

Inspection of Co-op Academy Swinton

Sefton Road, Pendlebury, Swinton, Manchester M27 6JU

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 May 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Many pupils are happy and proud to attend the Co-op Swinton Academy. Supportive relationships with teachers help most pupils to feel safe in school.

During the last year, senior leaders have successfully worked to raise teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve. However, some teachers do not get sufficient support from leaders to deliver curriculums well. This prevents pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), from achieving as well as they should.

Leaders have improved the overall standards of pupils' behaviour. Most pupils arrive at school ready to learn. Older pupils told inspectors that the behaviour of their peers around school and in classrooms has improved markedly as a result of leaders' actions. Many pupils follow teachers' instructions and listen attentively in class. That said, pupils told inspectors that the behaviour of a considerable minority of their peers continues to disrupt their learning in some lessons.

Many pupils are confident that, if they report incidents of bullying, they will be taken seriously and dealt with effectively by staff. However, a small proportion of pupils, along with some parents and carers, lack confidence in leaders' systems to prevent and tackle bullying.

There are lots of lunchtime and after-school activities in which pupils can take part. For example, some pupils make the most of clubs, such as volleyball, weightlifting, table tennis and ceramics. Pupils appreciate opportunities to take on additional responsibilities, such as being school prefects and student council representatives.

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

Over the last 12 months, senior leaders have taken decisive, appropriate and effective steps to improve the quality of education for pupils. This includes ensuring that the curriculum is ordered logically and that it is suitably ambitious. Subject leaders are clear about the knowledge that pupils should learn. Teachers are increasingly aware of what content they should be delivering and when this should be taught.

Some teachers have developed the expertise and received the support that they need to deliver leaders' new curriculums well. For example, in subjects such as history, leaders guide teachers to select appropriate activities and resources that support pupils to learn the curriculum well. Teachers emphasise and revisit important aspects of learning, supporting pupils to build securely on what they know already. That said, some teachers do not receive sufficient support from subject leaders to design learning as effectively as they should. They sometimes do not

design activities that maximise pupils' learning. As a result, some pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Leaders have established clear systems to help staff to manage pupils' behaviour, both during lessons and around the school. These systems have helped to secure some improvements in pupils' behaviour during lessons. However, some staff do not use leaders' systems consistently well. In some lessons, particularly those delivered by temporary teachers, the behaviour of a considerable minority of pupils continues to disrupt the learning of their peers.

Across key stages 3 and 4, there are times when teachers use assessment strategies well to check that pupils have learned and remembered important information. However, some teachers do not use assessment strategies effectively enough to identify and address some pupils' misconceptions. This means that some pupils develop misunderstandings about key concepts. Added to this, some teachers are not clear enough about those aspects of the curriculum that pupils need to revisit and consolidate. This hinders pupils when they encounter new learning and come to make links with what they have learned previously.

In recent months, leaders have acted swiftly to address some of the weaknesses in their systems to identify the needs of pupils with SEND. As a result, the quality of information that teachers receive to support this group of pupils is improving. That said, while staff have an improved understanding of the needs of pupils with SEND, some teachers do not support this group of pupils well to access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

Leaders ensure that staff are aware of those pupils who have fallen behind in reading when they join the school. They have appropriate plans in place to improve pupils' reading fluency and accuracy. Staff are taking the steps necessary to help those pupils who find reading more difficult to catch up quickly so that they can access the full curriculum.

Pupils are well informed about their next steps. They benefit from a wide range of opportunities to help them to make appropriate decisions about further education, employment and training. For example, pupils in Year 8 meet with a careers adviser to discuss the suitability of their GCSE option choices before they make these decisions in Year 9. There are a range of opportunities for pupils in Year 11 to speak with representatives of local colleges and training providers.

Pupils learn about issues relevant to relationships and sex education. These include puberty, sexism, gender prejudice and being a good friend. Leaders are making further changes to the personal, social and health education curriculum to strengthen pupils' understanding of different faiths, the rule of law and democracy.

More recently, the trust has reinforced governance arrangements to ensure that senior leaders are provided with an appropriate balance of challenge and support.

Many staff speak positively about the support that they receive from leaders. For instance, some subject leaders appreciate the opportunity to develop their curricular expertise through links within the trust. Mostly, staff are assured that leaders consider their workload and avoid placing unnecessary burdens on them. That said, a minority of staff do not feel that leaders are considerate of their well-being or that they are supported well to manage pupils' behaviour.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have a strong understanding of the potential safeguarding risks that pupils may face in the local community. Leaders have forged effective links with external partners, such as the police, to afford pupils further opportunities to learn about the dangers of gang-related violence, knife crime and drug misuse.

Staff receive appropriate and regular safeguarding training. This means that they remain vigilant to the signs that indicate that a pupil may be at risk of harm. For example, staff have recently received training to help them to spot when a pupil might be at risk of radicalisation.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe through the curriculum. For instance, pupils learn about the features of healthy relationships, sexual consent and how to keep themselves safe when using social media.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teachers do not receive sufficient support from subject leaders to deliver the new, more ambitious curriculums as effectively as they could. These teachers do not select the most appropriate pedagogical activities to deliver new knowledge. As a result, there is an unevenness in how well teachers design learning that supports pupils to progress smoothly through the curriculum. Subject leaders should ensure that all teachers are supported equally well to design activities which enable the curriculum to be delivered as intended. Leaders should ensure that teachers understand how best to deliver subject-specific content.
- There are some inconsistencies in how effectively teachers use assessment strategies to ensure that pupils have learned the intended curriculum. This means that some teachers do not ensure that pupils do have a secure grasp of earlier learning. Leaders should ensure that teachers are supported and trained to use assessment strategies well. They should ensure that teachers know how to identify pupils' misconceptions and that they address any misunderstandings. This is so that pupils deepen their knowledge and understanding of subject content over time.

- Some teachers do not use the information that they receive about pupils with SEND to provide suitable support for this group of pupils. This prevents some pupils with SEND from capitalising on the new curriculum and achieving as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that teachers are helped effectively to support pupils with SEND so that they can progress through the same ambitious curriculums as their peers and achieve well.
- Some teachers, but particularly those staff who are teaching at the school on a temporary basis, do not use the systems in place to manage pupils' behaviour as well as they should. This means that some lessons are disrupted by a considerable minority of pupils. This hinders their peers from learning intended curriculums and achieving as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that teachers, including temporary staff, are supported well to use the behaviour systems to manage pupils' behaviour effectively.

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	136987
Local authority	Salford
Inspection number	10212255
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	981
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Russell Gill
Principal	Zarina Ali
Website	swinton.coopacademies.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 May 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is part of the Co-op Academies multi-academy trust. The current principal was appointed in April 2021.
- The school uses three registered and four unregistered alternative providers for a small number of pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Year 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 that 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, other senior leaders, subject leaders and groups of teaching and support staff. An inspector spoke with the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, a representative of the trust board, a further

representative of the multi-academy trust and two members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors.

- As part of this inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, history, design and technology and English. Inspectors met with subject leaders to discuss the curriculum, visited lessons, reviewed pupils' work, spoke with teachers and spoke with pupils about their learning.
- Inspectors met with pupils across all year groups. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour at social times.
- 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. An inspector spoke with representatives from a selection of the alternative providers used by the school.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including that relating to safeguarding, leaders' self-evaluation and leaders' behaviour and attendance records.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff and pupils. Inspectors also considered the views of the parents who responded to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. 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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Annabel Bolt	Ofsted Inspector
Alyson Middlemass	Ofsted Inspector

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