

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Ofsted Subgroup

School inspection outcomes: academic year 2016/17

| School | Date of previous | Previous Ofsted | Date of most recent | Ofsted outcome |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| | inspection | outcome | inspection | |
| Manchester Academy | 24 January 2012 | Good | 20 September 2016 | Requires Improvement |
| Loreto High School | 9 July 2013 | Good | 27 September 2016 | Requires Improvement |
| Crowcroft Park | 20 May 2014 | Requires Improvement | 27 September 2016 | Good |
| Manchester Communication Academy | 19 September 2012 | Good | 27 September 2016 | Requires Improvement |
| Levenshulme High School | 3 July 2013 | Inadequate (SM) | 5 October 2016 | Outstanding |
| The Birches School | 11 July 2012 | Outstanding | 1 November 2016 | Outstanding |
| The Willows Primary School | 11 February 2015 | Requires Improvement | | |
| Moston Fields | 21 April 2015 | Requires Improvement | | |
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Manchester City Council Ofsted Subgroup

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14 November 2016

Mr Rob O'Hara Headteacher The Birches School Newholme Road West Didsbury Manchester M20 2XZ

Dear Mr O'Hara

Short inspection of The Birches School

Following my visit to the school on 1 November 2016 with Doreen Davenport, Ofsted Inspector, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be outstanding in July 2012.

This school continues to be outstanding.

The leadership team has maintained the outstanding quality of education in the school since the last inspection. As a new headteacher you have ensured that the school moves seamlessly forward, driving improvements and sharpening staff understanding of outstanding teaching and learning. Consequently, pupils have continued to make strong progress across the school. The recent restructuring of governance and the expansion of your leadership team have enabled distinct lines of responsibility to be implemented. Your senior leaders have a clear focus on ensuring that teaching, learning and assessment blossom across the school.

The school is highly skilled in teaching autistic pupils and gained the international quality standard, Autism Accreditation, in 2014. Consequently, the area for improvement identified at the last inspection has been tackled effectively.

Partnerships with other outstanding special schools are used well to obtain validation of the quality of the school's work. This approach has ensured that assessments are accurate and has encouraged staff to be outward-looking in school development.

The tracking and monitoring of attendance has been tightened by leaders and expectations raised across the school community. Effective systems are now ensuring that, whenever possible and within the limitations of medical circumstances, pupils' attendance is beginning to improve further across the school. Staff provide a supportive and caring environment where everyone is encouraged to

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strive and achieve their potential. The school has a unique family feel where everyone is highly valued and strong relationships are formed between staff and pupils. Equality permeates all aspects of the school's work. Staff use a range of effective communication strategies to ensure that their interaction with pupils is successful in bringing about effective learning and supporting pupils' development in the classroom. During break and lunchtime, staff enjoy spending time with pupils. They seize every opportunity to ensure that the school's vast and exemplary resources are used well to further develop pupils' skills and communication. Pupils have a strong sense of belonging to the school and enjoy spending time in their lessons learning and developing new skills.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership of safeguarding in the school is strong. Safeguarding arrangements and procedures operate properly and promptly. The school's safeguarding policy is clear and informative, reflecting current guidance and requirements. Leaders ensure that keeping pupils safe is a fundamental part of everyday life in the school. They ensure that staff are well trained and well versed in their responsibility to ensure the welfare and safety of all pupils. Staff are vigilant and recognise that pupils are extremely vulnerable and experience a wide range of difficulties which can impact on their ability to disclose worries, difficulties or abuse. The safeguarding team is highly effective and this is checked upon by the governors' own safeguarding scrutiny committee. Leaders work hard to support parents and carers with the dangers of e-safety and the internet. For example, they provided support to parents on how to keep personal internet devices used in the home safe for pupils.

Pupils are well informed about how to keep themselves safe and leaders have ensured that appropriate information is delivered through the curriculum. All staff have a detailed understanding of the needs of every pupil because systems for sharing information across the school are robust. New pupil personal development plans are well understood by staff. As a result, there are very few serious behaviour incidents. When incidents do occur, they are dealt with appropriately and carefully logged and evaluated as part of a wider assessment of needs and associated risks.

Inspection findings

- A spirit of inclusion and equality pervades the school, characterised by harmony and respect. Leaders capitalise on very positive working relationships with staff, parents and all linked professionals. They have developed a school that is vibrant and diverse, holding pupils' development at the absolute heart of all that the school strives to achieve.
- Leaders have highly detailed knowledge about pupils in the school and their individual needs and circumstances. This enables them to pinpoint exactly what each pupil needs in order to make the best possible progress. Frequent checks on teaching and learning reveal that pupils make strong progress.
- Pupils' academic abilities, including their reading and mathematical skills, are assessed on entry to the school and measured again at set points to check that improvements have been made. Pupils make excellent progress from their



starting points. Information you provided about pupils currently in the school shows that the positive trend of improvement is on track to continue. The impact of all teaching and therapeutic interventions is methodically measured to ensure that they are making a difference.

- A refocus on the quality of teaching and learning has been at the heart of the school's work since the last inspection. Senior leaders drive a mantra of excellence across the school. In addition, all staff benefit from regular scheduled professional development opportunities. They have a clear understanding of the recent government changes related to working with pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, information collected by leaders shows that the quality of teaching and learning continues to improve.
- Teachers work seamlessly with teaching assistants in lessons because learning plans are shared and well thought out to ensure that pupils make small but significant steps in progress. Teachers and support staff know their pupils well and work together to anticipate their needs so that barriers to learning are removed. Praise is used frequently across the school to reward pupils' efforts and boost confidence and self-esteem.
- Staff skilfully use a variety of communication strategies, depending on the skills and preferences of individual pupils. They reduce the amount of verbal information they use to make their instructions clear. They supplement speech with visual supports and signing to promote pupils' understanding. As a result, pupils make strong progress in the development of their communication skills.
- Pupils benefit immensely from the broad range of therapy provided by the school. As a result, pupils' academic, personal and physical development is supported to flourish because they are given the skills to overcome their very specific difficulties. I observed excited pupils engaging in a sensory yoga lesson, with staff tailoring motor challenges, strength and coordination to match pupils' needs and requirements. As a result, all pupils made progress, squealed with delight and left the session calm and ready for their next challenge.
- Pupils' behaviour in and around school is undeniably excellent. Their attitudes to learning are of the highest level and do not wane as the day progresses. This is because staff use the school's exemplary resources effectively and ensure that lessons are creative, imaginative and above all engaging to accommodate all their different needs, abilities and aspirations. Pupils who are known to have difficulty concentrating for long periods of time are brought back on track swiftly by staff so that learning hardly ever falters. Pupils' excellent behaviour contributes significantly to their progress.
- Staff are committed to empowering pupils and ensure that the work of the school shows that their thoughts, feelings and preferences matter. The school council is well established and helps pupils to have a greater say over matters that affect their school and wider lives. They take a lead role in interviewing prospective staff and contribute to deciding on staff appointments in the school. Through their own democratic appointments they have a good knowledge of British values. They play an active role in making their school a better place and develop their own life skills through this participation.
- Since the recent review of governance, a revitalised and sharpened governing body has emerged with vigour and commitment to improve the quality of education within the school even further. Governors are well informed about



pupils' achievements and the quality of teaching and learning. They use their plethora of skills to challenge and support the school well. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governing body committees have been reorganised to provide a platform to question impact and hold leaders to account.

- Leaders value the contribution that parents and carers make to pupils' developments in school. They recognise that empowering parents and signposting vital organisations that provide support to families of those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities contribute to raising pupils' outcomes. Leaders have invested in a parental support adviser so that the needs of the whole family are nurtured. Monthly workshops and weekly drop-in clinics are accessible to parents and carers. A recent sibling day allowed time for families to build relationships while enjoying a variety of activities such as baking, crafts and sports. Staff have shared with parents successful approaches used to support pupils when they are in school so that they can employ these within the home setting. Information provided to inspectors by leaders showed that parents appreciated the additional support and events on offer.
- Stakeholders recognise the positive impact that the school has on the lives of its pupils and consider the school to be very well led. Most of the parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that their child is very well looked after. Parents speak warmly about the school and the efforts of staff to ensure that their children thrive and achieve. Many parents commented favourably regarding the school's work on Parent View: 'As a parent of a special needs child, I can only commend the school for providing an environment that gives him every opportunity to develop and thrive.'
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- they extend their current strong analysis of pupils' academic progress information to include measures of improvement in pupils' personal development, so that they can evaluate even more precisely the impact of their actions on pupils' outcomes
- teachers plan learning to include even higher levels of challenge so that pupils' outcomes excel even further.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body and the director of children's services for Manchester. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Dawn Platt Her Majesty's Inspector



Information about the inspection

Inspectors undertook 'learning walks' and observed teaching and learning across a range of classes of pupils who have varying special educational needs and/or disabilities. Meetings took place with you, your senior leaders, members of the governing body, members of staff and the school council. Inspectors scrutinised a range of supporting documentation about safeguarding and child protection, the school's self-evaluation, monitoring information and improvement plans, minutes of governors' meetings, records relating to attendance, and information relating to pupils' achievement.

Inspectors took into account 14 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as eight responses from parents on Ofsted's free text service. Nine responses to the online staff questionnaire were also considered.

This inspection particularly focused on a number of key questions:

- Are leaders using effective strategies to improve pupils' attendance and reduce persistent absence in the school?
- Are teaching and learning supporting excellent outcomes for all pupils?
- Are pupils safe and are staff up to date with current legislation for safeguarding pupils?
- Are staff aware of the special educational needs and disability code of practice and are they trained appropriately to effectively support pupils?
- Do governors hold the school to account effectively and carry out their statutory responsibilities?



Crowcroft Park Primary School

Northmoor Road, Longsight, Manchester M12 5SY

| Inspection dates | 27–28 September 2016 |
|--|--------------------------|
| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Good |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Good |
| Outcomes for pupils | Good |
| Early years provision | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders know their school well and have high expectations and ambitions. They have brought about rapid improvements to the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes.
- Pupils achieve well in school, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. They make good progress from their starting points and are well prepared for their next stages of education.
- Disadvantaged pupils make strong progress in reading, writing and particularly mathematics because of the quality of support and teaching they receive.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge which they use effectively to promote pupils' learning. Teachers generally use questioning well to probe, evaluate and deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding. Sometimes, however, teachers do not place sufficient focus on subject knowledge in their evaluation of pupils' work.
- The school has a broad and balanced curriculum. The wide range of activities offered to pupils often bring learning to life.
- Pupils feel safe and enjoy coming to school. Their attendance is in line with national averages and improving. Pupils behave well and are eager learners.

- Leaders ensure that this is a school where all are welcome and each person is treated with respect.
- Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They speak highly of the 'Crowcroft Park experience' and of the wide-ranging benefits this brings to their children's education.
- Governors know their school well because of the comprehensive information they receive from leaders and other external professionals. They are committed to continued improvement and recognise the importance of sharpening the evaluation and monitoring of subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics in the improvement process.
- Children in the early years make good progress from their starting points and are well prepared for key stage 1 because of the quality of teaching they receive. However, where pupils access free-choice activities, adults' use of questioning to promote learning is not consistently strong.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to deepen their enquiry skills, particularly in science.
- Leaders do not fully evaluate pupils' achievement in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics.



Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the outcomes for pupils by enhancing the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - increasing the opportunities for pupils to deepen their understanding and apply their knowledge in a wide range of subjects and particularly in science
 - enhancing adults' consistent use of high-quality questioning to promote learning at times when children can choose activities in the early years
 - sharpening teachers' evaluations of subject knowledge in pupils' work in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics to ensure that pupils receive the best guidance on how to improve.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics sharpen their evaluative skills
 - enhancing the rigour by which governors evaluate pupils' achievement in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics.



Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development because of their frequent and rigorous monitoring. They work closely as a team and make good use of links with other local schools to share effective practice. Leaders and governors work in partnership and have a clear vision for improvement, which they share with staff. The determination and commitment of leaders and staff have led to sustained improvement in the quality of teaching and outcomes for pupils, particularly in English and mathematics.
- School improvement planning is clear and effective. It includes appropriate priorities based on leaders' evaluations and is contributed to by governors and school councillors. Regular reviews of the impact of actions undertaken by leaders and governors ensure the quick pace of improvement.
- Leaders' good use of the pupil premium grant ensures that disadvantaged pupils, including those who are most able, achieve well. The differences in outcomes between these pupils and other pupils nationally are diminishing quickly.
- Leaders' good use of the additional sports funding has resulted in pupils' greater participation in sports and their adoption of healthier lifestyles. Additional sporting clubs, which run before the start of the school day, have boosted pupils' punctuality and attendance at school. New training opportunities for girls' football, introduced following requests by the school council, are popular and well attended. Leaders' constructive negotiations with the local council and careful management of the school's grounds mean that pupils now have safe access to a high-quality sports pitch on which to develop their skills.
- Leaders' regular and effective communication with parents, including online, ensures that parents are well informed about their children's learning and school lives. Nearly all parents overwhelmingly support the school and appreciate the opportunities provided for their children through the wide range of cultural, social and academic events that all pupils are able to engage with during their time at the school.
- This is a caring school where pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed well, through the promotion of the United Nations charter of the rights of the child. Many children enter the school speaking little or no English. They are welcomed equally and helped to quickly develop effective English language skills that unlock their access to wider learning.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced and equips pupils well for their next stages of education. The curriculum is enriched through a series of well-planned experiences which ensure that all pupils visit a variety of different places of worship, go to a theatre production, visit a restaurant, attend a residential trip and travel beyond their local community. Leaders strongly encourage pupils to adopt positive values as future citizens of Britain, and Manchester in particular.
- The leadership of early years, reading, writing and mathematics is well developed and is a strength of the school. These subject leaders are clear about their roles and responsibilities and use their detailed knowledge of strengths and weaknesses in their subjects to bring about rapid improvement. A minority of middle leaders, some of whom are new to their roles, have more limited analytical skills and consequently do



not evaluate their subjects effectively.

Governance of the school

- The governance of the school is effective. Governors share the vision and commitment to improvement held by leaders and staff. They know their school well because of the quality of the information they receive. They visit the school regularly and attend many events, including the recent mathematics fair. Consequently, they understand how teachers are going about raising standards.
- Governors closely monitor the school's finances, including the pupil premium funding and sports funding, to ensure that they get best value.
- Governors are involved in planning development priorities. They monitor and evaluate the impact of actions rigorously through their committees, particularly those actions that have focused on improving pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics. However, they recognise that other subjects are not evaluated as fully.
- Governors ensure that the school's performance management policy is robustly applied. Their secure understanding of how the associated procedures relate to teachers' pay allows them to evaluate carefully any proposals for increases in staff salary against clear criteria.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The governing body ensures that the school meets all the statutory requirements for safeguarding. This includes the robust checking of the suitability of adults to work with children in school and the provision of appropriate filtering and monitoring of the school's internet connection.
- All staff are vigilant and well trained to protect pupils from potential safeguarding risks, including those from radicalisation and extremism, because leaders ensure that their skills and knowledge are kept up to date.
- The school's ethos of safeguarding pervades all aspects of school life. Consequently, pupils feel safe and are confident that staff will respond quickly and effectively to any concerns they might have.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment Good

- Teachers' high expectations and good subject knowledge, particularly in English and mathematics, brought about by the quality training they receive and the correctly focused priorities, have raised pupils' achievement.
- Reading and writing are taught systematically across the school using consistent strategies that develop pupils' skills and confidence. Consequently, pupils build upon their prior learning and make strong progress in these subjects. Pupils make good progress in improving their technical skills in writing. They also develop a broad and rich vocabulary, often from a starting point of no English, because of the effective teaching they receive.
- The quality of mathematics teaching has improved greatly due to an increased focus on the subject by leaders. Appropriate training of staff by a resident expert ensures that teachers possess the skills to plan and deliver effective sequences of lessons that quickly develop pupils' knowledge. Most-able pupils, particularly in upper key stage 2,

Inspection report: Crowcroft Park Primary School, 27–28 September 2016



are appropriately challenged to master their mathematical skills through experience of more complex problems, including the use of algebra. On occasions, however, some teaching does not allow pupils to deepen their understanding of concepts fully and apply their skills, including in other subjects such as science and geography.

- Teachers use questioning well to probe and develop pupils' understanding, particularly in more formal teaching situations. As a result, pupils, many of whom speak English as an additional language, quickly develop their knowledge and respond to questions with confidence and a broadening vocabulary.
- Teachers use homework effectively to practise and embed skills and understanding taught in lessons. Pupils read at home frequently and regularly complete tasks in writing and mathematics. Teachers effectively promote learning in other subjects using longer-term projects. For example, a recent visit to Manchester Airport resulted in design and technology homework to design and create models of aircraft.
- Skilled and committed teaching assistants have a positive impact on learning, particularly in more formal learning in the early years and in the leadership of computing.
- The quality of teaching in subjects other than the core subjects of reading, writing and mathematics is effective and pupils make good progress. However, the development of pupils' skills and knowledge in other subjects is weaker. This is because teaching does not systematically develop and evaluate pupils' subject-specific skills and knowledge. Consequently, pupils do not receive the same high-quality, subject-specific guidance as they do in English and mathematics. Pupils' opportunities to consolidate their knowledge and deepen their understanding of more complex aspects of subjects are sometimes limited, particularly in the development of scientific enquiry.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They say that teachers help them to learn and that they feel safe. Parents share this view and are overwhelmingly supportive.
- Pupils know how to stay safe in and out of school, including online, because of the guidance they receive. Focused work on online safety ensures that pupils are confident and able to explain what they would do if they were worried by something on screen. Pupils maturely carry out roles of responsibility, including as playtime buddies and sports mentors. The school council represents its electorate well and shares the impact of its actions on the 'You said. We did.' noticeboard.
- Pupils are well supported to become good citizens. They have a secure understanding of the rule of law and modern British institutions, including the differences between the role of the monarch and Parliament.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and well mannered to adults and each other. They welcome visitors and are eager to talk about their work and school life.
- Pupils know that bullying and name-calling, including the use of homophobic terms, are wrong. They say that incidents are rare; indeed, they struggled to recollect any recent

Inspection report: Crowcroft Park Primary School, 27–28 September 2016



examples. They are confident that teachers and other adults would deal quickly and effectively with any instances should they arise.

- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Consequently, attendance has improved and is now at least in line with that seen nationally for all groups, including those who are disadvantaged and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. A small number of pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should, particularly girls. Most long-term absences are for well-founded reasons such as medical needs. Leaders, however, ensure that all absences are quickly checked and that parents are challenged appropriately if their children miss too much school.
- Pupils are eager, attentive learners and are quick to respond to instructions. However, a small minority of boys occasionally disengage from their learning where work is too easy or too difficult for them. A small minority of pupils sometimes do not give the necessary attention and respect to others by talking over them in some lessons. Teachers, however, are quick and effective in their response.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes for pupils have improved since the last inspection, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. The work in pupils' books shows that this improvement is being sustained and enhanced.
- Pupils make good progress in their understanding of phonics because of the good teaching they receive. As a result, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the Year 1 screening check has improved rapidly and is in line with the national average.
- In 2015, the proportions of pupils leaving the school having achieved the standards expected for their age were generally in line with national averages in reading, writing, mathematics and English grammar, punctuation and spelling. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils reaching the standards expected for their age was in line with that of other pupils nationally.
- In 2015, pupils made good progress in reading, writing and particularly in mathematics in all key stages, especially in key stage 2 where progress was strong. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who made expected progress from their starting points in reading was in line with that of other pupils nationally, while the progress they made in writing and mathematics was higher than that of other pupils nationally.
- Disadvantaged pupils of all groups make good progress from their starting points because of the support they receive, particularly in key stage 2. This is diminishing the differences between their attainment and that of other pupils nationally.
- There were too few pupils identified as most able in the 2015 assessment tests to undertake any statistical evaluation about their progress and attainment. However, school-based tracking and the work seen in pupils' books show that most-able pupils across the school, including those who are disadvantaged, make good progress from their starting points because of the challenge and support they receive.
- Work in books shows that pupils' progress in other subjects, particularly in the development of pupils' knowledge and skills in scientific enquiry, is not developing as strongly as in English and mathematics.



Early years provision

Good

- The leadership and management of the early years are good. Leaders have a clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses because of their effective monitoring. They use this knowledge well to inform improvement planning.
- Children are helped to settle into the early years by high-quality transition arrangements and good relationships and links with the settings that children attend before starting the school.
- Effective partnerships with external agencies, including health visitors and children's centre workers, ensure that staff are well trained and that children receive appropriate provision for their needs.
- Most children enter the Nursery with levels of development below those typical for their age. Approximately a quarter of pupils enter Reception with skills below those which are typical. Many children enter with little or no English. All groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, most able and those who speak little English, make good progress from their starting points. In 2015, the proportions of children achieving a good level of development were in line with those seen nationally. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving a good level of development has rapidly improved to diminish the difference seen with that of other children nationally. School-based information shows that in 2016 this improvement is being sustained.
- Children are polite and courteous. They are keen to learn and play and collaborate well together. Consequently, children swiftly develop their inquisitiveness and social skills.
- Children are kept safe because well-trained and vigilant staff implement the school's safeguarding policies with rigour and act quickly to respond to and deal with any concerns.
- Leaders ensure that welfare requirements are met.
- The quality of teaching is good, particularly during more formal learning activities. Here, teachers and teaching assistants frequently use questioning well to probe and develop children's understanding. However, when children are engaged in choosing their own activities, adults do not consistently use questioning well to guide children and ensure that learning is purposeful.



School details

| Unique reference number | 105413 |
|-------------------------|------------|
| Local authority | Manchester |
| Inspection number | 10012159 |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

| Type of school | Primary |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 240 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Suzanne Richards |
| Headteacher | Lizzie Wray |
| Telephone number | 0161 224 5914 |
| Website | www.crowcroftpark.net/ |
| Email address | head@crowcroftpark.manchester.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 20 May 2014 |

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- Crowcroft Park Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Nearly all pupils are from minority ethnic groups. Over three quarters of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The school provides a breakfast club that is available to all pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.



Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed a range of lessons or parts of lessons and looked at pupils' work. They listened to pupils reading and talked with pupils about their lessons and school life.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, representatives of the governing body and the local authority's school improvement adviser who works with the school.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised documentation relating to pupils' progress and to school management, including the arrangements to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- The inspectors spoke with parents and staff and took account of the written responses to the online parent questionnaire, Parent View. There were too few responses to Parent View to undertake any statistical analysis.
- Inspectors took account of the 12 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the pupil online questionnaire.

