

# Inspection of Moorhouse Academy

Crossley Street, Milnrow, Rochdale, Lancashire OL16 4DR

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Inspection dates: 17 and 18 October 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Kelly Milnes. This school is part of Watergrove Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Mark Moorhouse, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Colin McKenzie.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils thrive in the knowledge that the school expects the very best from them. Since joining the multi-academy trust, the school has raised its expectations of pupils' achievement. It has made sure that across the curriculum, many pupils including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well.

Throughout the school, pupils benefit from positive relationships with adults. They feel assured that adults will support them if they have any worries. Pupils said that everyone treats each other kindly and with respect. They feel valued. This makes them feel happy and safe.

Children in the early years and pupils in Years 1 to 6 show good behaviour both in lessons and during playtimes. Younger children demonstrate high levels of independence, preparing their own painting equipment and putting on protective clothing. They mop the floor after their activities if necessary. Pupils are proud of their school. They look after equipment and keep their classrooms tidy.

Pupils are curious about the world around them. The school enhances this interest by ensuring that pupils learn through first-hand experiences such as visiting a farm and going to see dinosaur exhibitions. Pupils learn about teamwork and cooperation during their residential visit. They enjoy taking part in a range of clubs that the school offers, such as choir, reading and a range of sporting activities. Pupils value leadership opportunities. For example, becoming a reading ambassador and being a member of the eco-council.

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

In 2022, the proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard in subjects which have published results was lower than the national average. The school quickly identified that some weaknesses in the previous curriculum, coupled with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, was the main reason for these published outcomes.

The school took swift and successful action to address the shortcomings in the curriculum. As a result, it is now broad, balanced and ambitious. Pupils' learning is carefully mapped out from the early years to Year 6. Staff are consistently clear on exactly what pupils need to know and the order in which they should learn subject content. The school has also taken effective steps to address any gaps in pupils' learning caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, or the fact that some pupils join the school part way through their primary education. As a result, current pupils learn well. They are making the progress through the curriculum that leaders expect.

Teachers check that pupils are learning what has been taught. They have established consistent ways to check that pupils' prior knowledge is secure before they introduce new learning. The school has prioritised the development of teachers'

subject knowledge. Teachers successfully deliver the curriculum through well thought-out, appropriate activities that support pupils to know and remember more.

The school makes sure that pupils with SEND are identified quickly. It provides effective training so that staff know how best to help pupils with SEND to learn all that they should. Pupils receive the support that they need to be involved in the life of the school. This includes working with external agencies and other professionals across the trust where appropriate.

Reading has a high priority across the school. From the outset, children in the Nursery Year learn about sounds through stories, rhymes and songs. In the Reception Year, children learn the letters and sounds that they need to be able to read fluently. From an early stage, they become confident readers helped by the accurate matching of the books that they read to the sounds that they know. Older pupils continue to regularly read books matched to their reading stage. Staff read from a broad range of different texts and authors with their class. However, the school does not make sure that some older pupils are choosing their independent reading books from the wide range of literature that is on offer. This means that some pupils do not read widely enough to extend their learning and interests further.

Pupils enjoy their lessons and they are immersed in their learning. They walk around school calmly and considerately to ensure that they do not disturb other lessons. Throughout the school, pupils show that they are courteous and polite. They hold doors open for adults and say a cheerful hello to all those that they meet. Children in the early years quickly learn to make sensible decisions by choosing the activities that they will complete.

The school's work to support pupils who do not attend regularly enough has had some impact. However, the timeliness of the school's action means that there are still too many pupils who are regularly absent.

Pupils are accepting of those who are different to themselves. They embrace learning about cultures and faiths that are different to their own. They understand the importance of tolerance. The school makes sure that pupils are ready for life in modern British society. Pupils understand how to stay physically and mentally healthy, as well as how to stay safe online. The school promotes learning beyond the academic curriculum. For example, older pupils take part in an event run by the emergency services to enhance their learning about staying safe and making appropriate choices. A range of pupils learn first-aid skills.

Staff are extremely positive about the school. They appreciate the support that they receive for their well-being. The school and the trust make sure that any changes do not have a negative effect on staff's workload. For example, the school makes sure that staff have the necessary time to carry out their work, including making improvements to the curriculum subjects that they lead.

Parents and carers said that they appreciate staff at school being approachable, for example in helping to clarify curriculum terminology. The school involves parents in a range of workshops, such as reading, to help them support their children's learning at home.

Governors and trustees are clear about the school's priorities. They are rigorous in carrying out their duties. They know the school well and use this knowledge to support and challenge its work. Governors and trustees maintain a clear focus on improving outcomes for pupils. They ensure that the school delivers a high-quality education to pupils.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Some pupils do not attend school regularly. This means that they miss out on important learning. The school should improve the promptness of its actions in addressing pupils' attendance which falls below expected levels.
- Some pupils do not choose to select reading books from the wide range of literature on offer. This means that their knowledge of authors is limited and they miss out on the chance to enhance their learning further. The school should ensure that they increase their oversight of the books that pupils read so that they can support and encourage them to extend their choices beyond familiar texts.

## **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 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	148436
<b>Local authority</b>	Rochdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	10294425
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	214
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Colin McKenzie
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Mark Moorhouse
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kelly Milnes
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.moorhouseacademy.co.uk">www.moorhouseacademy.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Moorhouse Academy converted to become an academy school in April 2021. When its predecessor school, Moorhouse Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- This school is part of Watergrove Trust.
- Since joining the trust, the school has undergone considerable staffing changes, including a staffing restructure.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school runs an on-site breakfast club.

## 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the lead inspector met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. She also met with members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also met with members of the board of trustees and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to a range of pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in other subjects and looked at documentation and samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector heard a range of pupils from Year 1 to Year 3 read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors talked with pupils in meetings. An inspector visited the school breakfast club and spoke to pupils outside during breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. An inspector also spoke with some parents during the inspection.
- Inspectors also reviewed the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- No pupils completed Ofsted's online survey.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents, including school policies, records of behaviour, school improvement documents and a sample of documents for pupils with SEND. Inspectors also looked at minutes from governing body meetings, information about pupils leaving and starting at the school and records relating to pupils' attendance.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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' interest first.

## Inspection team

Sheena Clark, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Philip Barlow

Ofsted Inspector

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