

School report



# Manchester Creative and Media Academy for Boys

300 Victoria Avenue East, Blackley, Manchester, M9 7SS

**Inspection dates** 12–13 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

**This is an academy that has serious weaknesses.**

- Boys' achievement is inadequate. Boys make less progress from their relative starting points than boys nationally in English, mathematics and science.
- Many boys have weak literacy skills that affect their achievement in different subjects. Staff are working to improve this situation, but the impact is not yet clear. Reading, writing and speaking skills are not fostered well enough in some lessons and a careless standard of presentation in students' work is accepted by too many teachers.
- The most-able boys are not consistently challenged to attain at the highest levels. In some lessons they work independently and make rapid progress, whereas on other occasions their work is undemanding.
- The quality of teaching is too variable. Sometimes teachers talk for too long in lessons. This leads to boys switching off from learning or occasionally becoming disruptive. Too often, all boys are required to complete the same work irrespective of their abilities.
- A small number of boys arrive late to lessons and this reduces their learning time.
- When subject leaders identify weaknesses they do not always take precise actions to bring about swift improvement. Subject leaders have not done enough to improve the quality of teaching in all areas and do not always ensure that the academy's policies are consistently implemented.

**The academy has the following strengths:**

- Boys' behaviour has improved significantly over the last year. Exclusions have reduced and attendance has risen sharply.
- The academy's self-evaluation is accurate.
- Leaders have improved teaching through a well-targeted professional development programme and regular monitoring.
- Governance has been strengthened and is clearly focused on raising achievement.
- The academy is a safe, inclusive environment. Staff work hard with students, families and external agencies to help overcome difficulties and support boys' learning.
- Boys make better progress in the recently introduced co-educational classes.
- The academy's sixth form is good. Its courses meet the needs of its students and prepare them well for their next steps in education, employment or training. Students make good progress from their starting points in response to ambitious teaching and sensitive support.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspections of Manchester Creative and Media Academies for Boys and for Girls were undertaken as a single event because the two academies have a single Trust and governing body, leadership team and staff. They share premises and girls and boys are frequently taught in the same classes.
- Inspectors observed 41 lessons, taught by 39 different teachers. Five of these observations were conducted with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also visited an assembly and several tutorial sessions. They observed students' behaviour around the site at social times.
- Discussions were held with the Principal, senior leaders, heads of department, staff, two governors including the Chair of the Governing Body, a local primary headteacher and an adviser from the Schools Partnership Trust Academies (SPTA) who has quality assured the work of the academy.
- Inspectors held meetings with five groups of students and spoke to others informally. One inspector toured the academy with two students. Inspectors listened to a number of students reading during lessons.
- The inspection team observed the academy's work and looked at a range of documentation, including the academy's self-evaluation, improvement planning, monitoring records, analysis of students' achievement, performance management information, behaviour logs and arrangements for safeguarding students. They considered information provided on the academy's website.
- There were insufficient responses to the on-line questionnaire, Parent View, for consideration during this inspection. Inspectors took account of the academy's own surveys of parents' opinions.

## Inspection team

Shirley Gornall, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Patrick Geraghty	Her Majesty's Inspector
Drew Crawshaw	Her Majesty's Inspector
Kathleen Harris	Additional Inspector
Lyn Field	Additional Inspector

## Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

### Information about this academy

- Manchester Creative and Media Academies for Girls and Boys opened in September 2009. In September 2012 they moved to a single purpose-built site. The academies are led and managed by a single governing body and senior leadership team, and are generally referred to as Manchester Creative and Media Academy. Boys and girls are taught by the same teachers, sometimes in mixed groups and sometimes as single-sex groups.
- Manchester Creative and Media Academy has applied to be recognised as a fully co-educational institution from September 2014. The girls' academy is smaller than the average-sized high school and the boys' academy is much smaller. Together, the academies form one average-sized high school.
- The academy's lead sponsor is The Manchester College and its co-sponsors are Microsoft and Manchester City Council. The Trust arrangements are being re-established to include SPTA, which currently provides educational support.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is very high, at over twice the national figure. The pupil premium is additional funding for those students who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after by the local authority.
- An average proportion of boys are from minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest of which are Pakistani and African. An average proportion of boys speak English as an additional language.
- The proportions of students registered as disabled or with special educational needs supported at school action, school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are much higher than average.
- There is a small co-educational sixth form that offers a range of BTEC courses.
- The proportion of students joining or leaving the academy at other than the usual times is broadly average.
- A small number of students are educated at Manchester Pupil Referral Unit. A few study vocational courses at Community Service Volunteers, (CSV) a charity which provides vocational learning, or attend The Manchester College.
- In 2012, the academy's performance was below the government's floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- When it was inspected in March 2012, the academy was given a notice to improve.