Inspection team

John Nixon, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Pamela Potter

Ofsted Inspector



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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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School report



Levenshulme High School

Crossley Road, Levenshulme, Manchester M19 1FS

| Inspection dates | 5–6 October 2016 |
|--|--------------------------|
| Overall effectiveness | Outstanding |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Outstanding |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Outstanding |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Outstanding |
| Outcomes for pupils | Outstanding |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher, executive headteacher, trust board and governors have worked with strength and determination to transform the quality of education and care provided by the school.
- Staff and pupils have a great deal of confidence in the headteacher, who has inspired their loyalty and respect.
- Levenshulme High School has moved from needing considerable support to being in a position to share its outstanding practice with others.
- Leaders and staff have created a culture which brings out the best in everyone, where morale is high, no-one is afraid to learn from mistakes and where parents can be sure that their daughters are safe from harm.
- The girls at Levenshulme High School achieve results which are much better than other pupils nationally with similar starting points.
- Funding for disadvantaged pupils is used very well so that nothing stops them from making as much progress as other pupils nationally.

- Staff give excellent support to the large number of girls who speak English as an additional language. These pupils quickly achieve a good standard of English and so are able to make rapid progress in all subjects.
- Teachers are highly qualified specialists who plan motivating activities which stretch the most able and support those who need help.
- Pupils conduct themselves extremely well in lessons and around school. They are polite, courteous and respectful, and work very hard to achieve their ambitions.
- The school has succeeded in its aim of promoting the emotional, physical and social well-being of every pupil.
- Staff give pupils exceptional opportunities to take responsibility for many aspects of school life. They are very well prepared to become the leaders of tomorrow.
- Pupils and staff celebrate the school's diverse and multicultural population and every kind of difference is respected. When pupils and families are vulnerable, staff take care of them with compassion and empathy.



Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that numeracy is developed across a wider range of subjects so that pupils develop the skills to apply mathematics in a greater variety of contexts.
- Continue to develop strategies to support the very small number of pupils who have not yet embraced the school's very high expectations of behaviour.



Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- Since the new school opened in September 2014, the headteacher, executive headteacher, governors and multi-academy trust board have worked with strength, determination and moral purpose to transform Levenshulme High School. They, along with highly effective deputy headteachers and assistant headteachers, have ensured that pupils receive the very best education and care. They have created an open culture that enables pupils and staff to thrive.
- Working within the Education and Leadership Trust, Levenshulme High School's partnership with Whalley Range High School has been a key factor in the improvements made. Best practice has been shared across all aspects of school life.
- Leaders and governors have been successful in their uncompromising ambition to improve progress for all groups of pupils across all subjects of the curriculum.
- Leaders and governors have carefully planned the spending of the pupil premium to provide individual help from teaching assistants for disadvantaged pupils. This welltargeted support has resulted in ever-diminishing differences between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils at Levenshulme and non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.
- The school has spent Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up funding on well-devised intervention and support so that pupils targeted are now on track to make more-thanexpected progress in English and mathematics.
- Staff identify pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities early so that the school can fund extra intervention and individual support. This use of funding has been effective in ensuring that all make at least good progress from their starting points.
- Leaders have ensured that provision for the large number of pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) is well resourced. The staff of the EAL department have the skills to support the development of spoken and written English and, as a result, pupils make outstanding progress. In addition, staff have the background and experience to support, with compassion and empathy, the emotional needs of those pupils and families who have recently arrived in this country having suffered a great deal of trauma.
- Subject and pastoral leaders have gained in confidence and skill and now play a key role in monitoring their areas of responsibility and ensuring that there is consistent improvement.
- Teaching and support staff have a high degree of confidence in the headteacher and senior leadership team. Leaders have inspired loyalty and high endeavour. One teacher summarised what many staff reported: 'My morale has improved so much since the new school opened. I feel that the headteacher has invested in my development and that she believes in me. That makes me want to be the best teacher the school has ever had.'
- Teachers report that senior leaders have maintained a very good balance between support and challenge in improving teaching. Increased staff confidence has motivated teachers to be creative and imaginative. Senior leaders have closely linked performance management to professional development opportunities within and outside school. This



has contributed to what is now highly effective practice across all subjects.

- Leaders at all levels use a wide range of carefully gathered information to measure the school's performance. The school has drawn on expertise from Whalley Range High School and organisations such as the Special Schools and Academies Trust to support honest and accurate self-evaluation.
- The curriculum offered to the girls is broad and balanced and takes into account their abilities, interests and career aspirations. The school builds on skills learned at primary school and has designed a curriculum which provides appropriate academic rigour, while fostering an enjoyment of learning. Through the curriculum, the Education and Leadership Trust has achieved its mission of promoting the emotional, physical and social well-being of every pupil and preparing the girls to be the next generation of leaders.

Governance of the school

- Governors and the Education and Leadership Trust have played a key role in securing rapid improvement.
- They provide a high level of educational, professional and academic expertise which allows them to achieve a good balance between support and challenge for the school. They receive good-quality performance information from the headteacher, executive headteacher and middle leaders and interrogate it rigorously to ensure that policies are implemented and targets are met.
- They ensure that the impact of all finances available to the school, including pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up, is measured against rigorous targets.
- The multi-academy trust has played an important role in creating the ethos and strategic direction of the school. Discussions and documentation show that lines of accountability, roles and responsibilities, and limits of delegation are clear.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have prioritised the safety of pupils from the outset and the school is an extremely vigilant community. All policies and procedures are up to date and reflect the latest national guidance. Staff are well trained in this area and are clear which procedures to follow should they have concerns. Effective links with external agencies are used when the school requires specialist expertise.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers are highly qualified in their subjects and use their knowledge to plan interesting and motivating activities which build on each other to help the girls to progress. Teachers' subject knowledge enables them to ask thought-provoking questions to check that pupils have understood, to clarify misconceptions and to deepen pupils' thinking.
- Teachers plan programmes of work which take into account pupils' abilities and prior learning. All groups are challenged and supported to make at least good progress. At the planning stage, teachers identify groups and individuals for extra support and challenge. Teachers are aware of what disadvantaged pupils, including most-able



disadvantaged pupils, need to achieve to match the progress of other pupils nationally. They ensure that extra resources, particularly teaching assistants financed through the pupil premium, are targeted appropriately.

- The skills which teaching assistants bring to the classroom enable them to support and challenge pupils through effective explanation and questioning. They generate very positive relationships with pupils and play an important role in increasing rates of progress for individuals and groups.
- Teachers use departmental schemes of work and policies well to plan work. This ensures a high level of consistency across and within subjects. In science, the policy of beginning each lesson with activities which test longer-term recall of key knowledge enables pupils to complete examination-style questions to a good level, long after the topic has been covered.
- Teachers have the confidence to be creative and take risks. They have very high expectations of behaviour so that no time is wasted during or between activities. They generate very positive relationships with frequent use of praise and humour. The girls work hard, with no distraction, from the beginning of lessons to the end.
- All subject teams plan very effectively to develop literacy. They teach key words and technical language explicitly and teachers routinely require pupils to develop their own definitions. Teachers in all subjects expect sustained writing with good spelling, punctuation and grammar. Numeracy across the curriculum is less well developed, although strong in science.
- Teachers put considerable effort into marking work according to the school's policy and identifying what pupils can do to improve. Pupils take the time to reflect on teachers' comments and to apply advice to future work.
- Teachers regularly set carefully devised homework so that it extends what has been learned in class.
- Pupils make the most of every lesson. They follow instructions immediately and listen to teachers and to each other with rapt attention. They cooperate with each other and share ideas very well. They are not discouraged when an answer is wrong but simply strive to understand their mistake and learn from it.
- Pupils present their work in an excellent way. They take good notes for revision and organise them well using highlighters, coloured pens, dividers and bullets. During lessons, they refer back to previous notes to help them understand new teaching points.
- A very wide range of sporting, cultural and academic extra-curricular activities attracts the girls in large numbers. Inspectors observed a house assembly when the senior student council explained how staff explicitly plan these activities to enhance resilience, organisation, presentation, communication, initiative, leadership and confidence.
- Teachers give parents regular information about how their child is progressing and how they might support learning at home. They have the opportunity to attend meetings to discuss reports in detail. Teachers give parents of pupils for whom English is an additional language individual time and support, to ensure that they fully understand what feedback from the school means. Written feedback from parents after meetings indicates that they feel that the information provided is comprehensive and useful.
- Teachers and pupils fully embrace the school's culture of celebrating diversity. Teaching strategies and resources reflect pupils' backgrounds and experiences and extend pupils' knowledge of cultures and religions beyond their immediate experience.



Pupils report that derogatory language is never heard in their school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The Education and Leadership Trust's core values of cooperation, self-reliance, teamwork and ethical approaches to business underpin much of the school's work in personal development and welfare.
- The girls are proud of their school and loyal to it. One pupil typified this view when she said, 'This school is my community. I feel an emotional attachment to it.'
- Younger and older pupils enjoy building relationships with each other through the organisation of mixed-age tutor groups. This arrangement provides opportunities for older pupils to support and mentor younger ones and to be inspirational role models.
- There is exceptional opportunity for pupils to become leaders in many areas, including each subject of the curriculum, the house council, careers, library and anti-bullying. Pupils take their leadership responsibilities very seriously. Inspectors witnessed many instances of pupils leading assemblies and tutor time when pupil leaders were confidently and articulately inspiring others to become the next generation of female leaders. They were encouraging the girls to play their full part socially, culturally, economically and politically in modern Britain and the wider world.
- Debating issues, formally and informally, is a routine part of the life of the school. There is a thriving debating society which has been recognised nationally as an example of excellent practice. Pupils do not shy away from expressing sincerely held views, while being careful to listen to others and to respect their ideas.
- Pupils confidently express their aspirations for sixth form, higher education and careers. They know how their own hard work will help them to achieve their personal and career ambitions.
- Pupils clearly express that they feel very safe in school. They are confident that if problems arise they will know whom to turn to, and they trust staff to help and support them. Lessons, tutor time, assemblies and special events equip pupils with the skills and knowledge necessary to keep themselves safe. They have appropriate strategies to avoid the dangers of social networking, mobile technology and being online. Year 7 pupils were able to explain how teachers have designed 'focus days' which are effective in developing pupils' awareness of how to keep healthy and to alert them to dangers such as child sexual exploitation, extremism, radicalisation and forced marriage.
- The school has clear and effective arrangements in place to ensure the attendance and well-being of any pupils who attend the alternative provision.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. The girls have very mature attitudes to learning and understand the value of consistent application of rewards and sanctions.
- Behaviour in lessons and around school leaves nothing to be desired. Inspectors saw no instances of disruption, inattention or lack of respect. The opinions of pupils, parents and staff were gathered by inspectors from discussions and questionnaires. This information clearly shows that the behaviour seen during the inspection is typical. All those involved agree that behaviour has improved enormously since the school



opened.

