

Inspection of Co-op Academy Failsworth

Brierley Avenue, Failsworth, Manchester M35 9HA

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 December 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Co-op Academy Failsworth appreciate the improvements that leaders have made to the quality of education that they receive. Teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour and achievement are much higher than they were in the past.

Most pupils enjoy coming to school. They are tolerant of others' different beliefs and values. Pupils said that they feel safe. They are confident that they can approach staff for help if they have a problem. On the rare occasions when bullying happens, staff act quickly to stop it.

Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school site. The school is a calm place to walk around at any time of the day.

Pupils study a well-planned, suitably ambitious curriculum. However, in some subjects, this curriculum is not delivered effectively. This means that some pupils do not progress through the curriculum as well as they should.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities to support their personal development. There is a rich menu of clubs and sports for pupils to choose from. Recently, many pupils have become involved in leading and supporting projects in the local area, such as the 'Community Fridge' and the 'Uniform Exchange'.

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

Over recent years, leaders have introduced many changes to the school which have made a real difference to the quality of pupils' education. In many subjects, pupils are remembering more of the curriculum.

Governors and the trust have taken effective steps to strengthen the leadership of the curriculum. Leaders have provided high-quality training for subject leaders and teachers to develop their curriculum expertise.

The new key stage 3 curriculum is well planned. Subject leaders have thought carefully about the key knowledge that they want pupils to learn. They have planned their subject curriculums so that pupils can build up their knowledge in a logical way. However, some teachers do not make sure that pupils fully understand the most important knowledge in the curriculum before moving on to a new topic. This limits the progress of some pupils.

Recently, leaders have made changes to the systems that they use to assess pupils' progress through the curriculum. While some teachers are using these strategies effectively to check how well pupils have learned what they have been taught, other teachers are not. Some teachers are unclear about the misconceptions that pupils may have. This means that some pupils' learning is not secure.

Leaders accurately identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND follow the same ambitious curriculum as all other pupils. However, in some lessons, teachers are not provided with the information that they need to support these pupils well in their learning. This means that some pupils with SEND do not learn the curriculum as well as they should.

Leaders have increased the range of strategies to address the deficits in pupils' reading knowledge. For example, all Year 7 pupils receive time each day to improve their reading skills. Teaching assistants, who are trained in teaching phonics, successfully support pupils who find reading difficult. This is helping them to catch up quickly. All pupils are encouraged to use the school's well-stocked library so that they can read widely and often.

In lessons, in corridors, and within the large atrium at the centre of the school, pupils behave well. Pupils can learn without disruption. Behaviour records show that exclusions from school have fallen over time. A greater proportion of pupils are attending school more regularly than they did in the past.

Pupils follow a well-planned personal development curriculum which provides them with the knowledge and skills that they need to become active and informed citizens.

Leaders provide an effective careers programme. Pupils can take part in a range of activities designed to develop their leadership and business skills. Pupils have high aspirations for their futures. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education, employment and training.

Staff appreciate leaders' consideration of their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong safeguarding culture across the school. Leaders provide regular safeguarding training to all staff. Staff know what to do if they have concerns about a pupil. Staff know how to identify pupils who are at risk of neglect, grooming, abuse or exploitation. They record all relevant information promptly. Leaders work closely with outside agencies to ensure that these pupils and their families receive the timely support that they need.

Pupils are knowledgeable about the potential dangers that they may encounter in the community. Pupils learn about keeping themselves safe online as part of the citizenship curriculum.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, some teachers do not deliver the planned curriculum effectively enough. This prevents some pupils from learning more and remembering more over time. Leaders should ensure that the new curriculum is delivered consistently well across all subjects.
- Leaders' new systems for assessing how well pupils learn the curriculum are not used well by some teachers. Some teachers are misinterpreting how this new system should be used to check what pupils have learned. Therefore, some teachers are not identifying or addressing pupils' misconceptions quickly enough. This is hindering how well some pupils progress through the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that the new assessment system is used effectively across the school so that all teachers can use the assessment information to remedy pupils' missing knowledge.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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	144627
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10209698
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	1464
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Nick Speight
Headteacher	Phillip Quirk
Website	failsworth.coopacademies.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school has its own alternative provision on site for a small number of pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school joined the Co-op Academies Trust in September 2017. When the predecessor school, Failsworth School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to require improvement.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, other senior leaders and subject leaders.

- The lead inspector spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- The lead inspector met a representative of the trust.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's records of safeguarding checks and referrals to the local authority. Inspectors spoke with staff about how they keep pupils safe. Inspectors also asked pupils how they keep themselves safe and what to do if they have concerns.
- Inspectors held discussions with staff and considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils from all year groups and considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for pupils.
- Inspectors considered the views of the parents who completed Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. This included the free-text responses.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in English, mathematics, science, history and design and technology. Inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and looked at pupils' work from some other subjects.

Inspection team

Timothy Gartside, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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