## **What does the academy need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the quality of teaching in Key Stages 3 and 4 so that it is at least good leading to rapid progress and raised attainment for all groups of boys, especially in English, mathematics and science by:
  - planning lessons that are tailored to the different attainment levels of students
  - providing more opportunities for students to develop their independent learning skills
  - ensuring that tasks are engaging and challenge all students, including the most-able
  - using questioning effectively so that students develop their reasoning and extend their thinking by giving more developed answers
  - doing more to promote boys' reading, writing and speaking skills in all subjects
  - challenging students to present their work carefully.
  
- Improve behaviour to be at least good by:
  - ensuring that the academy's code of conduct is consistently applied in all lessons and around the academy
  - improving punctuality to lessons so that learning time is not wasted.
  
- Improve leadership by:
  - ensuring that all staff who return to the academy from maternity leave, as well as those new to post, receive appropriate induction so that their contribution to achievement is immediate
  - strengthening the role of subject leaders in improving the quality of teaching
  - ensuring that swift action is taken by subject leaders to address areas of underperformance in teaching apparent through monitoring.

## Inspection judgements

### **The achievement of pupils is inadequate.**

- The achievement of boys, although improving remains below the government floor target.
- Boys enter the academy with standards of attainment that are significantly below those found nationally. Their progress is not rapid enough to close the gap between their standards and those of boys nationally. In too many lessons in mathematics, English and science, boys make less than expected progress. Where boys are taught alongside girls, their progress is noticeably better.
- In 2012 boys supported by pupil-premium funding performed significantly less well than their peers at GCSE level. Gaps in attainment between these groups are narrowing but these boys remain about half a grade behind their peers at GCSE level.
- Achievement is inadequate for disabled students and those with special educational needs. Boys with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties who were educated off-site achieved particularly low standards in 2012. The academy has reviewed and reduced its use of off-site provision, including discontinuing some placements. Academy leaders regularly monitor the education of boys who are educated off-site and can demonstrate that they are making better progress now than was previously the case.
- Lower-attaining boys, including those with special educational needs supported through school action and school action plus, are making better progress now, partly due to well-targeted use of the pupil premium to fund interventions, such as individual mentoring and recently introduced reading programmes.
- Boys from minority ethnic groups made better progress overall than their peers in 2012. The academy's data for students currently on roll indicates that the progress of students from different backgrounds, including White British, is improving.
- The most-able boys receive insufficient challenge to enable them to excel. Too many lessons do not require them to solve problems or link their learning to real-life contexts.
- More effective intervention strategies are beginning to tackle boys' low literacy levels. Reading ages of boys in Years 7 and 8 are improving due to a greater encouragement of regular reading for pleasure. There is insufficient requirement in lessons for boys to provide extended verbal explanations, or to read for different purposes. Boys' writing is often inaccurate and poorly presented and there is inconsistency in how teachers respond to these issues.
- The quality of data held by the academy has improved and its approach to tracking students' progress has strengthened, enabling under-performance to be recognised earlier and tackled more systematically.
- The use of early entry for GCSE English and mathematics is considered carefully. Students who do not achieve at the highest level are encouraged to re-sit examinations to secure better grades.
- The achievement of the small group of boys who attend the sixth form is good. They make strong progress in their BTEC courses in response to high quality teaching and individual support.
- The academy provides some extra-curricular activities, including a debating society, to support boys' academic learning and acknowledges the need for more to be done to promote their high aspirations.

### **The quality of teaching requires improvement.**

- The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Inadequate teaching has largely been eradicated but there is too much variability between and within subjects. Less than half the teaching of boys' classes observed during the inspection was graded good or better. The profile of teaching in co-educational classes was much better.