- Across the school there is a culture of mutual respect. At social times, the atmosphere is very pleasant, with pupils acting responsibly and chatting to each other and to staff in a mature manner.
- Pupils respect their school environment and wear their uniform and achievement badges with pride.
- Pupils were polite and courteous at all times during the inspection. All pupils were very keen to discuss their school with inspectors and did so with maturity and good grace.
- Documentation shows that there is a very small number of girls who have yet to embrace the high expectations of conduct in the new school. Staff deal with these girls appropriately, using the school's well-devised procedures. There are no permanent exclusions and the rate of fixed-term exclusion has decreased dramatically since the new school opened.
- Pupils, parents and staff report that all forms of bullying have been eradicated. School procedures for reporting and dealing with bullying are robust and supported by pupils who are trained anti-bullying ambassadors.
- Attendance levels are high in comparison with other schools across the country. Attendance for groups who previously had lower levels of attendance has improved, so that their progress is no longer adversely affected by missing school.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Pupils' books and school data show that outcomes continue to improve for all groups and across all subjects. Almost all pupils are making more-than-expected progress from their starting points.
- Progress in English and mathematics continues to improve in all year groups. In 2016, provisional data indicates that pupils made more progress in both of these subjects at GCSE than other pupils nationally with similar starting points.
- Pupils of all abilities read widely and well and make good use of the well-stocked school library. They read with confidence, accuracy and enthusiasm.
- Those who need to catch up in their English and mathematics skills do so quickly and are soon able to match their peers.
- In all subjects and in all year groups, the difference between the progress of disadvantaged pupils, including most-able disadvantaged pupils, and other pupils nationally with the same starting points is diminishing and, in some subjects, has been eradicated.
- The progress of the large number of pupils for whom English is an additional language is outstanding across all subjects. Some of these pupils have joined the school with little or no knowledge of English and, in some cases, with no experience of school. They make rapid progress in a short time and quickly catch up to the level of their non-EAL peers nationally.
- Analysis of the progress of individual pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities shows that all pupils within this group make at least good progress across all subjects, given their starting points.
- Across all areas of the curriculum, pupils develop excellent thinking and problem-



solving skills which enable them to understand subjects in depth and answer the higher-level examination-style questions very well.

- As a result of achievement in modern foreign languages, the percentage of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate qualification has improved significantly and increasing proportions of current pupils are now on track to achieve it.
- Very well-planned and well-resourced careers education, information, advice and guidance ensure that pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education. Since the school opened, figures for pupils not in education, employment or training when they leave school have decreased dramatically and are now well below the national average.



School details

| Unique reference number | 141196 |
|-------------------------|------------|
| Local authority | Manchester |
| Inspection number | 10022811 |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

| Type of school | Secondary comprehensive |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| School category | Academy sponsor-led |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 16 |
| Gender of pupils | Girls |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 1,010 |
| Appropriate authority | The Education and Leadership Trust |
| Chair | Emma Antrobus |
| Headteacher | Dr Johan MacKinnon |
| Telephone number | 0161 224 4625 |
| Website | www.levenshulmehigh.co.uk/ |
| Email address | office@levenshulmehigh.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- Levenshulme High School is an average-sized, all-girls, 11 to 16 secondary comprehensive school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is high and includes almost half of the school.
- The very great majority of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, the largest of which are Pakistani and Bangladeshi. The proportion of pupils whose first language is believed not to be English is very high. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average.
- For a very small number of pupils, the school uses alternative provision which it manages itself in conjunction with Whalley Range High School.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set minimum



expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

As part of the Education and Leadership Trust, the school has been supported by Whalley Range High School.



Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited classrooms to observe teaching and pupils' learning. Six of these lesson observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors observed and spoke to pupils during lessons and at breaktimes.
- Inspectors met formally with five groups of pupils and heard pupils read. They considered responses to the Ofsted pupil questionnaire.
- Discussions were held with staff, middle and senior leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the multi-academy trust board.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including arrangements for safeguarding. They took account of school information about pupils' outcomes and scrutinised pupils' books.
- Inspectors considered the 15 responses to Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire), including 11 free-text comments. In addition, inspectors considered information which the school had gathered from its own parental questionnaires.

Inspection team

| Liz Kelly, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| Dympna Woods | Ofsted Inspector |
| Stephen Ruddy | Ofsted Inspector |
| Annette Patterson | Ofsted Inspector |



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School report



Loreto High School Chorlton

Nell Lane, Chorlton-Cum-Hardy, Manchester M21 7SW

| Inspection dates | 27–28 September 2016 |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Overall effectiveness | Requires improvement |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Requires improvement |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Requires improvement |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Good |
| Outcomes for pupils | Requires improvement |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Good |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils do not make consistently good progress across a wide range of subjects and year groups. Outcomes for boys, the most able and disadvantaged pupils are weaker than others. However, new senior leaders have accurately recognised the school's areas for development and are swiftly raising standards across the school.
- Leaders and governors do not monitor and measure rigorously the impact of the targeted pupil premium funding.
- Governors do not challenge leaders effectively and have not held the school strenuously to account. As a result, the school has drifted and pupils' outcomes have not been maintained.
- Newly appointed middle leaders and teachers are strengthening the quality of teaching and learning. However, they have not been in place long enough to have significant impact on pupils' progress.
- New initiatives to raise outcomes for boys, disadvantaged pupils and the most able are in their infancy. It is too early to see the impact of these changes across the school.
- Strategies to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are not consistently applied across all subjects within the school.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are safe, well cared for and enjoy positive relationships with staff.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are tolerant and respectful of everyone. Bullying is rare.

- The design of the school curriculum does not support effective outcomes for all pupils.
 However, leaders are taking the action required to address the issue.
- Teaching, while improving, is not yet consistently strong and doesn't enthuse pupils' love of learning.
- Some teachers do not plan activities that are challenging enough and well matched to pupils' abilities. Teachers do not routinely check pupils' understanding, so opportunities to clarify or support pupils are missed.
- Teachers do not consistently apply the marking and feedback policy. Consequently, not all pupils know how to improve.
- Teaching in mathematics does not consistently strengthen pupils' skills in problem-solving and reasoning. As a result, some pupils' outcomes are not strong. Standards are not as high as they could be.
- Some teachers do not ensure that pupils' skills in extended writing are developed effectively.
- Not enough importance is placed on the quality of pupils' written work. Some pupils make frequent and common mistakes in their writing. Pupils' skills of spelling, punctuation and grammar are inconsistent.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is well developed, wide and varied.
- Pupils receive high-quality careers guidance and advice.



Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders and governors monitor and evaluate more rigorously the impact of the spending of targeted funding on improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
 - new middle leaders continue to flourish in their roles and strengthen the quality of teaching and learning to improve pupils' outcomes
 - governance is reviewed and governors are trained accordingly so that they can challenge the work of the school and hold leaders to account effectively
 - effective strategies are implemented across the school to further improve the attainment and progress of boys and disadvantaged pupils and the most able
 - the school's literacy and numeracy strategy is consistently applied across all subjects within the school
 - curriculum design supports effective outcomes for all pupils.
- Continue the drive to improve teaching, learning and assessment so that they lead to consistently good outcomes for pupils, particularly for boys, disadvantaged pupils and the most able, by:
 - planning activities which enthuse pupils' love of learning and motivate them to excel
 - ensuring that learning activities are challenging and consistently well-matched to pupils' abilities
 - making sure that teachers routinely check pupils' understanding before moving on to additional tasks
 - ensuring that the curriculum for mathematics strengthens pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills
 - increasing opportunities for extended writing in a wide range of subjects and building resilience in pupils
 - ensuring that the school's marking and feedback policy is consistently applied so pupils know how they can improve their understanding and learning quickens
 - ensuring that teachers place a greater importance on the correct use of spelling, punctuation and grammar in pupils' written work

 persevering with the current actions taken to raise standards across the school.
An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.
An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.



Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The actions taken by senior leaders and governors to tackle the variation in pupils' achievement have not yet resulted in good achievement for all groups of pupils. Pupils do not make consistently good progress across a wide range of subjects and year groups.
- Leaders do not monitor effectively the impact of the targeted pupil premium funding. Consequently, they are unclear on the effectiveness of strategies used to improve pupils' progress. As a result, disadvantaged pupils do not achieve as well as they should.
- Pupils are not consistently supported by a wide range of subjects to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. Leaders have implemented a strategy but it is still embryonic and as yet there is little impact on pupils' progress.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced for all pupils, but the design at key stage 3 is too rigid and does not provide senior leaders with the flexibility to address issues in learning. Consequently, this has hindered pupils' progress and limited teachers in their ability to provide consistent stretch and challenge for pupils in their learning. However, leaders are taking the action required to tackle the issue.
- Under the direction of the new headteacher, leaders work as a cohesive group, united in purpose, providing a clear vision and direction for staff and pupils.
- The new headteacher and both newly established deputy headteachers have revitalised and empowered staff and pupils to work together to improve the provision. Together, they have strengthened leadership across the school and this has resulted in green shoots of improvements. Senior leaders are now swiftly and methodically getting the school back on track; their actions have a clear momentum.
- Senior leaders have an accurate view of the school. They understand the school's strengths and areas for development. They recognise the urgent need to accelerate improvement in pupils' achievement. Initiatives have begun and key changes have been made to tackle inconsistencies, but some have not yet had an impact on pupils' learning.
- Senior leaders who are relatively new in post have quickly established robust systems across the school to drive improvements and raise success for all pupils. They have ensured that the school is poised for rapid improvement.
- Over the last year, strong leadership appointments in science, mathematics, drama and information technology and a new special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) have injected a sense of order and improved curriculum organisation. There is a real desire to improve teaching, learning and pupils' outcomes. However, changes in middle leadership have been too recent for the newly appointed leaders show enough impact for all pupils.
- The deputy headteacher for teaching and learning has improved accountability across the school and has clear plans to improve teaching and learning. She has established rigorous systems for checking teaching and pupils' progress. The foundations to build strong teaching and learning are set and the school is poised for further improvement.
- Staff feel well supported and are overwhelmingly positive about working at the school and the way their departments are being led. There is a renewed confidence in



leadership. Parents are also supportive of the school.

- Newly appointed staff from other establishments bring good skills and passion to teaching and learning within their subjects. All staff in the school benefit from development opportunities. Leaders value the importance of developing teachers' professional skills and aspirations, thereby building a culture of continuous improvement. Leaders hold teachers accountable for their pupils' progress. Performance management systems are fair, transparent and effective.
- The school has ensured that there is a wide range of different subjects at key stage 4. The school holds full discussions with parents about pupils' curriculum choices and how these affect their life learning plans. The school supports pupils' career choices and careers plans by providing appropriate careers education from Year 7 onwards. Pupils also have access to an online careers package, coupled with specific impartial advice through one-to-one interviews during key stage 4. Good connections are made with local providers for apprenticeships and a well-established careers fair further supports pupils' career choice routes. The school has clear connections with local employers and communicates local employment trends to pupils. As a result, very few pupils who leave Year 11 are not in education, employment or training.
- The local authority provides appropriate support for this school. Senior leaders have started to broker 'school to school' support for some middle leaders to sharpen teaching and learning and thereby improve pupils' outcomes.
- The school forms strong links with primary schools and establishes particularly positive relationships with pupils in Years 5 and 6. Pastoral leaders work hard to organise a wide range of rich, well-organised programmes to ensure that pupils are well informed and have any uncertainties dispelled before their arrival in Year 7.
- The school helps pupils to develop a strong sense of moral responsibility. Their social skills are well developed and they explore a range of personal and ethical issues through the religious education and the personal, social and health education curriculum.
- The school works effectively with parents and carers. Correspondence to parents is effective and wide reaching through a variety of channels. For example, leaders use frequent letters home, updates on social media and the school's website. The school's newsletter, 'Loreto news', is used well to communicate information to parents and carers. A recent development of using a phone application is providing up-to-date information for all. Written reports about pupils' progress and development are clear and appropriate in content.
- Leaders support newly qualified teachers and those in training well.
- The behaviour, attendance and progress of pupils studying off-site are monitored closely so that pupils attend well and are kept safe. These pupils' courses are matched well to their needs.
- The school's librarian is passionate about promoting reading and uses his knowledge and skills to ignite pupils' imagination. He ensures that the library lives up to its mission statement: 'The place for independent learning, exploration and happiness.' Pupils value the well-stocked shelves and the librarian ensures that creative displays and frequent engaging events throughout the academic year lure pupils into the library. For example, theme days to explore Victorian literature and the creation of 'mama Loreto', a reading scheme linked to a pizza, encourages pupils to broaden their reading. Author visits and frequent competitions are used to maintain pupils' interest. The librarian is aware of the reading needs of boys and has ensured that this is well promoted to



entice boys in becoming eager readers.

