

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

300 Victoria Avenue East, Blackley, Manchester M9 7SS

---

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 April 2024

## Outcome

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

The principal of this school is Sharon Hands. This school is part of Co-operative 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 (CEO), Dr Chris Tomlinson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Russell Gill. There is also an executive headteacher, Steve Brice, who is responsible for this school and one other.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), benefit from a broad and ambitious curriculum. More and more, pupils are rising to the school's high expectations of achievement and an increasing number of pupils achieve well. That said, the published outcomes in 2023 did not reflect that pupils typically achieve well. This is because almost a quarter of the pupils who left the school in 2023 only joined the school at the end of Year 10. Therefore, they did not benefit fully from the school's strong curriculum and support.

Pupils are very clear about how the school expects them to behave. They are respectful towards staff. Pupils display positive attitudes to their learning in lessons and generally try their best. At social times, groups of pupils participate in sporting games together. Overall, pupils behave well and there is a calm atmosphere in the school.

Pupils are happy. They are committed to the school and to serving the community. For example, they enjoy volunteering at different school events. Pupils enjoy a variety of musical clubs and performing on stage. There is a raft of leadership opportunities, including being a mental health ambassador, sports leader or sitting on the student council. These positions allow pupils to support and represent their peers.

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

The school has designed an ambitious and well-defined curriculum. It has ensured that the order of learning helps pupils to build on prior knowledge and to connect new ideas. The school has identified the important knowledge that pupils need to know and when it

should be taught. This helps teachers to be clear about what they need to teach and the order in which it should be taught. However, in a small number of subjects, there is an inconsistency in how teachers deliver learning. As a result, some pupils do not learn as well as they could. Assessment strategies are used well to identify pupils' misconceptions. However, assessment information is not always used effectively to design future learning to remedy gaps in knowledge. This means that some pupils do not build a secure body of knowledge across subjects.

Teachers are adept at introducing new vocabulary and ensuring that pupils use it correctly. As a result, pupils articulate their understanding effectively. Pupils' work shows that they are knowing and remembering more. Furthermore, they communicate well and appropriately. This helps to prepare them for their next steps after school.

The school accurately identifies pupils with SEND. In the main, staff use the information which they receive to adapt the approach to learning for these pupils. This helps to meet these pupils' needs and for them to achieve well.

Reading is top priority in this school. The school quickly identifies pupils who struggle with reading. These pupils receive effective support to help them to read well. Reading is intentionally woven through the curriculum and this helps pupils' reading fluency to improve.

The school has made pupils' attendance a high priority. Working closely with the trust, it analyses absence data and uses that information to implement strategies to improve attendance. Despite this, there are still some pupils who do not attend school regularly. In lessons, pupils are attentive and behave well.

Pupils benefit from strong careers provision. This helps to support them in their next steps. Most go on to ambitious destinations. The school ensures that pupils are equipped to take their place in society. Pupils learn to appreciate the differences in each other. For example, international new arrivals are given a 'language buddy' to help them to settle in. Pupils learn about consensual relationships. For instance, the school has equipped pupils to identify and report sexual harassment.

The trust has supported the school well in improving thus far. The trustees and governors are committed to seeing the school develop further. They have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas of development and hold the school to account effectively. Teachers said that their workload is manageable. For example, having a reprographics assistant reduces their workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- In some subjects, teachers do not deliver the curriculum as intended. This means that some pupils do not benefit from the strong curriculum and do not develop a secure understanding of these subjects. The school should ensure that teachers are supported to deliver the curriculum effectively and as intended.
- From time to time, some teachers do not use assessment information effectively to address gaps in understanding or to remedy misconceptions. As a result, some pupils have gaps in knowledge that are not addressed. The school should ensure that teachers use assessment information to design future learning to remedy any gaps in knowledge.

## 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2019.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	142762
<b>Local authority</b>	Manchester
<b>Inspection number</b>	10321457
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<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>	1,182
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Russell Gill
<b>CEO</b>	Chris Tomlinson
<b>Principal</b>	Sharon Hands
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://northmanchester.coopacademies.co.uk">northmanchester.coopacademies.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	13 and 14 February 2019

## Information about this school

- The school makes use of four registered and three unregistered alternative providers for a number of pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

- 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, music, history and science. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the

curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also visited lessons in some other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke to the principal, the executive headteacher, other senior leaders, the CEO, the regional director and staff.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the trustees, including the chair and some members of the academy governing council.
- The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour across the school, including at social times.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about behaviour, bullying and their views of the school.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, development plan, records relating to pupils' attendance and bullying logs.
- 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' interests first.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and for pupils.

### **Inspection team**

Jenny Jones, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Karen Parker

Ofsted Inspector

Phill Walmsley

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2024