- In weaker lessons teachers tend to talk too much, resulting in boys becoming passive and sometimes engaging in low-level disruption. There is insufficient challenge in these lessons, shallow questioning and a lack of opportunity for boys to work collaboratively or independently. In some lessons teachers' planning indicates that they intend different students to achieve different outcomes, but they provide them all with the same tasks and do not adjust the pace or nature of work for higher- or lower-attaining students. This results in a slow pace of learning and some boys becoming frustrated.
- The better lessons are characterised by pace, energy and challenge. This was exemplified in a history lesson in which boys worked in groups to explore, summarise and evaluate problems besetting the Spanish Armada. They then took responsibility for presenting their ideas to other groups. The boys relished this challenge and made excellent progress.
- Teachers' marking has improved. The best marking celebrates students' achievements and provides clear advice on the next steps to be taken. Some teachers identify literacy errors and expect students to make corrections. This practice is not consistent across the academy and some marking is infrequent and uninformative.
- There is a drive to improve literacy standards. Literacy workbooks have been produced for use during tutorial sessions. These are helping to secure students' understanding of spelling, punctuation and grammar. The teaching of reading and mathematical skills has not been developed explicitly beyond English and mathematics departments, although some good practice occurs in individual lessons. Opportunities for these basic skills to be developed across the curriculum are not strong enough.
- Specialist teaching in the sixth form is good, enabling students to apply practical skills and plan elements of their own learning.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement.**

- One student summarised the views of many when stating, 'behaviour is so much better now.' Parents and staff agree that improved behaviour now enables students to learn more effectively and cooperatively. The acute behavioural issues that were found at the time of the previous inspection have reduced markedly.
- Permanent exclusion from the academy is very rare and the number of students receiving fixed-term exclusions has significantly reduced.
- Occasionally, lessons are disrupted by immature behaviour and some boys have lethargic attitudes to learning. Some teachers lack the skills to manage inappropriate behaviour or do not apply the academy's conduct policy with sufficient rigour.
- Coeducational groupings appear to be having a positive impact on boys' behaviour and motivation. Both girls and boys told inspectors that they enjoy each other's company and that opportunities to work in mixed groups help them to understand each other's perspectives.
- Older students noted a clear improvement in how bullying, including racist, homophobic and cyber-bullying, is tackled by the academy. They do not perceive bullying as a significant problem within the academy and feel that they can easily seek help from staff to resolve any problems that arise.
- Attendance, while remaining below the national average, is improving. The attendance of boys in Years 7 and 8 is in line with national figures, reflecting the hard work of staff in partnership with families and other agencies. The number of boys missing school persistently has dropped.
- Punctuality at the start of the day has improved although too many students arrive late to lessons and thereby lose out on learning time. Lateness is not always challenged by staff.
- Boys understand the academy's behaviour code and think that the sanctions for poor behaviour used are 'strict but fair.' They also value the rewards system that enables them to select treats for sustained good behaviour and hard work.
- Boys enjoy opportunities to take responsibility for improving the academy, including through their membership of the school council and as librarians.