Governance of the school

- Governors have not been rigorous enough in the past at holding leaders to account. This is because governors relied too heavily on information given to them by leaders. However, since the arrival of the new leadership team, governors now have a realistic view of the school and they know that teaching and outcomes are not yet good enough. They are keen to develop and become more effective in their roles.
- Governors have not monitored the impact of the targeted pupils' funding effectively. As a result, disadvantaged pupils do not make strong progress.
- Governors have not ensured that the website is fully compliant with the necessary curriculum content and information on the use of targeted funding for specific groups of pupils.
- Governors fully support the school's ethos and inclusivity and recognise the vulnerability of some pupils and the challenges that leaders face in raising aspirations. Governors are aware of the strengths of the new headteacher and senior leaders and fully support them in their drive to improve standards.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The new deputy headteacher is the driving force behind improvements that have sharpened behaviour and safeguarding across the school. He is knowledgeable and effective, ensuring safer recruitment practices are used throughout the school. Consequently, pupils feel safe in school and staff are highly informed about current issues affecting young people. Staff check attendance closely and effectively monitor the welfare of all pupils. Form teachers liaise well with the effective pastoral team. Pupils who need additional support are swiftly identified and pastoral leaders use a wide range of external support for pupils in their care.
- All staff are well trained and alert to any risks. For example, all teachers have completed online training on the 'Prevent' duty, increasing their knowledge on how to safeguard pupils from the threat of terrorism and radicalisation. They act swiftly to pass on any concerns they may have; record-keeping and the suitability of actions are appropriate.
- The school provides high-quality safeguarding information and guidance to pupils through planned curriculum time and assemblies. Leaders also keep parents well informed about current issues. Pupils who attend off-site provision are checked upon by leaders and care is taken to ensure that they are appropriately safeguarded.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Although teaching is getting better across the school, and pupils' progress is beginning to improve, the quality of teaching and learning is not yet consistently good across the school and within subjects.
- Some teachers' expectations of what pupils can and should do are too low and they set work which is not challenging enough. As a result, boys, the most able and disadvantaged pupils do not make as much progress.
- Leaders have strengthened teaching and learning through effective appointments and



the implementation of new approaches and initiatives. However, these have not yet had sufficient impact across the school.

- Teaching is inconsistent and does not consistently meet pupils' needs. Teachers are aware of the need to plan for different pupils but they do not always do so effectively. Too many teachers are planning for the middle ability pupils and there is a lack of challenge for some pupils.
- Some teachers do not provide enough opportunities to develop pupils' skills in extended writing. As a result, pupils are less resilient and their skills are not well developed for their age.
- Some teaching in mathematics does not strengthen pupils' problem-solving or reasoning skills. As a result, pupils' progress is uneven.
- Some teachers do not check pupils' understanding thoroughly enough and rush pupils onto the next task. Consequently, opportunities to consolidate pupils' learning are missed.
- Teachers' feedback does not always let pupils know how they are doing and how they can improve. Teachers do not follow the school's marking policy carefully enough. As a result, pupils are not always clear what they need to do next to improve their work.
- The school's policy about the presentation of work is not consistently implemented. Pupils do not always take sufficient pride in their work and errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar occur. Teachers do not always follow up pupils' shortcomings with grammatical errors, and opportunities to reinforce the importance are missed.
- Teachers have a good knowledge of their subjects and are committed to doing their best for their pupils. Relationships between teachers and pupils are positive and respectful, and the great majority of pupils want to learn.
- Teaching assistants provide helpful support and additional guidance to pupils so they are able to improve their understanding in lessons.
- Where pupils are stimulated and required to give of their best, they rise to the challenge. This was seen by inspectors in drama, art, and resistant materials lessons. However, not all teachers drive a passion for learning and provide learning environments that raise pupils' engagement and encourage them to excel.
- Homework is set regularly. It is usually of good quality and assists pupils' learning and progress.
- Pupils are encouraged to participate in enrichment activities to develop their interests and deepen their knowledge and skills. A wide range of activities is offered and they complement the curriculum effectively and support pupils' character, attitudes and confidence. Music is extremely well structured and highly popular. For example, pupils are involved in: samba band, string group, gospel choir, jazz band, rock band, ukulele club and singing group.
- There are particular strengths in the teaching of drama, art, resistant materials and music. This is reflected in the good levels of pupils' progress in these subjects over time.
- Teachers are skilled in promoting diversity, challenging stereotypes and ensuring that a respectful ethos defines all aspects of the school's work.



Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are proud to be members of the school and wear their uniform smartly. Staff ensure that pupils have every opportunity to become their best selves. Assemblies and form time are used well to drive home gospel values and instil a clear moral code in pupils.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is effective. There are clear systems to support staff and pupils. Staff are well trained and highly skilled, they act wisely to keep all pupils safe. Leaders in the school work ably with other services to provide quality support for all pupils. For example, the school engaged with a national charity to raise awareness about gender identity. As a result, pupils improved their awareness of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues.
- The excellent provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. The curriculum is tracked closely and reviewed three times a year by leaders and pupils to ensure that information is relevant and topical for pupils. Pupils talked maturely to inspectors and were well informed about their rights and responsibilities and how to keep themselves safe and reduce the risk of child sexual exploitation. The school places emphasis on teaching pupils of all ages about British values and life in modern society through form time, assemblies and the religious education curriculum. As a result, pupils have positive views about the values in other faiths and cultures.
- Pupils are tolerant of others and respectful of those who may look and act differently from themselves. Pupils told inspectors that they do not regard bullying as an issue for the school. Parents and staff agree with the pupils that the school is safe. Pupils appreciate that staff are sensitive to any of their concerns and know that staff will spend time to resolve problems, however large or small.
- Pupils have learned how to keep themselves safe online and when using social media. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is frequently updated so that pupils receive current and relevant information on keeping themselves safe online. Pupils understand the importance of security settings and the consequences of sexting and disclosing their personal details. They know how to keep themselves safe and value the work of the pastoral staff within the school.
- The school provides an abundance of opportunities for pupils to develop as responsible individuals. For example, pupils are able to experience leadership positions such as prefects, form representatives and members of the student council. The school also embraces and promotes leadership and democracy through pupils taking part in the Manchester Youth Council. The recently formed pupil eco-warrior group have supported the school environment through their research on waste disposal. As a result, they have suggested waste disposal changes to save the school money and also promoted the use of recycle bins in classrooms.
- Pupils did not participate in the online questionnaire. However, those who met with inspectors felt safe and considered bullying to be rare and effectively dealt with by the school. Inspectors did not hear any derogatory language during the inspection.
- Pupils attending off-site courses have good levels of behaviour and attendance. Their attitudes to learning are positive and they make positive progress in their learning.



Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Leaders have established a positive culture built on respect and tolerance for everyone. Pupils conduct themselves well across the school and the vast majority obey the school's rules. Almost all pupils have good attitudes to learning and try their best even when the pace of learning slows.
- Pupils are clear about the school's expectations and how incidents will be treated. Consequently, the number of pupils being excluded from lessons has fallen. Leaders have worked effectively to reduce repeat incidents of poor behaviour among key groups of concern in the school.
- The vast majority of pupils behave well during breaks and lesson times and enjoy their time together. Many pupils attend organised activities on offer in the school. Staff supervision is well organised, and there is always an adult to help to solve any problems quickly and calmly. Pupils move calmly and purposefully around the building and arrive on time for lessons.
- Pupils' attendance has improved due to well-focused initiatives to raise the importance of attendance. The school's work with parents is increasingly effective. The number of pupils who are persistently absent from school is very low. Pastoral leaders work effectively together and standards across the school are consistent.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In the most recent summer examinations, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics rose compared to the previous year. However, too few pupils made the expected progress in mathematics and English.
- Current pupils do not make good enough progress from their various starting points in a wide range of subjects and year groups.
- Disadvantaged pupils' attainment in English and mathematics has improved and differences between their outcomes and those of their peers are now reducing. However, the progress for disadvantaged pupils remains an issue in the school. They did not secure the same progress as other pupils in the school. This is because the targeted funding is not used wisely by the school and opportunities are missed to support pupils to gain further progress. However, leaders now have clear plans in place to diminish the differences and improve disadvantaged pupils' progress, in particular the most able disadvantaged.
- The most able pupils do not reach the high levels of attainment of which they are capable because some teachers do not provide enough challenge in their learning.
- Leaders have been quick to recognise that boys achieve less well than girls and have clear plans in place to address this across the school.
- Work to develop spelling, punctuation and grammar is not effectively applied by teachers across the school. Consequently, pupils' development in this area is too shallow and common errors do still exist among a few pupils which limit their achievement.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make less progress than their peers. However, a new SENCo is training staff and providing effective support across the school. Improvement in current pupils' progress has now begun.
- Leaders of some subjects are leading by example in the classroom and driving teams



forward to ensure pupils' success. For example, achievement in music, art, drama, resistant materials, and textiles is consistently strong due to the clear leadership and delivery of high-quality teaching.

- Teachers are now providing accurate information on pupils' attainment. Leaders use this information to identify where appropriate support is needed. There is a strong appetite from all staff to accelerate pupils' progress.
- Pupils start the school with attainment which is below average. When they join the school, many do not read or write as well as typical pupils of their age. A number of pupils arrive with a considerable learning lag, particularly those joining midway through their secondary schooling.
- Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment; high proportions of pupils move to higher-level courses. The proportion of pupils progressing to education establishments, apprenticeships, employment or training is above the national average.
- Pupils with low reading levels receive well-structured and coordinated support to enable them to effectively improve their reading. The reading recovery programmes are effective in developing and improving pupils' reading.
- Pupils who attend alternative provision are gaining appropriate qualifications. Leaders in the school communicate frequently and make checks on pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance.



