

Inspection of Melior Community Academy

Chandos Road, Scunthorpe DN17 1HA

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 May 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Good
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The principal of this school is Amber Bradley. This school is part of Delta 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, Paul Terence Tarn, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Steven Peter Hodsman. There is also an executive principal, Chris McCall, who is responsible for this school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils have an improved opinion of the school and the opportunities it provides for them. They recognise that, following a period of instability, leaders have made improvements to the school. This helps pupils to feel better supported with their studies and wider well-being.

Pupils' behaviour has significantly improved over recent terms. Classrooms are calm and conducive to learning. Pupils move responsibly between lessons and are well supported by staff. Pupils feel safe. The school's expectations of them are clear and consistently applied. A minority of pupils still struggle to meet these expectations. The school provides these pupils with additional support. Bullying and other acts of unkindness happen increasingly rarely. The school does not tolerate these behaviours. Pupils have renewed confidence in the school to deal with incidents such as these well.

The school provides pupils with a broad and increasing range of extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities, such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make effective use of these opportunities.

Leaders have strengthened the curriculum studied by pupils in recent years. It is more ambitious. Pupils now have a greater choice of which subjects to study at key stage 4. The majority of pupils achieve well at the school. Some disadvantaged pupils achieve less well than they should.

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

The school's curriculum is ambitious for what pupils can achieve. The school has identified the most important knowledge in each subject. Leaders have carefully considered the order in which pupils should learn this knowledge so that it builds over time. Staff know exactly what knowledge is to be taught and when. Links between subjects are thoughtful and support pupils' understanding. For example, pupils use common approaches in mathematics and science. Pupils' knowledge of texts that they learn in English is reinforced when these are revisited in drama.

Reading is a central part of the school's curriculum. Teachers model subject-specific vocabulary well. Pupils learn about important concepts such as respecting diversity through carefully chosen texts. Pupils who need additional help with their reading are quickly identified when they start at the school. Well-trained staff help them to quickly gain the skills to read accurately and with confidence.

Lessons are calm and focused. Where lessons are most effective, pupils develop secure knowledge of the subject. Teachers build on pupils' prior knowledge effectively. 'Drill' retrieval activities revisit and revise important knowledge. Teachers check on what pupils know and use this information to inform their future teaching. There remains some variability in how well the curriculum is learned by some pupils.

Typically, this happens when teachers do not adapt lessons or activities to reflect the prior knowledge or needs of specific pupils.

Over time, the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have not been met as effectively as they should have been. The school, with support from the trust, has identified and acted on this issue. Significant improvement is now evident and continues to be built upon. The school provides staff with detailed information about the needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers use this information increasingly effectively to support pupils in lessons.

Pupils' attendance is low. Attendance is a key priority for the school. The school has developed an effective attendance strategy that is leading to more regular attendance, including for disadvantaged pupils.

Most pupils' conduct around school is positive. These pupils are considerate and welcoming to visitors. Relationships between staff and pupils are respectful. Some pupils do fall short of the school's expectations. Sanctions such as suspensions remain higher than leaders would like but are reducing as pupils adapt to the school's higher expectations. One older pupil reflected that examples of poor behaviour are now 'more isolated events'.

The school has developed a comprehensive personal, social and health education curriculum. Pupils learn this important knowledge during their ethics, philosophy and citizenship lessons. Pupils speak particularly confidently about how to keep healthy and safe. They have an age-appropriate understanding of issues such as consent and healthy relationships. Alongside the school's effective careers programme, this knowledge prepares pupils well for when they leave school.

Leaders have supported staff well through a period of significant change. Staff are positive about improvements to the school and how these affect their work. The school and trust collect rich information about many aspects of school life, including pupils' achievement. In some areas, such as improving behaviour, this is well used. In others, opportunities to identify which pupils are not achieving well enough or why this is the case are sometimes missed.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not consistently adapt their teaching or activities to reflect the needs and prior knowledge of pupils in their class. Gaps in some pupils' understanding of the curriculum go unaddressed. The school should ensure that staff adapt their teaching to meet the needs of individual classes and pupils consistently.

- Too many pupils are absent from school too often, especially disadvantaged pupils. These pupils develop gaps in their knowledge and miss other opportunities, such as enrichment activities offered by the school. The school should build on its attendance strategy to ensure that improvements in attendance are sustained.
- The school does not use the information it collects, for example around pupils' achievement, consistently well to inform future improvements. Some areas of underperformance are not addressed as precisely or rapidly as they might be. The school should ensure that available information is used effectively to inform improvement actions and the evaluation of the impact of these.

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	139059
Local authority	North Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10323042
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	866
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Steven Peter Hodsman
CEO of trust	Paul Terence Tarn
Principal	Amber Bradley
Website	www.melior.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	2 and 3 April 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has experienced significant changes in leadership since the previous inspection. This includes multiple changes in principal/interim principal since December 2023. The current principal formally took up their post in April 2024.
- The school is part of Delta Academies Trust.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through pupil premium funding is significantly higher than the national average.
- The school uses three registered and three unregistered alternative provisions.
- 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

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.
- 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.
- The lead inspector met with members of the trust board and the trust's director of education. He also spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with the principal. They also met with other senior and middle leaders, including those responsible for safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and personal development.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, English, history and drama. 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 and looked at pupils' work in modern foreign languages, science and geography.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation regarding the support which pupils with SEND receive. They looked at the quality of the provision for pupils with SEND in lessons.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including minutes from governing board meetings as well as the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- Inspectors looked at a range of information regarding behaviour. They observed the behaviour of pupils in classrooms and at social times.
- The views of pupils and staff who responded to Ofsted's surveys were considered.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents through the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Thomas Wraith, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
John O'Hara	Ofsted Inspector
Jayne Gaunt	Ofsted Inspector
Eleanor Belfield	His Majesty's Inspector
Andrew Gibbins	His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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