## **The leadership and management requires improvement.**

- The leadership of the academy has encountered significant recent challenges due to required changes in staffing levels and several staff taking maternity leave. The Principal has retained a strong focus on improvement and directed the energy of the senior team astutely. The academy's self-evaluation is accurate and based on wide-ranging data, including students' and parents' perceptions.
- Progress has been made in improving the most important areas of the academy's work: teaching, behaviour and attendance are all better than they were a year ago. Partly, these improvements reflect on the well-targeted use of pupil-premium and catch-up funding. The impact of leaders on achievement has been less pronounced for boys than for girls, but the move to making the academy co-educational is beginning to pay dividends. Most recent academy data indicate that achievement is improving but an aspirational culture for boys is not yet embedded across the academy.
- The academy has good arrangements for providing impartial information, advice and guidance to students on their post-16 pathways. Boys move on to a range of colleges in Manchester when they leave the academy.
- The academy's values, 'Aspire, Respect, Contribute, Care' are emphasised through the assembly and personal development programmes. The academy operates as a harmonious community. Students recognise each other's differences and racist incidents are rare. Equality of opportunity is promoted through the academy's policies. Evidence of attainment gaps beginning to narrow between different groups of students indicates that these policies are beginning to have impact. The curriculum for boys has been enhanced to include a better academic offer, including modern foreign languages.
- Subject leaders are developing a better understanding of the ways in which they can tackle underperformance within their areas of responsibility, but have yet to ensure consistency in teachers' management of behaviour or their strategies to meet the needs of different groups of students. A well-designed coaching programme benefits participating staff in developing their teaching skills by learning from each other, but more needs to be done to share the best quality teaching that exists within the academy.
- Senior leaders have an accurate view of teaching across the academy. Leaders at all levels undertake monitoring that ensures a clear, shared view of the academy's performance. Sometimes actions resulting from this monitoring are not swift or precise enough.
- A good induction programme supports new teachers to the academy. Staff willingly help and support each other. Teachers returning from extended absence commented that the academy 'feels like a different place.' Although this comment reflects the positive recent changes in the academy, it also highlights a need for effective induction of the substantial number of staff due to return to or join the academy later this year.
- Academy leaders acknowledge the need to review the curriculum, including extra-curricular opportunities, so that boys are more engaged and challenged. Closer links with the Alternative Provision Academy are planned to better tailor pathways for boys in Key Stage 4.
- The academy is effective in developing partnerships to enhance provision, as reflected in its nomination for a prestigious business in the community partnership award.
- **The governance of the academy:**
  - A new Chair of the Governing Body has been appointed. He works very closely with the senior leaders and has a thorough knowledge of the academy's work. Governors bring relevant, varied professional experience and personal skills to their role. The Trust has been strengthened. Sponsorship arrangements and lines of accountability are clearly defined. The governing body receives objective, accurate reports of the academy's performance, asks searching questions and supports leaders in finding practical solutions to problems, including making effective use of pupil-premium funding to meet students' needs through a range of programmes including individual support and mentoring. Governors are rigorous in holding the

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Principal and senior leaders to account. They ensure that teachers' performance is robustly managed through the review of evidence from lesson observations, student performance data and scrutiny of students' workbooks in making pay recommendations. Governors undertake their statutory responsibilities assiduously, including ensuring that arrangements to safeguard students meet requirements.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	135909
<b>Local authority</b>	Manchester
<b>Inspection number</b>	408887

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	371
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	5
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Carter
<b>Principal</b>	Helen Phillips
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 March 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 681 1592
<b>Fax number</b>	0161 681 8190
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:hphillips@mcmacademy.com">hphillips@mcmacademy.com</a>

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School report



# Levenshulme High School

Crossley Road, Levenshulme, Manchester, M19 1FS

**Inspection dates** 3–4 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires special measures.

- Arrangements for safeguarding students are inadequate because leaders and managers, including governors, are failing to secure an environment where students can learn effectively.
- Many students spoken to by inspectors feel unsafe at school and have little confidence in the ability of leaders and managers to deal with unacceptable behaviour.
- Procedures to address bullying are inadequate, resulting in continued victimisation going unreported.
- The curriculum fails to engage some groups of students, which results in them becoming disengaged, demonstrating poor behaviour and truanting.
- Teaching is often not good enough, giving rise to the underachievement of White British girls and students who are disabled or have special educational needs.
- Attendance for some groups is low and this is a key factor in their underachievement.

### The school has the following strengths

- Students achieve well in science.
- There are pockets of high quality teaching, for example in information and communication technology, science, performing arts and geography.
- There is an active school council and opportunities for student leadership.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at no notice in response to concerns about the safeguarding of students raised by a parental complaint.
- Inspectors took account of the 16 responses to the online Parent View survey.
- The inspection team observed 19 lessons taught by 18 teachers and they also made a series of short visits to lessons to observe behaviour.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, senior and middle leaders, and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors had a telephone conversation with the School Improvement Partner and a conversation with the school's police officer.
- Inspectors listened to over 100 students in meetings and around the school site. This included students chosen by inspectors, students who requested to speak to inspectors, representatives of the school council and a small group of students selected by the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of other evidence provided by the school including records of teaching and learning, students' achievements and special educational needs, a sample of students' work, school improvement planning, safety records, and policies relating to behaviour management and anti-bullying.