School details

| Unique reference number | 105574 |
|-------------------------|------------|
| Local authority | Manchester |
| Inspection number | 10022643 |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

| Type of school | Secondary comprehensive |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 11–16 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 756 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Patrick Cassidy |
| Headteacher | Mrs Catherine Hughes |
| Telephone number | 0161 881 9448 |
| Website | www.loretochorlton.org |
| Email address | welcome@loretochorlton.manchester.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 9–10 July 2013 |

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller-than-average-sized Roman Catholic secondary school and is affiliated to the Loreto International Family of Schools under the trusteeship of the Diocese of Salford.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the government's pupil premium grant is double the national average. There are more boys at the school than girls.
- Over half of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and a quarter of the school population speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is almost double the national average and the proportion who have an education, health and care plan is over double the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Inspection report: Loreto High School Chorlton, 27–28 September 2016



- A small number of pupils are educated through off-site provision at the Manchester pupil referral unit.
- The school does not meet requirements on its website on the publication of information about the curriculum and the impact of pupil premium funding.



Information about this inspection

- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders, and the chair of the governing body. Inspectors also made phone calls to the local authority, alternative providers and other local leaders supporting the school, as well as a current parent.
- Meetings were held with qualified teachers, including teachers who are newly qualified, and those undertaking training at the school.
- Inspectors formally interviewed a wide number of pupils and spoke to a range of pupils informally at break and lunchtime. Inspectors also observed pupils' conduct and behaviour throughout the school day.
- Inspectors viewed registration periods and an assembly, and made visits to the school's internal seclusion unit and also the behaviour unit, 'the hub', in the school.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school across a range of subjects and year groups. Some observations of teaching and learning were undertaken jointly with senior and middle leaders. Inspectors also undertook a number of shorter visits to lessons to gauge the climate for learning and pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors looked closely at samples of pupils' written work across a range of subjects and year groups.
- Inspectors also visited the school library and listened to pupils read.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including the school's policies, records relating to behaviour and attendance, safeguarding records and performance information. Development planning, self-evaluation documents, minutes of meetings, and records relating to teaching and learning were also considered. During the inspection, detailed consideration was given to policies and practices relating to safeguarding and also to how the school prepares its pupils for life in modern Britain.
- Inspectors considered 28 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as 23 responses from parents on Ofsted's free text service. They considered the responses to the staff and pupil online questionnaires provided by Ofsted to the school.

Inspection team

| Dawn Platt, lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Dympna Woods | Ofsted Inspector |
| Michael Holland | Ofsted Inspector |
| Stephen Ruddy | Ofsted Inspector |
| Tim Long | Ofsted Inspector |



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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

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Manchester City Council Ofsted Subgroup

School report



Manchester Academy

Moss Lane East, Moss Side, Manchester, M14 4PX

| Inspection dates | 20–21 September 2016 |
|--|--|
| Overall effectiveness | Requires improvement |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management Quality of teaching, learning and assessment Personal development, behaviour and welfare Outcomes for pupils | Requires improvement Requires improvement Requires improvement Requires improvement |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Good |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not done enough to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress across a wide range of subjects and year groups.
- Newly appointed teachers have strengthened teaching and leadership. These staff have not been in place long enough, however, to have brought about significant changes in outcomes.
- Leaders do not check effectively the impact of extra funding for targeted pupils. Consequently, they are unclear about the effectiveness of the strategies used to improve pupils' progress.
- Teaching, while improving, is not yet consistently strong. Some teaching does not capture pupils' interest or encourage a thirst for learning. As a result, pupils' progress remains uneven.
- Teachers do not always plan work that is well matched to pupils' abilities. As a result, pupils' progress sometimes slows.

The school has the following strengths

- The school works effectively with a range of external services to keep pupils safe and ensure that they are well cared for.
- Leaders have established an ethos built on respect and tolerance for everyone.
- Teaching and learning in modern foreign languages are strong.

- Teachers do not consistently check pupils' understanding and, consequently, are not able to plan effectively for further learning.
- Teachers do not always provide opportunities to develop pupils' communication skills. This means that too many pupils have poor oral and reasoning skills.
- Leaders do not instil a culture of wider reading. Reading strategies are not effective in meeting pupils' needs and so some pupils remain unable to cope with the reading demands of the secondary curriculum.
- Behaviour, while improving, is not yet consistently strong. Pupils' behaviour during social times sometimes lacks self-control.
- The provision for internal exclusion is not effective in improving pupils' behaviour and supporting learning. As a result, the number of fixed-term exclusions is too high.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is wide and varied. Their experiences effectively promote their positive attitudes.
- Pupils receive good-quality careers advice. Nearly all pupils proceed into further education, training or employment.



Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that pupils' progress is consistent throughout the school by ensuring that all teachers:
 - plan learning activities that are consistently matched to pupils' abilities
 - enthuse pupils and stimulate their love of learning
 - check pupils' understanding more effectively to help plan new learning
 - plan opportunities to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in relevant subjects across the curriculum and enable pupils with low starting points to catch up
 - develop pupils' oral communication skills and their ability to explain clearly their reasoning, thinking and ideas.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by devising clear ways of:
 - ensuring that effective strategies are in place across the school to drive pupils' love of reading and improve the quality and fluency of pupils' reading skills
 - improving the collaboration between middle leaders, so that the effective practice in numeracy and literacy can have an impact on all pupils across the school
 - effectively monitoring the use of targeted funding, including pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding, and evaluating its use and impact
 - improving the provision for pupils who are excluded from lessons but remain in school, so that it is a purposeful place to learn and is effective in improving pupils' behaviour.
- Improve the behaviour of a minority of pupils, and further reduce the instances of pupils' fixed-term exclusions.
- An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.



Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The school's leaders have not ensured that current pupils make consistently good progress across a wide range of subjects and year groups.
- Leaders do not ensure that the additional funds to support disadvantaged pupils and those who need to catch up in Year 7 are used effectively. Leaders have not carefully measured the impact of strategies used to improve these pupils' achievement. Consequently, disadvantaged pupils' progress is not consistently strong.
- Leaders have not established effective strategies to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. As a result, errors in pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar stubbornly remain and pupils lack confidence in knowing their multiplication tables.
- Leaders do not promote the importance of reading well across the school and strategies to improve reading are not effective. Reading is not promoted well by subject leaders or teachers beyond English. A deep-rooted pleasure and culture of reading is not well established. Consequently, some pupils' reading skills are not well enough developed to cope with the secondary curriculum.
- Leaders have failed to ensure that the school's internal exclusion unit, which is attended by pupils who are temporarily excluded from lessons, is effective. Pupils' learning is not well supported because the work and guidance they receive in the unit is of poor quality. Pupils are not well supported to improve their behaviour and many enter the unit on multiple occasions.
- The principal and the multi-academy trust have now secured strength in school leadership and this is beginning to have an impact throughout the school. More effective systems are in use across the school and there is a palpable change among staff and pupils. A strong culture is developing. However, the changes have not been in place long enough to secure significant improvements in pupils' achievement throughout the school.
- Leaders understand the areas for improvement and have appropriate actions in their development plans. They recognise the urgent need to accelerate improvement in pupils' achievement. Changes are under way to address inconsistencies, but some have not yet had an impact.
- Heads of each year group and pupil support workers know pupils well. They forge good relationships with pupils and their families to ensure that all pupils are supported well. Each year team works effectively to check pupils' progress and personal development. Better-targeted support and intervention are beginning to remove barriers to learning and improve pupils' success at all levels. For example, external agencies such counselling services, child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), and the school's own engagement officers, provide effective support irrespective of culture or language.
- Recent appointments of senior leaders, middle leaders and some new teaching staff have strengthened the school's capacity for further improvement. New staff are beginning to improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Consequently, standards are rising and pupils are beginning to make stronger progress.
- Leaders work closely with the trust and appreciate the well-targeted support and scrutiny they receive. The trust analyses the performance of the school and provides frequent targeted support to raise pupils' performance. An effective example is the provision of additional teaching development programmes, such as the 'lead practitioner'

Inspection report: Manchester Academy, 20–21 September 2016

programme', to enhance teachers' skills. The school also uses other school support partnerships to improve teaching and learning and improve pupils' achievement in weaker subjects such as resistant materials.

- Leaders support newly qualified teachers and those in training extremely well. Teachers who are new to the profession are developing their practice well and spoke of the well-planned and extensive support that the school provides. Leaders coach young teachers and provide many opportunities to observe other teachers. This approach is building confidence and sharpening teaching skills among new recruits.
- The school enables all pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well. This is promoted across the curriculum.
- Senior leaders have recently improved the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Teachers participate in well-organised, good-quality training. Nearly all staff who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire were positive about the professional development that they receive. Senior leaders evaluate teachers' success in raising the achievement of all groups of pupils, and this is closely linked to pay increases.
- The curriculum effectively meets the needs of the pupils. Leaders have ensured that pupils of all abilities have an appropriate balance of academic and vocational subjects. The formal, taught curriculum is well supplemented by a range of extra-curricular clubs, including sporting, academic and arts activities. For example, pupils can choose to attend science clubs, a rock school and trampolining to develop their interests beyond the classroom.
- The special educational needs coordinator is effective and ensures that support in phonics and reading is in place alongside support to develop pupils' numeracy skills and to narrow existing differences in attainment. Consequently, a small number of identified pupils are making strong progress in catching up with their peers. However, good practice in phonics and reading is not widespread.
- Leaders provide frequent and detailed information to all parents about pupils' progress. The school is committed to engaging with parents and the community and uses a wide variety of approaches. For example, school newsletters and social media are used frequently to update parents about pupils' activities and achievements. Most parents fully support the work of the school, but a very small number of parents indicated some dissatisfaction during the inspection. Inspectors found no evidence to substantiate any of these concerns.
- The school works closely with primary schools and establishes positive relationships with pupils in Year 6. Well-organised programmes ensure that pupils are well informed and have any uncertainties dispelled before their arrival in Year 7.

Governance of the school

- The governing body has been strengthened with a new chair since the last inspection and is aware of its responsibilities in raising school standards. Governors are strongly committed and are kept up to date with training, such as understanding data and safeguarding. As a result, they are knowledgeable about the school's strengths and areas of development. They are passionate about improving pupils' life chances.
- The governing body does not always consider spending decisions carefully. It has not held leaders to account for the use of the pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding and whether or not it has been effective.
- Some governors have established links with middle leaders and are using these to establish a deeper understanding of subject departments and their work to raise pupils' achievement.

Governors hold frequent meetings and are ambitious for the future of the school. They insist upon detailed reports so that they can understand and measure the impact of leaders' work on pupils' progress. They are confident in using this information to support leaders' decisions in teachers' salaries or tackling underperformance. They have supported leaders effectively with capability procedures that have taken place in the past.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils overwhelmingly feel safe in the school. The school makes safeguarding a high priority through topics that pupils are taught in the community curriculum, information promoted via the school's website and liaison with a range of external agencies. Teachers are well trained and staff are alert to the dangers and risks to all pupils. Staff have received a range of training on potential areas of risk for young people. For example, they have attended 'Prevent' training to help them to identify pupils who may be at risk of being radicalised. Safer recruitment practices are used throughout the school. Pupils who attend off-site provision are checked upon by leaders and care is taken to ensure that they are appropriately safeguarded.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Although teaching is getting better and more pupils are making faster progress than previously, the quality of teaching is not yet consistently good throughout the school and within subjects.
- Teachers assess pupils' attainment regularly to establish accurate information on their progress. Some teachers, however, do not use this information to plan work that matches all pupils' abilities and do not check their understanding well enough. Too many teachers move onto new learning without ensuring that firm foundations are in place. Consequently, teaching often does not deepen pupils' knowledge or correct misconceptions, so pupils' progress slows.
- Most teachers do not ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunity to sharpen their speaking skills. They do not provide enough occasions for pupils to explore orally the reasons for their views or the thinking behind ideas. Consequently, many pupils are not adventurous in their learning and they lack confidence in articulating their ideas.
- Some teaching does not capture pupils' interest and does not instil a love for learning. Consequently, pupils are not curious to learn and their progress is not as strong.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in numeracy and literacy are not planned well in relevant subjects across the curriculum. Leaders have not provided teachers with an agreed strategy of support in numeracy. Consequently, pupils are not being provided with regular feedback and direction and so their progress slows.
- Leaders have not ensured that pupils read widely and often across the curriculum and its importance is not promoted well. Reading is not rigorously rewarded or celebrated to encourage pupils who are less inclined to read. New reading recovery programmes are not well established and pupils' progress in reading is uneven.
- The presentation of work in pupils' books is improving. Leaders have focused on improving the quality of feedback teachers provide to pupils. Consequently, more detailed and frequent marking can be seen throughout the school, in line with the school's policy. Pupils know where they have gone wrong and what they need to do to improve their work.
- Homework is set regularly. It is usually of good quality and assists pupils' learning and progress.

