of these incidents are not dealt with well by staff.

The frequent leadership and staffing changes in the last two years have made the situation worse. Until recently, pupils have had no stability. This has now changed with the arrival of the new headteacher. The new leadership team understands the deep-rooted issues in the school. They genuinely care about and want the best for the pupils. They are committed to providing a safe environment in which all pupils can flourish.

During their time in the school, pupils do not make good enough progress. They do not achieve well by the end of Year 11. New leaders have made changes to what and how pupils learn, particularly in Years 7 to 9. The quality of education that pupils receive is now improving.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

This school is in a worse position now than at the time of the last inspection. Leaders, including trustees and governors, have not been able to make the school a safe place in which pupils can thrive and achieve well.

Since the previous inspection, there has been a lack of consistency and stability in leadership. This has badly affected pupils and staff. The responses to the online surveys from pupils, staff, and parents and carers raise significant concerns about the quality of leadership, particularly in relation to behaviour. The saving grace in this dire situation is the calibre of the new senior leadership team. These principled and committed leaders are acutely aware of the serious deficiencies throughout the school. Their actions have already had a positive impact on the quality of pupils' education. However, they know that pupils' very poor behaviour relates to more underlying concerns about the culture of the school.

Leaders understand how important it is for all pupils to benefit from a high-quality curriculum. The new headteacher has wasted no time before working with subject leaders to design an ambitious curriculum, particularly in key stage 3. There is a focus in Years 7 to 9 on broadening and deepening pupils' knowledge. Each subject now has an overarching plan. However, these have only been introduced at the start

of this term. There is more work to be done on the detail that sits underneath these plans to ensure that learning is planned and organised effectively. That said, pupils in key stage 3 are already benefiting from this new curriculum.

The curriculum in recent years has not enabled pupils to gain the knowledge and skills that they require to achieve highly. In the last three years, the progress that pupils have made by the end of Year 11 has been well below the national average. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and those who are disadvantaged, do not achieve well at this school.

Pupils with SEND get a particularly raw deal. Often, their needs are not identified effectively. Even when they are, some leaders do not understand how to meet these needs to help pupils be successful. Far too often, these pupils are excluded or placed on inappropriate part-time timetables.

There has been some improvement in pupils' behaviour in lessons. This is particularly so where there are strong relationships between teachers and pupils. Where this is the case, pupils' positive attitudes contribute to their learning.

Leaders have been able to do nothing to address the extremely concerning behaviour of many pupils during social times and between lessons. The dining room is not fit for purpose, as it cannot safely accommodate the number of pupils on site. A very high number of pupils are either excluded from lessons or from the school. Leaders have unlawfully excluded some pupils, who are not attending school while they await alternative arrangements for their education.

Pupils' attendance is not good enough. This is particularly the case for those with SEND and those who are disadvantaged. Leaders have not ensured that pupils' absence is recorded accurately.

Leaders have not made pupils' personal development a high enough priority. This has created a culture in the school in which people's differences, for example in relation to race and sexual orientation, are not valued or respected. Leaders have not ensured that pupils are prepared for life in modern Britain. Leaders have plans in place to improve the programme to support pupils' personal development. However, currently, these plans have done little to rectify the situation.

The headteacher and her team are under no illusion about the enormity of the task that they face in turning this school around. They are not helped by the lack of clarity that exists in relation to the responsibilities of governors and trustees.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Many pupils and some staff do not feel safe in the school. The main reason for this is the unruly, anti-social behaviour of a significant proportion of pupils. For many pupils and some staff, their day-to-day experience at school routinely involves

having to endure verbal abuse. Fights are frequent, and there have been incidents of staff being physically assaulted.