## Inspection team

Sally Kenyon, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Joan Bonenfant	Her Majesty's Inspector
Drew Crawshaw	Her Majesty's Inspector

## Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

### Information about this school

- Levenshulme High School is an average-sized girls' comprehensive school.
- The school attracts students from a great range of ethnicities; the largest single group are of Pakistani heritage. The large majority of students speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- There is a designated unit for hearing impaired students on-site.
- The school receives pupil premium funding for approximately half of the school population. This is government funding set aside to help schools support children of armed forces families, pupils who are looked after by the local authority and students who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of students with special educational needs supported at school action is broadly average.
- The proportion of students with special educational needs supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average.
- A higher proportion of students than found nationally leaves and joins the school other than at the usual times,
- Off-site provision is offered for a few students at the South Learning Centre. At the time of the inspection, one student was attending this provision.
- The school has a reflection room, which operates as an internal exclusion unit.

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

- Ensure teaching is consistently good and raise achievement, particularly for White British students and those who are disabled or have special educational needs, by:
  - continuing to improve attendance and reducing persistent absence for these groups
  - ensuring that learning is tailored to meet individual needs and abilities
  - allowing students to take a greater role in their learning through a written dialogue with teachers.
- As a matter of urgency ensure that all groups of students feel safe in school, behaviour is consistently good, and create a positive ethos, by:
  - listening formally and regularly to students' views and taking appropriate action in response to them
  - revising procedures for behaviour management so that poor behaviour, and particularly bullying, is dealt with effectively, consistently and fairly

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- implementing a curriculum whose range of subjects fully meets students' learning needs, engages them and promotes good progress for all
- providing a safe and purposeful learning environment for those whose circumstances may make them vulnerable.

■ Improve the impact of leaders and managers by:

- ensuring that the most senior leaders, governors and the local authority regularly check that school policies are effective and school procedures are followed
- effectively training middle leaders in accurately monitoring and tracking standards
- continuing to challenge performance in weaker departments.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### Requires improvement

- Students enter the school with below average attainment. They make strong progress in science but they do not always make the progress expected of them across a range of other subjects including humanities and modern languages.
- White British students and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs do not always progress as well as they should.
- The progress of students who are disabled or have special educational needs is not good because information about their abilities and needs is not used by all teachers to plan suitable learning experiences. As a result, by the end of Key Stage 4 this group of students, including those who are hearing impaired, are typically two GCSE grades behind their peers.
- A very small number of students attend short-term placements at the South Learning Centre, to help them re-engage with learning. The school's own data shows that these individuals make reasonable progress.
- Students for whom the school receives the pupil premium attain less well than their peers. For example, in mathematics they are almost one GCSE grade behind their peers and in English just over half a grade behind. However, gaps in attainment are closing.
- The Year 7 catch-up premium is being used to improve reading skills. The impact is already being seen, not only through improved reading abilities, but also much more positive attitudes to reading.
- Year 11 students have been entered early for GCSE examinations in English and mathematics. This has had some impact in mathematics on improving the performance of White British girls. Early results in English also show some improvement.
- Leaders and managers forecast that the proportion of current Year 11 students achieving five good GCSEs including English and mathematics will be just below the national averages in 2013. While there is some detailed tracking of progress in English and mathematics, tracking across other subjects is not as rigorous.
- In approximately half of lessons seen by inspectors, students of all abilities did not make sufficiently good progress. This is because teachers do not regularly use information about individual students' abilities to plan effective support and challenge. This results in students losing interest and causing low-level disruption.
- In the best lessons students achieve well due to the teacher's diligent planning for all of their learning needs. High expectations and challenging targets are set for all students allowing them to make securely good progress.
- Leaders and managers now track groups of students to better promote equality of opportunity and achievement for all. However, the impact of some of this work is embryonic so inequalities in achievement, attendance and behaviour still exist.

