

# Inspection of Co-op Academy Smithies Moor

Leeds Old Road, Heckmondwike WF16 9BB

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Inspection dates: 23 to 25 April 2024

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

The head of academy is Catherine Brackenbury. This school is part of The Co-op 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, Dr Chris Tomlinson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Russell Gill. There is also an executive headteacher, Jack Sowter, who is responsible for this school and two others.

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

Co-op Academy Smithies Moor has undergone a period of significant change. Pupils explained to inspectors that these changes have helped to make their school a happy place to be. Pupils achieve well, particularly at the end of key stage 2. The school and multi-academy trust (the trust) are proud to share how they have developed strong links with their local area. These links are supporting the school on their journey to becoming an 'integral part of their local community'. Trustees and the academy governing committee are working closely with the school to embed high expectations for all pupils. Most parents and carers recognise that the school is on an improving journey.

More recently, behaviour has improved across the school. However, there are still regular incidences of poor behaviour. Pupils say that this happens more frequently at playtime and lunchtime. Pupils know who to speak to if they are concerned. They are confident that trusted adults will keep them safe. Pupils explained that bullying does not happen often, but if it does, staff help them to resolve any worries they may have.

The school has a clear focus on promoting good attendance and punctuality. Attendance is slowly beginning to improve. However, the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent remains a concern. Pupils in upper key stage 2 and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are more highly represented in this group, with approximately one in three pupils persistently absent from school.

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

Recent changes at the school have led to improvements in the English and mathematics curriculum and stronger key stage 2 outcomes. Pupils' attainment in the phonics screening check in Year 1 has also improved and is now broadly average. However, reading, writing and mathematics outcomes at the end of key stage 1, and the key stage 2 multiplication tables check, remain low. In some classes in key stage 1, pupils' recall lacks depth. There are too few opportunities for pupils to cover previous learning and explore and deepen their knowledge before learning something new. Despite the weaker outcomes at the end of key stage 1, pupils achieve very highly at the end of Year 6.

The school's wider curriculum is at an earlier stage of development. The school does not adapt the curriculum well enough for pupils who might need it, including pupils with SEND. Gaps in learning are not addressed quickly enough.

The school and the trust have a clear vision of what they want to achieve and the action they are taking to realise this. Initial changes implemented when the school joined the trust in 2019 were slow to take root. The trust worked carefully with the school throughout this period to build a stable staff team. A new leadership team took up post in 2022. This change has increased leadership capacity and supported

the school to undertake a much more rapid transformation. However, many of these changes are recent. They have not had enough time to become established and make a sustained, positive difference.

The school has created a bespoke curriculum offer, with the support of trust leaders. In early reading, this curriculum offer has been implemented with fidelity. The school has prioritised developing a love of reading in all classes. This is supporting pupils to develop their listening, vocabulary and speaking skills. More widely, the implementation of the school's curriculum is at an earlier stage. Subject leaders acknowledge that staff require additional support to ensure that the curriculum is taught consistently well, in every class. Opportunities for pupils to revisit what they know and remember before learning something new are not well developed. In a number of subjects, misconceptions are not addressed quickly enough. This allows gaps in pupils' learning to remain and widen in some instances.

The school has strengthened the support for pupils with SEND. Teachers use pupil learning passports well to help pupils with education, health and care plans meet their individual targets. However, many pupils with identified speech, language and communication needs do not receive the intervention and support that they need at an early enough stage. The school has recently introduced systems within the early years to help address this. These are in the very early stages of implementation.

The school is working closely with the trust to implement an early years curriculum that is ambitious and designed to prepare children well for Year 1 and beyond. Children are happy and well cared for. However, learning opportunities in the classroom are underdeveloped. They do not support children well enough to use what they already know to help them learn something new. In Reception, children can talk with confidence about their more recent learning, including the topic of minibeads. However, opportunities for children to embed and enhance prior learning, to help deepen an understanding of the world, are limited. Further opportunities for children to participate in, or learn by using familiar routines, stories, rhymes or songs are not consistent. Staff do not regularly follow the trust approach to learning and teaching in the early years.

The personal development of pupils is of the utmost importance to the school. Their 'ways of being Co-op' align with the trust and co-operative values. The school is committed to developing an inclusive environment that celebrates difference. Pupils are increasingly confident about speaking up when they see examples of unacceptable behaviour. A small proportion of pupils continue to use inappropriate language that some refer to as 'banter'. The school is actively addressing this through their personal, social, health and economic education lessons.

The school raises pupils' aspirations of the careers they can follow in the future. Pupils have the opportunity to meet a range of professionals and ask them about their roles. There is an annual careers week. Pupils spoke with animation about their recent Dragons' Den activity and how they can apply for different roles in school. Leaders are working towards a national accreditation for careers.

Staff feel well supported by school leaders and the trust. They speak highly of the support and training they receive. Staff appreciate being able to access expertise from the trust's regional team in addition to the support they receive from governors, trustees and colleagues in school. Staff feel proud to work here.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Implementation of the school's curriculum is inconsistent. Some staff do not adapt learning to meet pupils' varied starting points. Prior knowledge is not routinely revisited to address misconceptions or gaps in what pupils know and remember, particularly in early years and key stage 1. Consequently, pupils struggle to recall significant aspects of their learning or cannot build on what they have learned previously. The school must ensure that children and pupils in the early years and key stage 1 build on more recent improvements, similar to those at key stage 2, by regularly revisiting what they know. Furthermore, the school should adapt pupils' learning, ensuring that activities match pupils' different starting points.
- Throughout the school, some pupils, including pupils with SEND, struggle to moderate their behaviour. Leaders should ensure that the school's behaviour policy is effective and implemented consistently well so that pupils understand the school's high expectations and receive targeted support to help them to manage their behaviour appropriately.

## 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>	147534
<b>Local authority</b>	Kirklees
<b>Inspection number</b>	10323112
<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>	199
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Russell Gill
<b>Head of school</b>	Catherine Brackenbury
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.smithiesmoor.coopacademies.co.uk">www.smithiesmoor.coopacademies.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Co-op Academy Smithies Moor converted to become an academy in November 2019. When its predecessor school, The John Curwen Co-operative Primary Academy, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- The academy is one of 32 schools in The Co-op Academies Trust.
- There have been significant changes in leadership at the school in recent years. The executive headteacher was appointed to work with the school from September 2022. The head of academy and deputy headteacher took up post in September 2022.
- The academy does not currently use alternative provision.
- The academy runs a breakfast club and after-school clubs for pupils who attend the academy.

## 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 head of academy, the executive headteacher and the deputy headteacher, who is also the special educational needs coordinator. Inspectors also met with a range of representatives from the trust, including the regional director, the chair of the board of trustees and the chair of the academy regional council. The lead inspector held an online meeting with the chief executive officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum 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. The lead inspector also observed some pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in art and design, design and technology, geography and science.
- Inspectors observed pupils’ behaviour in lessons and at other times around school.
- 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.
- The views of parents were considered through the responses to Ofsted Parent View and parent questionnaire. An inspector also spoke to parents during the inspection.
- The views of staff and pupils were considered through responses to surveys and through discussions with them.
- The inspection started on 23 April 2024. It was paused on 24 April 2024 in line with Ofsted inspections and visits: Deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence policy. Inspectors returned on 25 April 2024 to complete the inspection.

## Inspection team

Kathryn McDonald, lead inspector	His Majesty’s Inspector
Andrew Knight	Ofsted Inspector
Zoe Lightfoot	His Majesty’s Inspector
Alex Thorp	His Majesty’s Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
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