A significant minority of pupils are unlawfully excluded from school while they await alternative education. Too many pupils are on inappropriate part-time timetables. These arrangements compromise the safeguarding of these pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders, including trustees and governors, have not demonstrated the expertise or capacity needed to bring about the improvements that this school requires. This means that the school is in a worse position now than when it was last inspected. Leaders must take urgent action to change the culture of the school, so that all pupils and staff feel valued and can flourish. The trust must provide the new leadership team with all the support that it needs to tackle the endemic weaknesses that exist throughout the school.
- The scheme of delegation between the trust and the governing body is not fit for purpose. There are no clear lines of accountability between the trust board, governing body and executive officers. Trustees are in breach of their statutory duties in relation to safeguarding and the Equality Act 2010. The trust must urgently review its responsibilities in relation to all aspects of this school. They must draw up a scheme of delegation that provides clarity to school leaders about where responsibilities lie.
- Equality of opportunity is not promoted throughout the school. Leaders have failed to create a culture in which difference, for example in relation to race and sexual orientation, is respected and valued. Racism and homophobia are endemic in the school. Leaders must ensure that the Equality Act 2010 is promoted in all aspects of school life. They must make pupils' wider personal development a higher priority, so that pupils are better prepared for life in modern Britain. Leaders must also ensure that there are systems in place to help staff to deal more effectively with bullying.
- Leaders have not created an environment in which all pupils and staff are safe. The unruly and aggressive behaviour of many pupils means that leaders cannot ensure that pupils and staff are physically safe. Pupils and staff are at risk of verbal abuse and physical assault. Some pupils have been unlawfully excluded from school while awaiting alternative educational placements. Others are on inappropriate part-time timetables. In these situations, the safeguarding arrangements of pupils are compromised. Leaders must waste no time before establishing a strong culture of safeguarding for all pupils and staff.
- During break, lunchtimes and between lessons, the behaviour of a significant proportion of pupils is unacceptable. These pupils routinely behave in an anti-social manner. There are too many incidents of rowdy behaviour, including fights. Leaders must take urgent action to promote pupils' ability to regulate their own

behaviour. They must also ensure that they have a behaviour management system that is fit for purpose and that all staff apply this consistently.

- Leaders have a poor track record in supporting pupils with SEND. Leaders are not effective at identifying or meeting the needs of these pupils. Consequently, a high proportion of these pupils do not attend the school regularly and are frequently excluded. They also do not achieve well. The trust should ensure that there is strong leadership in this area, so that the needs of these pupils are prioritised.
- Pupils' attendance is not good enough. This is particularly the case for pupils with SEND and those who are disadvantaged. Leaders must take action to ensure that all pupils attend the school regularly.
- Leaders have taken effective action to improve the quality of the curriculum throughout the school, particularly in key stage 3. Leaders must ensure that the ambitious curriculum plans are now implemented well in all subjects. They must continue to identify what the key concepts are that pupils need to know and remember as they progress through the curriculum.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	144494
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10121996
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1001
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andrew Mullen
Headteacher	Jacqueline Bowen
Website	http://theeastmanchesteracademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	17–18 October 2017

Information about this school

- A new headteacher took up her post in March 2019. This is the fifth headteacher in the school in the last four years.
- There are 18 pupils currently attending alternative provision. The school works with the following providers: Harpurhey Alternative Provision School; Manchester Vocational Learning Academy; Manchester Pupil Referral Unit; Leo Kelly Centre; Teenage Works; and EdStart.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

In accordance with section 44(1) 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 in the school.

It is strongly recommended that the school does not appoint newly qualified teachers.

- We held meetings with the headteacher, and senior and subject leaders. We also met with the executive headteacher, the chair of the trust and the chair of the local governing body.
- We held telephone conversations with a representative from the local authority and with representatives from two of the alternative providers used by the school.
- We checked on safeguarding documentation, including the school's appointment checks on staff.
- We considered the views of the 252 pupils and the 70 staff who responded to Ofsted's online surveys. We also considered the views expressed by parents in the 27 responses to Ofsted's online survey Parent View, including the comments received via the free-text facility.
- We spoke with groups of pupils formally and informally to gather their views, particularly on behaviour and safety.
- We did deep dives in English, mathematics, science and history. We met with subject leaders, pupils and teaching staff, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work.

Inspection team

Anne Seneviratne, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Dawn Platt	Ofsted Inspector
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