- Teachers have a good knowledge of their subjects and are very committed to doing the best for their pupils. Relationships between most teachers and pupils are positive and respectful.
- Some teachers combine excellent subject knowledge with a very secure understanding of pupils' needs. They plan activities that match pupils' abilities well. These teachers are confident, adaptable and have high expectations of what their pupils can achieve. They inspire pupils to be successful. This better quality of teaching is most commonly found in modern foreign languages.
- Teachers frequently check pupils' assessments across their departments and also with some external providers, securing the accuracy of their judgements.
- Teachers recognise the importance of their subjects in supporting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and ensure that the curriculum incorporates these aspects clearly during lessons. The school also use trips and visits to enhance pupils' development. For example, a recent trip to Stratford-upon-Avon to see Shakespeare's 'Hamlet' provided a new cultural learning experience for pupils in Years 7 and 8.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders make very good efforts to ensure that the needs of pupils are known prior to their arrival at the school. Information is provided to teachers and additional support for the most vulnerable pupils is well organised. For example, the least able pupils are quickly identified and grouped together to enable leaders to deliver a curriculum matched to their needs that provides a high level of support and builds pupils' confidence. The school works well to make sure that pupils who need additional support settle well when they arrive at the school. This is particularly true for pupils who enter the school after the start of an academic year.
- The school provides many opportunities for pupils to develop as responsible individuals. For example, pupils are able to experience leadership positions as prefects, form representatives and members of the student council. The head boy and head girl are elected by pupils; this instils a clear understanding of democracy through election experiences. The school also embraces and promotes leadership and challenge through pupils becoming involved in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.
- The welfare of pupils is the highest priority for leaders. Pupils describe how they are well cared for, that they feel safe and are sure about which member of staff to go to if they have a concern. They report that any concerns are well managed by the school. The use of 'pupil support workers', non-teaching support staff allocated to each year group, are highly valued by staff and pupils in providing effective support. There are clear, well-established systems to support pupils who are struggling with issues.
- Pupils who attend the school's two resource bases are integrated into mainstream lessons and their welfare and development are supported well by all staff. Consequently, they feel part of the school culture and develop well socially.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong and they are well prepared for the diversity of life in modern Britain. This is driven throughout the school by an effective community curriculum and is supported by assemblies and organised visitors. For example, leaders organised a pop-music band to visit the school with a message of anti-radicalisation.

- The school's safeguarding procedures are strong. All staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures and are well trained, including on the school's duty to safeguard pupils who may be at risk of exposure to extremism. Staff are also highly trained to enable them to support girls at risk of female genital mutilation. The school is highly vigilant in identifying those pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable to harm. The school provides continual reminders to pupils about safety using assemblies. Strong links with the local police keeps the school abreast of local issues. A recent educational programme led by a community nurse supported pupils' understanding of consensual safe relationships, grooming and child sexual exploitation.
- Careers advice and guidance are well organised and effective. Leaders have provided an employability manager alongside an impartial careers adviser to ensure that pupils have open access to tailored advice. Pupils are well informed about further study and career options. Support and information for parents is of good quality. The school hosts careers fairs and advertises careers events to pupils. For example, the university outreach programme, 'Scrubs', was attended by pupils who were keen to learn more about the medical profession. Pupils in key stage 4 experience careers fairs, apprenticeship guidance and have access to personal careers interviews. Leaders work with a wide range of employers and training providers to enhance the school's well-structured and organised careers education programme. Pupils are extremely well prepared for their next stage of education, employment or training. Consequently, very few pupils do not enter education, employment or training after Year 11.
- Pupils in Year 9 are encouraged to reflect on careers when selecting their courses for key stage 4 in personal support meetings with leaders. Pupils' choices are carefully matched with their future aspirations. Advice and guidance processes for pupils making study choices for GCSE are very thorough and lead to there being very few pathway changes because pupils are on appropriate courses.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils and staff say behaviour has improved and poor behaviour is dealt with quickly and effectively since the recent launch of the revised behaviour system. While disruption to learning is rare, the behaviour of a minority of pupils is still not good. The number of `removals' from lessons due to poor behaviour has reduced, but numbers of pupils who are placed into the school's internal exclusion unit is still high.
- Inspectors observed pupils behaving well in lessons. No derogatory language was heard. Most pupils wear their uniform smartly and have pride in their school. However, pupils' behaviour during social times around the school site is not as positive, respectful or courteous.
- Pupils are tolerant of others and respectful of those who may look and act differently from themselves. Leaders ensure that diversity is celebrated within the school. Pupils told inspectors that they do not regard bullying as an issue for the school. Pupils appreciate that staff are sensitive to any of their concerns and know that staff will spend time to resolve problems, however large or small.
- Pupils' attendance has improved and is now close to the national average because wellfocused initiatives have raised the importance of attendance. The school's work with parents is increasingly effective. There is an upward trend of attendance among pupils who are persistently absent from school.
- Most pupils attending off-site courses have excellent behaviour and levels of attendance. Their attitudes to learning are positive and they make good progress in their learning.

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Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- There is no consistent trend of improving standards. Current pupils do not make good enough progress from their various starting points in all year groups and in a wide range of subjects, including English and mathematics. Pupils' progress is too varied to show a strong trend of improvement. However, some successes are masked by a cohort that includes an untypically high number of pupils who joined the school at a later stage in their secondary schooling.
- Subject leaders in English and mathematics are ambitious in driving improvements in attainment and rates of progress improved in 2016. Progress in other year groups is too varied, however, to result in a secure positive trend of improved standards.
- New staff appointments to strengthen teaching and learning have not been in place long enough to secure a significant impact on pupils' achievement across a wide range of subject and year groups.
- Pupils do not always receive well-structured and coordinated support to enable them to improve their skills swiftly enough. Pupils who are furthest behind receive effective extra catch-up help in Years 7 and 8. Too many pupils throughout the school who are still behind with literacy and numeracy, however, do not receive effective support or catch-up programmes. As a result, these pupils' development is hampered.
- Many pupils enter the school with low levels of literacy skills and some pupils have considerable language barriers. The school has many pupils who cannot read as well as they should, in all year groups, and this is inhibiting their progress. The recently implemented reading recovery programme has not yet had a positive impact in developing pupils' wider reading or enjoyment of reading. Consequently, pupils are not equipped with skills to build strong foundations for future success.
- The most-able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, made strong progress in 2016. This improvement reflects the determination of the principal in his quest to improve outcomes for the most-able disadvantaged pupils.
- More generally, however, the differences in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally are not diminishing evenly or swiftly enough throughout the school and among subjects. The absence of effective checks by leaders on the school's use of pupil premium funding means that they do not know what impact their spending has had on pupils' progress. As a result, the progress of disadvantaged pupils still varies throughout the school.
- The least-able pupils made strong progress in their examination results in 2016 because they had received well-targeted support.
- Good leadership is securing improving achievement in a range of subjects. In 2016, examination results in the following subjects were above national figures: BTEC business, BTEC hospitality and catering, BTEC information communication technology, GCSE computing, GCSE further mathematics, GCSE Spanish, GCSE French, and GCSE philosophy.
- Achievement in modern foreign languages is consistently stronger than national figures because of clear leadership and delivery of high-quality teaching.
- The few pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress in relation to their starting points. The pupils who make use of the provision in the resource bases are also very well supported and make strong progress.
- Pupils who attend alternative provision off the school site for some or all of the week achieve well because the courses and experiences they are provided with are carefully

matched to their interests and their level of ability. These courses successfully help them to re-engage with learning and the pupils make good progress as a result.

Good careers advice is provided and this is reflected in the high proportion of pupils who leave the school for education, employment or training.

School details

| Unique reference number | 134224 |
|-------------------------|------------|
| Local authority | Manchester |
| Inspection number | 10003286 |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

| 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 | 995 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Ms Margaret Woodhouse |
| Principal | Mr Andy Griffin |
| Telephone number | 0161 232 1639 |
| Website | www.manchester-academy.org |
| Email address | office@manchester-academy.org |
| Date of previous inspection | 24–25 January 2012 |

Information about this school

- Manchester Academy is part of United Learning and is an averaged-sized secondary school and has more boys than girls.
- A very large majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average and the proportion who have an education, health and care plan is below average.
- The school has two specially resourced units for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These units are for deaf pupils and for those who have an autism spectrum disorder.
- Since the previous inspection the school has closed its sixth-form provision.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well over double the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

- A number of pupils are educated through off-site provision. Providers include: Manchester Vocational Learning Academy; The Together Trust Pupil Referral Unit; and Brighter Futures.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the school's pupil premium funding on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Meetings were held with the principal, associate principal, senior leaders, middle leaders, members of the local governing body and the United Learning Trust. Inspectors also made a telephone call to the local authority to discuss its work within the school.
- Meetings were held with qualified teachers, including teachers who are newly qualified, and those undertaking training at the school.
- Inspectors formally interviewed a large number of pupils and spoke with a range of pupils informally at break and lunchtime. Inspectors also observed pupils' conduct and behaviour throughout the school day.
- Inspectors viewed registration periods and an assembly, and made visits to the school's internal exclusion unit and also the specialist resource bases in the school.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school across a range of subjects and year groups. Some observations of teaching and learning were undertaken jointly with the principal. Inspectors also undertook a number of shorter visits to lessons to gauge the climate for learning and pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors looked closely at samples of pupils' written work across a range of subjects and year groups.
- Inspectors viewed pupils arriving and leaving school and sat in on an assembly. Inspectors also visited the school library and listened to pupils read.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including the school's policies, records relating to behaviour and attendance, safeguarding records and information about teachers' performance. Development planning, self-evaluation documents, minutes of meetings, and records relating to teaching and learning were also considered. During the inspection, detailed consideration was given to policies and practices relating to safeguarding and also to how the school prepares its pupils for life in modern Britain.
- Inspectors considered 21 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as 10 responses from parents on Ofsted's free text service. They considered the responses by the staff and pupils to an online questionnaire provided by Ofsted.

