

Inspection of Cedar Mount Academy

Gorton Education Village, 50 Wembley Road, Gorton, Greater Manchester M18 7DT

Inspection dates: 15–16 January 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Cedar Mount Academy is improving strongly. Leaders have a clear and ambitious strategy which has pupils' best interests at its heart. Some of the improvements that leaders have put in place have made a real difference to the quality of pupils' education.

The school is rooted in the local community. It is like a family. Adults in the school genuinely care about the well-being and safety of pupils. Pupils said that they feel safe when they are in school. The school celebrates the diverse cultures of its pupils. Pupils respect each other's differences. The environment in school is caring and free from prejudice.

Classrooms are calm and orderly places to learn. Most pupils behave well, although some pupils are unruly and noisy during social times. This affects the mood in the school outside of lessons. When incidents of bullying occur, teachers deal with these well.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of activities outside the classroom. These include trips to places such as Amsterdam and Liverpool.

Expectations for all pupils are now high. This has not been the case in the past. Too many pupils have left Year 11 without making the progress that they should have. Although improving, there is more to do to make sure pupils benefit from a good quality of education.

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

Many improvements have been made in the school since the previous inspection. Leaders, including governors and trustees, are ambitious for all pupils to succeed. Their aim is for pupils to become 'the best version of themselves'. For example, in the school's onsite alternative provision, 'The Bridge', leaders ensure that vulnerable and challenging pupils receive a strong curriculum.

Governors and trustees have ensured that leadership at all levels is strong. Leaders are in a better position to be able to improve the school. They are less reliant on external support.

A weak curriculum in recent years meant that too many pupils left Year 11 with lower than average GCSE grades in a range of subjects. Pupils were not well prepared for the next stage of their education. Leaders are in the process of renewing the curriculum to ensure that it is ambitious for everyone. In key stage 3, pupils now study a broader range of subjects. The curriculum is well planned to help pupils build their knowledge over time. That said, these changes are fairly recent. It is a little too early to see the difference that this new curriculum is making to pupils' achievement in different subjects.

Not all teachers understand how best to teach the new curriculum. They do not always make sure that pupils gain the important knowledge that they need. This is particularly the case in English. Not enough thought has been given to planning the English curriculum in a logical order. In key stage 3, pupils do not have the opportunity to study a range of novels in sufficient depth.

Leaders and teachers have high expectations of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils follow the same school curriculum as all pupils. Even so, too many pupils with SEND are absent from school. This hampers their achievement. Despite leaders' best efforts, pupils' attendance is not good enough.

Teachers care for the pupils. As one pupil said, 'It is heart-warming what the teachers will do for you, because they do more than they need to for their jobs.'

The school develops pupils well as young citizens. There is a strong programme to support pupils' personal development. Pupils take part in a broad range of clubs and opportunities to enhance their learning and experience of the world. The emphasis on pupils' social and moral development creates well-rounded young people. Pupils from the school contribute well to their local community.

The majority of pupils behave well and show positive attitudes to learning. The school behaviour management system is well used in lessons so that learning is mostly uninterrupted. There is still a way to go to improve the behaviour of some pupils outside of lessons. Too many pupils behave in an unruly, inconsiderate manner at breaktimes and lunchtimes. This can include pushing, shoving and boisterous behaviour.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Adults in school go above and beyond to support vulnerable pupils and keep them safe. A large team of well-trained adults supports pupils with their well-being and safety. Support for pupils with mental health issues is a particular strength of the school.

Teachers act quickly to keep pupils safe. They work well with other agencies. Pupils learn how to live safe lives. The Bridge is particularly successful in keeping the most vulnerable and challenging pupils safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils are not achieving well enough in English. The curriculum is not well planned. This does not help teachers to deliver knowledge in a logical order. This means that pupils do not learn as well as they should. Leaders should strengthen

the English curriculum to enable all pupils to know more, remember more and achieve well in this subject.

- There are inconsistencies across and within subjects in the implementation of the new curriculum. There is variation in how well teachers' planning enables pupils to learn the intended curriculum content. This prevents some pupils from building up their knowledge over time. Leaders should ensure that the renewed curriculum is understood fully by all teachers and delivered consistently well across different subjects.
- Some pupils' behaviour outside of lessons is unruly and inconsiderate. There are too many occasions during breaktime, lunchtime and change of lessons when pupils do not conduct themselves well, for example by shouting, being unruly or pushing into others. As a result, the climate in the school outside of lessons is less positive than it is in lessons. This means that teachers have to re-establish positive attitudes to learning in lessons after unstructured time. Leaders must ensure that the behaviour of pupils in unstructured time improves and supports a positive, respectful school culture.
- Although some improvements have been made, pupils' attendance is not good enough. This is particularly the case for pupils with SEND. As a result, too many pupils lose learning time, which creates gaps in their knowledge. Leaders must continue to take action to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly.

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 are the school and you are 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	138097
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10110908
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	835
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Gary Handforth
Principal	Kal Hodgson
Website	www.cedarmount.manchester.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	4–5 July 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A new principal took up his post in January 2019.
- The school has four pupils currently attending alternative provision. Pupils also attend The Bridge, an onsite provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- We held meetings with the principal, and senior and subject leaders. We also met with the chief executive officer (CEO) of the trust, the director of the Alliance for Learning Teaching School and the chair of the local governing body.
- We held telephone conversations with a representative from the local authority.
- We checked on safeguarding documentation, including the school's appointment checks on staff.
- We considered the views of the 107 pupils and the 46 staff who responded to Ofsted's online surveys. We also considered the views expressed by parents and

carers in the 52 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including the comments received via the free-text facility.

- We spoke with groups of pupils to gather their views, particularly on behaviour and safety.
- In considering the quality of education, we looked in depth at English, mathematics, modern foreign languages and history. We met with subject leaders, pupils and teaching staff, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work.

Inspection team

David Hampson, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Elaine Parkinson	Ofsted Inspector
Anne Seneviratne	Her Majesty's Inspector
Nell Banfield	Ofsted Inspector

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