

Inspection of Inspire Academy

Mossley Road, Ashton Under Lyne, Tameside OL6 9RU

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 October 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The principal of this school is Louise Armstrong. This school is part of Victorious Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Karen Burns, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Andy Hodgkinson.

What is it like to attend this school?

Inspire Academy provides a warm and welcoming environment. Pupils, and children in the early years, benefit from the strong, caring relationships that staff build with them. This helps pupils to feel safe.

Pupils understand and respond positively to the high expectations set by the school. They enjoy a broad and balanced curriculum that meets their needs and interests. They engage enthusiastically in their learning and achieve well.

Pupils are polite and respectful. They understand the clear rules that are in place. These strategies and routines help pupils to manage their emotions and behave well.

The school provides strong support for pupils' mental health and well-being. For example, pupils look after Robbie, the school's pet dog, and older pupils provide support for younger children as reading buddies.

Pupils learn about difference and diversity. They treat each other with consideration and kindness. Pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), said that their school is 'a place where they can be themselves'. Beyond school, pupils relish the range of opportunities that they have to develop themselves more widely. For example, they take part in a range of clubs, charity fundraising and volunteering in the local community.

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

Trustees and governors have supported the school to develop an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including pupils with SEND.

In most subjects, the school has identified the essential knowledge that it wants pupils to learn and remember. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to identify and address any misconceptions that pupils may have. This helps to ensure that gaps in pupils' knowledge are filled and that they can build securely on what they already know. However, in a small number of subjects, the school is still developing its curriculum thinking. This means that, in these subjects, teachers are less clear about the precise knowledge that they want pupils to learn and the gaps in knowledge that they need to address. This hinders pupils from building securely on what they already know.

The school places reading at the centre of its curriculum. This begins in the nursery when skilled teachers use songs, rhymes and carefully selected stories to engage children. Children in the early years develop their oracy and communication skills well in readiness for future learning. From the Reception Year, children learn sounds systematically and read books that reinforce their learning. If needed, older pupils are provided with extra support and catch-up sessions. As a result, most pupils learn to read with confidence and fluency. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about their

enjoyment of reading and how it is promoted in their school. For example, pupils look forward to being rewarded by selecting a book from the book vending machine. They eagerly participate in the summer reading challenge.

The school identifies any additional needs that pupils may have swiftly and effectively. It provides effective training and support for staff so that they can adapt the delivery of the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. A small number of pupils with SEND receive extra support and access some of their curriculum in a different way to their peers. The school, supported by the trust, continually reviews and refines this approach to ensure that the curriculum is equally ambitious for these pupils and that it prepares them well for the next stages of their learning. Typically, pupils with SEND achieve well.

Pupils behave well. The school reflects regularly on the strategies that staff use to promote positive behaviour. Staff receive regular training to ensure that they deal with behaviour incidents appropriately. However, the school does not make effective use of the information that it gathers about particular types of incidents to analyse patterns and trends. This means that it does not have a clear enough picture of how these strategies support pupils to improve their behaviour over time.

The school provides a range of opportunities for pupils to gain a wider understanding of the world and to develop themselves beyond the academic curriculum. For example, pupils relish the school trips and residential activities that the school provides. The school is creative in ensuring that all pupils benefit from these experiences.

Leaders at all levels know the school well. Governors and trustees provide effective support and challenge to ensure that the school continually improves the quality of education for pupils.

The school, supported by trustees and governors, engages effectively with staff so that they feel well supported to carry out their roles. The school works closely with parents and carers and provides multiple opportunities for them to support their children's learning. For example, the school runs phonics information sessions for parents so that they can help their children at home when learning to read.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the school is in the process of refining the curriculum content. This means that teachers are not clear about the precise subject knowledge that they want pupils to learn or where the gaps are in pupils' knowledge. This hinders pupils from building up their knowledge securely over

time. The school should refine its curriculum thinking so that teachers are clear about what pupils should know and remember and can address gaps in learning effectively.

- The school does not use the information that it gathers about pupils' behaviour as effectively as it could to analyse patterns and trends. This hinders the school from developing a clear picture of how its rules and routines support pupils' behaviour over time. The school should ensure that it uses the information that it collects about pupils' behaviour more strategically to fully understand the impact of behaviour systems.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	140427
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	10294376
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	441
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Andy Hodgkinson
CEO of the trust	Karen Burns
Principal	Louise Armstrong
Website	www.inspireacademyashton.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	9 and 10 May 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Victorious Academies Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders and a range of staff.

- An inspector spoke to a representative from the local authority.
- The lead inspector met with representatives from the local governing board, including the chair of the local governing board. The lead inspector also met with the chief executive officer of the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history, physical education, and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke with subject leaders about the curriculum in other subjects.
- An inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors considered the views expressed by parents in their responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included the free-text comments.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. An inspector also spoke with staff to discuss the support that they receive from leaders.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils and also spoke with some pupils about school life.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.

Inspection team

Amanda Downing, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
David Deane	Ofsted Inspector
Patrick Rayner	Ofsted Inspector
Phill Walmsley	Ofsted Inspector

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