

Inspection of Manchester Enterprise Academy Central

Lytham Road, Levenshulme, Manchester, Greater Manchester M14 6PL

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 February 2022

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Manchester Enterprise Academy Central are incredibly proud and happy to be part of a diverse and respectful community. Everyone can be themselves. Pupils are considerate of one another. They do their best to model the school's core values. They strive to work hard, be kind and take part.

Staff forge trusting and positive relationships with pupils. This helps pupils to feel safe in school. They know that they can speak with staff if they have any worries. At social times, corridors and spaces are serene. Pupils are confident that any rare incidents of bullying will be dealt with swiftly and appropriately by staff.

Pupils are supported well to be successful. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well. They are eager to live up to the high expectations that staff have of them. As such, pupils' behaviour during lessons is exemplary. They listen attentively and follow teachers' instructions diligently, assured that staff will help them with their learning when needed.

Pupils are encouraged by staff to be active participants in opportunities beyond the classroom. They appreciate the many extra-curricular activities on offer, such as Japanese art, Mandarin, 'debate mate', basketball and 'raspberry-pi' club. Pupils are also keen to be involved in community projects and fundraising events.

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

Leaders are determined that each and every pupil at this school will succeed. To this end, leaders have designed a suitably broad and ambitious curriculum, to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they should. At key stage 4, a high proportion of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, study the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects. Leaders' swift and accurate identification of pupils' needs, alongside skilled support from staff, means that pupils with SEND progress through the curriculum as well as their peers.

Subject leaders are clear about the knowledge that pupils should learn and when this will be taught. As such, teachers design learning carefully so that pupils can build on what they already know. Pupils' impeccable conduct and their scholarly attitudes to learning ensure that classrooms are free from disruption. Teachers can devote their attention to using their strong subject knowledge to deliver new concepts and ideas with clarity. This helps pupils, including those with SEND, to learn in depth, acquiring a rich base of knowledge across the curriculum.

Leaders have designed effective assessment systems that support teachers to check on whether pupils have learned the intended curriculum content. Leaders use assessment information systematically to thoughtfully review and adapt curriculums. Any gaps in pupils' learning caused by the COVID-19 pandemic are being identified and addressed promptly.

Mostly, teachers use assessment strategies effectively to identify and address pupils' misconceptions over time. That said, very occasionally, some teachers do not use these systems as well as leaders intend. This hinders these staff in checking on some pupils' understanding. As a result, a small number of pupils do not embed new knowledge or use their earlier learning as fluently as they should.

Many pupils arrive at the school without the knowledge that they need to read fluently and accurately. Leaders have designed a highly effective catch-up programme to identify these pupils quickly and provide them with appropriate support. Staff are knowledgeable about how to support these pupils with reading. These pupils learn to read fluently. This means that they can access the curriculum well.

Leaders ensure that pupils have opportunities to read in school. Leaders have plans in place to ensure that there is a strong culture of reading for pleasure across the school. Due to the pandemic, leaders are working to ensure that staff promote and encourage a love of reading among pupils consistently well.

Leaders actively seek to address social disadvantage through the school's extensive 'co-curriculum'. They ensure that those pupils, who may not have had the same opportunities as their peers, benefit from experiences such as visiting restaurants, museums and theatres. Staff provide a wealth of rich opportunities to develop pupils' interests and talents, as well as supporting pupils to look after their mental health. Pupils are prepared well to do what is right in modern society.

Members of the local governing committee and trustees are highly knowledgeable. They are skilled in holding leaders to account for the quality of education that pupils receive. Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, leaders have been very successful in recruiting high numbers of staff and supporting them to become proficient in the classroom. Staff in the early stages of their teaching careers are rapidly becoming expert practitioners.

Staff feel respected and valued. They appreciate that leaders are cognisant of their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and those responsible for governance have ensured that there is a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders maintain an acute sense of the dangers that pupils may face in the local community.

Leaders' systems for ensuring that staff remain alert to the signs that may indicate that a pupil is at risk of harm are robust. Leaders provide staff with suitable and regular safeguarding training, including specific training on child criminal exploitation and peer-on-peer abuse. Leaders have forged strong links with external partners,

including alternative providers, with the aim of ensuring that vulnerable pupils and their families get the help that they need.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe through a well-structured and age-appropriate curriculum. For example, pupils learn about the features of healthy relationships, how to recognise and give consent and the dangers of drug misuse.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Very occasionally, some staff do not use assessment systems effectively to check that pupils have learned and remembered the intended curriculum. This hampers these teachers in checking pupils' understanding of curriculum content and helping pupils to embed earlier learning. Leaders should ensure that these staff are supported to use assessment strategies that help pupils to know and remember more of the taught curriculum.
- Some pupils do not independently read widely and often. This prevents these pupils from developing further their reading fluency and comprehension skills. Leaders should ensure that staff promote a love of reading consistently well, so that pupils can further develop their reading confidence and enhance their understanding of more complex vocabulary.

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	144755
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10212113
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1063
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jenny Andrews
Principal	Emily Reynard
Website	www.meacentral.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school opened in September 2017. It is part of the Prospere Learning Trust.
- The school makes use of three registered alternative providers 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 and apprenticeships.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the principal and the executive principal, the senior leadership team, subject leaders and a range of teaching and support staff. An inspector spoke with the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the

chair of the trust board and two members of the local governing committee, including the chair of governors.

- As part of this inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, history and geography. Inspectors met with subject leaders, considered the curriculum, visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work and spoke with pupils and teachers.
- Inspectors met with pupils from Years 7 to 11. Inspectors also observed breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors checked on safeguarding procedures, including recruitment checks made on new staff. Inspectors met with those responsible for governance, leaders, staff and pupils to evaluate the culture of safeguarding.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, self-evaluation documents, curriculum plans, minutes of meetings of the governing body and behaviour and attendance records.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires for staff and pupils. Inspectors also considered the views of the parents and carers who responded to Ofsted Parent View. This included the comments received via Ofsted's free-text facility.

Inspection team

Emma Gregory, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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