

# Inspection of a good school: Co-op Academy Manchester

Plant Hill Road, Higher Blackley, Manchester, Greater Manchester M9 0WQ

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Inspection dates:

13 and 14 March 2023

## Outcome

Co-op Academy Manchester continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders, trustees and governors strive for all pupils at Co-op Academy Manchester to be successful. Pupils are encouraged to demonstrate the 'ways of being Co-op' in all that they do. In the main, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well.

Many pupils told inspectors that they feel happy and safe in school. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm. Pupils are confident that if they have any worries, staff will listen to them and provide them with appropriate support. When bullying does happen, staff deal with it swiftly and well.

Leaders have set out high expectations for pupils' behaviour and learning. Pupils focus well on their work in lessons. Most pupils are respectful towards each other and to adults. Pupils are behaving increasingly well around the school site. This is because leaders are well on their way to establishing a positive culture throughout all aspects of the school.

Pupils are proud of the diverse nature of their school community. They enjoy the opportunities that leaders provide to celebrate this diversity, such as the school's culture day.

Pupils relish the opportunity to take on different responsibilities, such as representing their peers on the school council, being a prefect or being a librarian. Pupils realise the importance of supporting the local community. For example, they have recently introduced a 'community fridge', which both reduces food waste and provides help to local families.

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

Leaders have thought carefully about the curriculum that they want all pupils to learn, including those with SEND. The curriculum is well organised. Subject leaders have thought deeply about the key knowledge that pupils should learn and the order in which

this content should be taught. All pupils in key stage 3 study a broad range of subjects. This equips them well for the demands of key stage 4. An increasing proportion of pupils in key stage 4 study the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They use their expertise to help pupils to learn well in lessons. Teachers who are not specialists in a subject receive appropriate and effective subject-specific training. This enables these teachers to deliver the curriculum equally well.

Teachers use assessment strategies effectively, to check what pupils know and what they need to develop further. They frequently check that pupils have remembered recent learning. Teachers also check on how well pupils have understood their learning over time.

Leaders have recently raised their expectations of pupils' behaviour and conduct further. As a result, disruption to lessons has reduced considerably. A small number of older pupils sometimes find it difficult to regulate their behaviour out of lessons. Leaders are taking appropriate and effective actions, but this work is still in its early stages. This means that, at times, some of these pupils do not behave as well as they should during social times.

Leaders prioritise reading. For example, they choose the books that pupils read in form time with care. Pupils enjoy listening to staff read to them. Some pupils arrive at the school struggling to read. Leaders provide a comprehensive reading support programme to help these pupils to catch up quickly with their peers. This helps these pupils to fully access the wider curriculum.

Leaders accurately identify, assess and support pupils with SEND. They make sure that staff are well informed about how to best meet pupils' additional needs. Pupils with SEND progress through the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

Leaders have created a comprehensive personal development offer. This ensures that pupils learn about looking after their mental health, the dangers of misogyny and how to develop healthy relationships. Leaders have ensured that pupils have access to regular, high-quality information about careers. This helps them make informed choices about their potential next steps.

Governors and trustees know the school well. They provide leaders with appropriate support and effective challenge. Most staff said that they appreciate the recent changes made by leaders to support their workload and well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding. They have a large, well-trained team of staff who specialise in areas of safeguarding. This team works well together to support the school community.

Staff are trained well to identify the signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. They report any concerns about a pupil's welfare diligently.

Leaders are resolute in following up safeguarding matters. They work closely and with external agencies to ensure that pupils and their families get the appropriate and timely support that they need.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Some aspects of leaders' work to improve pupils' behaviour are in the earlier stages of implementation. There remains a small number of older pupils who do not behave as well as they should during social times. As leaders fully embed their new behaviour policy, they should ensure that these pupils are supported to behave well.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2018.

## **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.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136174
<b>Local authority</b>	Manchester
<b>Inspection number</b>	10256165
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,588
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Russell Gill
<b>Principal</b>	Christopher Beard
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://manchester.coopacademies.co.uk">manchester.coopacademies.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	14 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Co-op Academies Trust.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- Leaders use six registered alternative providers for a small number of pupils.

## Information about this inspection

- 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, other senior leaders, subject leaders and members of staff. Inspectors also met with members of the governing body and trustees, including the chair of governors and the chief executive officer of the Co-op Academies Trust.

- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils and students from Years 7 to 11 about their experience of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of evidence, including the school's self-evaluation document, improvement plans, minutes of governing body and trustee meetings and records of pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors checked the school's safeguarding policies and procedures and the school's single central record. Inspectors met with leaders, staff and pupils to check how effective safeguarding is in the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, geography, art and design, science and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and spoke to some pupils and students about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' and students' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in other subject areas.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Rebecca Sharples, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

David Woodhouse

Ofsted Inspector

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