Inspection team

| Dawn Platt, lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Linda Griffiths | Ofsted Inspector |
| Michael Pennington | Ofsted Inspector |
| Stephen Ruddy | Ofsted Inspector |
| Debra Wood | Ofsted Inspector |
| Alison Stot | Ofsted Inspector |
| Liz Kelly | Ofsted Inspector |
| Annette Patterson | Ofsted Inspector |

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Manchester Communication Academy

Silchester Drive, Harpurhey, Manchester M40 8NT

| Inspection dates | 27–28 September 2016 |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Overall effectiveness | Requires improvement |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Requires improvement |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Requires improvement |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Good |
| Outcomes for pupils | Requires improvement |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Good |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders and governors have too generous a view of the quality of education the school provides. The specific plans to improve the school further and how that will be achieved are vague.
- The strategies to improve the progress of disadvantaged pupils are not robustly checked by leaders and governors.
- The tracking of progress and subsequent interventions for the most able pupils has not been as thorough as it is for other groups.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders, including governors, teachers and staff are committed to the pupils in their care.
- The personal development and welfare of pupils is good. The school's support for pupils' health and well-being is exemplary.
- Pupils' behaviour and attendance are good.

- Teaching does not consistently meet the needs of pupils, given their starting points, especially for the most able pupils.
- The standards reached by pupils in mathematics, especially for disadvantaged pupils, are not yet good.
- Pupils are not encouraged to read widely outside of their English classes.
- The achievement of pupils is improving. Pupils achieve particularly well in English and computer science.
- The school works well with the local community through its outreach programme.



Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the impact of leadership and management, by:
 - improving the tracking and monitoring of the most able pupils
 - evaluating the impact of the pupil premium funding on outcomes for pupils
 - ensuring that school improvement planning is clear and specific on what needs to be done, how it will be done and what success criteria will be used to demonstrate clear improvement.
- Ensure that teaching meets the needs of pupils, given their starting points, especially for the most able pupils so that they achieve well.
- Ensure that the improvements that have begun in mathematics continue and lead to good progress being made, especially for the disadvantaged pupils.
- Promote a culture of reading within the school whereby pupils are encouraged to read widely and beyond their English lessons.
- An external review of the school's use of pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.



Requires improvement

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

- Leaders and managers, including governors, have too generous a view of the quality of education at the school.
- The school's improvement plan does not give a clear steer as to exactly what needs to be done in order to move the school forward and how these actions will have a demonstrable impact on the outcomes for pupils across all year groups. The plan is vague in terms of specific strategies and success criteria.
- Leaders and managers, including governors, have not evaluated the impact of the pupil premium funding effectively. Consequently, it is unclear as to which strategies are having the greatest impact on pupils' outcomes and providing value for money.
- Leaders and managers have not been attentive enough to the achievement of the most able pupils within the school.
- Leaders and managers are determined to do their best for the pupils at this school. Leaders acted quickly to address the poor performance of pupils in 2015 and the provisional results for 2016 show marked improvements. This indicates a capacity within leadership to make further improvements.
- Leaders provide teachers with a range of professional development opportunities to improve the quality of their teaching; teachers commented to inspectors that they value these opportunities and that they are making a difference to their practice.
- The curriculum is well thought out. Due to recruitment and retention issues in certain subjects, leaders have had to make decisions that have removed subjects from the curriculum offer. However, leaders do not deny pupils opportunities to study appropriate courses and they source alternative provision if necessary.
- The curriculum is enhanced by many extra-curricular activities and enrichment opportunities. The uptake by pupils in these areas is high and develops pupils' interest and progress.
- The school is committed to promoting equality and diversity. The policy and practices of the school are fully reflective of the legislative requirement to protect all people on the grounds of race, religion, sex, disability and marital status, for example.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is woven into the curriculum and daily life of the school. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. The school has particular strength in its outreach work and involves adults and pupils from different social backgrounds in offering employment opportunities. The focus on communication within the school offers occasions to understand the cultural influences that shape British heritage.

Governance of the school

- Governors share a tangible ambition and passion for the pupils at this school. They are committed and supportive.
- However, the governors do not evaluate with the necessary rigour the impact of the pupil premium funding. Similarly, the school's improvement planning is lacking in precision. It does not indicate to governors precisely what needs to be done and what the impact of this will be with clear, demonstrable evidence on pupils' outcomes.

Inspection report: Manchester Communication Academy, 27–28 September 2016



- Governors take an active role in the performance management of staff. They are not afraid to make tough decisions on staff performance.
- Governors regularly receive updates on safeguarding matters throughout the year and they take their duties seriously.
- At the start of the inspection, the website was not compliant and key policies and documents out of date. This was rectified during the inspection.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school is attentive to ensuring that pupils are kept safe. The recruitment and induction of new staff is robust and all staff are updated on a regular basis through formal training and regular safeguarding bulletins. This includes training relating to extremism and radicalisation, child sexual exploitation and forced marriages. The single central record meets requirements.
- The records that the school keeps are appropriate and the school works well with a range of external agencies as well as parents and carers to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- The school is currently in the process of reviewing the safeguarding policy to ensure that it reflects the recent changes to 'Keeping children safe in education'.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching across the school is inconsistent. Pupils are not routinely challenged enough in their learning. During the inspection it was evident that pupils were finding the work either too hard or too easy and that the learning did not consistently match their abilities.
- The pupils spoken to during the inspection were unable to explain what it is they need to do in order to improve their learning. Pupils were unclear as to what their targets are.
- Teachers do not intervene quickly and early enough when most-able pupils fall behind in their learning. Consequently, the most able pupils do not make as rapid progress as they could.
- All of the pupils spoken to commented that they found it difficult to maintain concentration during the two-hour lessons in non-practical subjects. This led to a lack of engagement and pupils' attention waning.
- Parents are informed of how well their children are doing and have the opportunity to discuss progress at face-to-face meetings throughout the year. The majority of parents who responded to Parent View said that they were given valuable information regarding their children's progress.
- Homework is set in accordance with the school policy and many pupils take the opportunity to complete their homework in the after-school sessions.
- Teachers and middle leaders have benefited from the experience and support of colleagues from other schools in improving their practice.
- The teachers show good subject knowledge and are brimming with energy and enthusiasm. Effective teaching was seen in English and creative subjects.



Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The school has extensive provision for ensuring the personal development of pupils is paramount.
- The work that the school carries out to promote the health and well-being of pupils is exemplary. There is an array of classes, groups, workshops and outside visitors to actively promote healthy lifestyles. This provision is greatly enhanced by the school's own school nurses.
- The multi-cultural dimension of the school gives pupils real experience of life in modern Britain. Leaders ensure that pupils are being prepared to be well-rounded citizens.
- The pupils are given good impartial careers information, advice and guidance. Pupils are appropriately advised and welcome the opportunity to discuss their aspirations and future plans. The pupils are supported through the 'Venture' programme, which consolidates the advice and allows them to broaden their scopes and horizons through enrichment activities.
- The pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe and what to do if they have any concerns. They are particularly knowledgeable about e-safety and the dangers of radicalism and extremism.
- The personal development and welfare of pupils educated at alternative provision is monitored closely by school leaders.
- The pupils showed a mature and respectful attitude to questions regarding pupils who identify themselves as lesbian, bisexual and gay. All the pupils said that this would not lead to any name-calling or homophobic bullying.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The behaviour observed by inspectors in and outside of classes was good. The pupils were polite and friendly towards each other, their teachers and visitors.
- The rates of attendance are good and the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is reducing.
- The attendance of pupils who attend alternative provision is good. There are strong lines of communication between the school and the providers.
- The school keeps accurate and thorough logs of incidents of poor behaviour. Fixedterm exclusions are used as a last resort and the number of exclusions is reducing.
- The pupils that inspectors spoke with said that when bullying happens it is dealt with quickly and effectively.



Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In 2015, the results in the school were below the government's floor standard and the achievement of pupils was unacceptably low.
- Provisional results for 2016 indicate marked improvements. The standards in English, computer science and art are high. While standards have improved in mathematics, the progress made by pupils from their starting points, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, is not good.
- Pupils achieve well in citizenship, health and social care, performing arts and physical education. However, the standards reached in French, geography, graphics and resistant materials are low.
- The most able pupils and most-able disadvantaged pupils do not progress as well as they could from their starting points.
- Disadvantaged pupils are now making better progress than in previous years but this is not yet consistently strong across all subjects. It is unclear as to what specific strategies funded by the pupil premium allocation are having the most impact as this has not been carried out with the sufficient rigour.
- Pupils are not encouraged to read widely. The pupils that inspectors spoke with said they only read during their English lessons.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive a significant amount of help and support but the assessment information shows that the progress that these pupils make across year groups and subjects is variable. For example, the progress made in mathematics by pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities was low. Similarly, the progress that these pupils make at key stage 3 in science was weaker than for other groups of pupils.
- The school has adopted an early entry strategy for Year 10 pupils. All Year 10 pupils are entered for some subjects in Year 10 to allow them to focus on English, mathematics, science and humanities subjects in Year 11. The results achieved by Year 10 in 2016 demonstrate a stronger performance in these subjects than the previous year.
- Pupils who are from minority ethnic groups and/or have English as an additional language achieve well.
- The pupils educated at alternative provision are making the progress that is expected of them.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils who left the school went on to further education or employment.



School details

| Unique reference number | 136105 |
|-------------------------|------------|
| Local authority | Manchester |
| Inspection number | 10021839 |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

| 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 | 1,071 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mike Blackburn |
| Principal | Lynne Heath |
| Telephone number | 0161 2020161 |
| Website | www.manchestercommunicationacademy.com |
| Email address | I.heath@mca.manchester.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 19–20 September 2012 |

Information about this school

- The school opened in September 2010. It is a larger-than-average secondary school.
- The lead sponsor of the school is British Telecom. The school is co-sponsored by Manchester College and Manchester City Council.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is very high.
- The proportion of pupils identified as needing support for special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is below average.
- The school uses three alternative provisions: Harpurhey House, The Lighthouse Group Centre and the local authority's pupil referral unit. There are currently 15 pupils educated at alternative provision.
- The school received support from Whalley Range High School for sports and Cheadle Hulme Teaching School for mathematics.

Inspection report: Manchester Communication Academy, 27–28 September 2016



- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish on their website.
- The school has extensive links with other organisations. Among its accolades it is a STEM Flagship school; part of the National Space Education initiative; a member of the Science Learning Partnership; Lead Health and Well-being School, a Digital House School and a member of the Global Learning Partnership.
- In 2015, the school did not meet the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11.



Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of lessons across subjects and across all year groups. A learning walk took place with senior leaders. Inspectors spoke with pupils and looked at their work.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils from both key stages about their experience of school and their learning.
- Inspectors considered 14 responses to Parent View and 15 written submissions on free text online questionnaire for parents. There were no staff responses and no pupil responses to Ofsted's inspection questionnaires. Inspectors also considered emails that were sent directly to Ofsted during the inspection.
- Inspectors met with the members of the governing body. Meetings were also held with the principal, senior and middle leaders and members of staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised a variety of documentation including the school's own selfevaluation and development plan; anonymised performance management documents; school policies and procedures and the school's own assessment information. A range of documentation regarding safeguarding was scrutinised, including behaviour and attendance records and bullying logs.

Inspection team

| Jonathan Jones, lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Bernard Robinson | Ofsted Inspector |
| Osama Abdul Rahim | Ofsted Inspector |
| Andrew Cooper | Ofsted Inspector |
| Timothy Gartside | Ofsted Inspector |
| Mike Merva | Ofsted Inspector |



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