Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: E-ACT the Oldham Academy North

Broadway, Royton, Oldham, Greater Manchester OL2 5BF

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 April 2025

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that the school's work may have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Jessica Giraud. This school is part of E-ACT, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Tom Campbell, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Lord Jim Knight.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is unrelenting in its pursuit of excellence for all pupils. Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, rise to meet the school's very high expectations. They achieve highly, including in public examinations at the end of Year 11.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school. They are happy and feel safe. Relationships between pupils and staff are respectful and polite. Pupils behave very well in class and work very hard. Pupils enjoy socialising with each other at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They are exceptionally proud of their school and feel valued. This gives them a strong sense of belonging.

Pupils' time at the school is enriched by a wealth of opportunities. Visits to universities, museums, galleries and overseas destinations inspire pupils and broaden their horizons. Pupils enjoy participating in school drama productions where they can showcase their talents. They spoke excitedly about a wide range of clubs and activities, including sports, African drumming and the eco- and Harry Potter clubs. Pupils develop their leadership and teamwork skills through outdoor education activities and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. They enjoy taking on responsibilities, for example by helping pupils who are new to the country with reading. In addition, the school has ensured there is a suitable prayer space. Pupils value this.

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

Pupils are given every possible opportunity to succeed through a highly ambitious and well-designed curriculum. The school has given great thought to what pupils are expected to learn and the order in which they should learn it. The proportion of pupils following the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects is significantly higher than the national average. All pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, achieve well across the curriculum.

Staff use their excellent subject knowledge to explain new concepts and information exceptionally well. They routinely check pupils' understanding and use this information well to tailor their teaching in order to address any misconceptions or gaps in knowledge. Pupils make strong gains in their knowledge and understanding.

Reading has a high priority in the school. The school provides highly effective support for pupils who need extra help. This helps them to catch up quickly. There is a strong culture of reading for pleasure throughout the school. Pupils benefit from regular opportunities to develop their reading skills and deepen their understanding of subject-specific vocabulary.

The school ensures that the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified quickly and accurately. Staff use detailed information about pupils with SEND to adapt their teaching skilfully and provide appropriate support. This ensures that pupils with SEND access the ambitious curriculum and achieve very well.

Pupils' behaviour is typically exemplary. They follow the school's high expectations of behaviour. This contributes to a calm and orderly atmosphere that enables pupils to learn. For a small number of pupils who occasionally find it more difficult to manage their behaviour, the school provides tailored support to help them improve their behaviour. Pupils' attendance is checked forensically. The school works relentlessly with families and external agencies to support regular attendance. As a result, pupils' rates of attendance are improving.

Pupils access an exceptionally rich personal development programme. The school expertly delivers a wide range of sessions around healthy relationships, first aid and citizenship, including the rule of law. Pupils learn about different faiths and beliefs. This promotes tolerance and respect for others. Careers information, advice and guidance are excellent. Pupils receive meaningful encounters with the world of work. They speak highly of the mentoring they receive from professionals and prestigious school networks. Almost all pupils go on to education, training and employment.

Staff are proud to work at the school and feel well supported. They value the efforts of school and trust leaders to help them manage their workload and promote their well-being. Trust leaders know the school well. They provide exceptional support and hold the school to account. This is helping the school to improve further. The school engages productively with pupils and parents to help everyone feel part of a cohesive and inclusive school community. For example, the 'Culture Day' event celebrates the diversity that makes the school so special.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in May 2016.

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	136115
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10348261
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	1,330
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Lord Jim Knight
CEO of the trust	Tom Campbell
Headteacher	Jessica Giraud
Website	theoldhamacademynorth.e-act.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	10 and 11 March 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, there have been some changes in leadership and staffing at the school. This includes the appointment of a new headteacher in December 2022. She was previously deputy headteacher at the school.
- The school makes use of three registered and one unregistered alternative provisions for a very small 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 evaluation 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 acting headteacher in the absence of the headteacher, other school leaders, members of staff and the regional education director and deputy national director of the trust. The lead inspector spoke with the CEO, other trust leaders and the chair of the trust board. He also spoke on the telephone with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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' interest first.
- Inspectors spoke with several groups of pupils and observed their behaviour at break- and lunchtime. No responses were received to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- Inspectors met with groups of staff and also considered the opinions expressed through Ofsted's staff survey.
- Inspectors took account of the views expressed by parents and carers through Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments.

Inspection team

Ahmed Marikar, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Tuesday Humby	Ofsted Inspector
Tim Long	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.

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/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: 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
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025