### The quality of teaching

### Requires improvement

- There is a core of good and outstanding teaching but too much teaching requires improvement. Approximately half of the teaching observed by inspectors required improvement; no inadequate teaching was seen.
- Students' progress is hampered because teachers do not always use information about students' abilities to guide them in planning lessons. Consequently, while some students are not challenged enough, others struggle and become frustrated because the level of challenge is too high.
- Teachers do not routinely provide students with good opportunities to learn through written feedback on the quality of their work.
- A number of students are unable to explore their learning independently of teachers because

they do not have a strong grasp of English. This is compounded by the fact that not all teachers are sufficiently confident in integrating literacy support into their teaching and some lessons are very much dominated by the teacher. Furthermore, some students who do have a good grasp of English have insufficient understanding of specialist vocabulary used by the teacher, which excludes them from learning.

- Registration is a missed opportunity for learning. There is no effective programme of activities to engage students, help them improve their progress or explore some negative attitudes to school. Some registration groups reinforce poor behaviour by allowing students to talk over the teacher as the register is being taken or to wait outside registration groups for friends unsupervised, rather than going to assembly escorted by the form tutor.
- Some excellent teaching was observed by inspectors. This was where teachers ensured all students were actively involved, which prompted good behaviour, and students demonstrated great enthusiasm. These lessons were also characterised by teachers' excellent subject knowledge, a strong understanding of students' abilities, the confidence to pitch learning appropriately coupled with highly respectful working relationships.
- Some inspirational teaching was seen in a Year 10 performing arts lesson. Students created their own dramatic interpretations of a storm. The teacher's skill, passion and boundless expectations for the students inspired them to pause, reflect and think for themselves in an abstract and creative way. Prompted by the teacher to consider, 'Where do we go from here?' they contemplated, discussed and challenged each other to further develop their performances to very good effect.
- Good support for students who are hearing impaired was seen where teaching assistants broke down tasks into manageable chunks and the teacher planned well for their specific learning needs. However, support from teachers and support staff is not consistently good across all subjects.
- The teaching of numeracy, literacy and reading across the curriculum is under-developed, although the school can point to examples of targeted work where students have really improved attitudes to reading.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils is inadequate**

- There has been a rapid deterioration in behaviour. There is now a significant minority of students in school whose learning needs are not met by the current range of subjects on offer.
- A core group of students has disengaged from their education and show no respect for teachers or their fellow students. They cause widespread disruption to learning and an unsafe learning environment resulting in eight permanent exclusions in the academic year to date.
- A serious incident that occurred at the school since the previous inspection has been investigated by the appropriate authorities and is now closed.
- Responses from parents on Parent View show that approximately one third of parents disagree that their child feels safe in school and approximately half disagree that the school ensures students are well behaved.
- Behaviour logs from this year show regular reports of unacceptable behaviour including students truanting from lessons, leaving the school site, refusing to go to lessons, smoking, and swearing at teachers. Some students have been removed from lessons over 30 times this year and one student more than 80 times; a clear illustration that the behaviour system is not working.
- Many students have no confidence in the ability of the school to combat bullying effectively. Consequently, some bullying goes unreported and is allowed to continue. In response to a serious incident in school, leaders have introduced a more severe sanction to address racism, which students say is beginning to have an impact.
- Many students feel unsafe in school due to a wide variety of intolerable behaviours including: fighting; congestion and pushing on the stairs; teachers leaving classes unattended; teachers behaving aggressively towards students; and food and drinks being thrown.
- Behaviour observed by inspectors in lessons was sometimes good but too often students became

distracted and were allowed to distract others from their learning. Silly, unhelpful behaviour was observed and although this was almost always addressed by teachers, the intervention was not always effective.

- Behaviour observed by inspectors around the school site was mixed. Students were very eager to speak to inspectors and many reported concerns. The majority of students behaved well in front of inspectors. Other students were observed at lunch-time, throwing drinks, congregating in a big group, swearing, talking and filming on mobile phones. The big group of students only dispersed once a number of staff had spoken to them and the police officer stood in the middle of them.
- Attendance overall is just below the national average, and although improved overall this year, remains low for some groups of students including those who are White British, those for whom the school receives the pupil premium and those who are disabled and have special educational needs.

### **The leadership and management are inadequate**

- Leaders and managers do not effectively prevent bullying and many students spoken to by inspectors feel that staff are unable to protect them and control those whose behaviour is disruptive and dangerous.
- Leaders and managers have not responded quickly or effectively enough to the need to change the way the curriculum is organised and taught. Many students spend time in the reflection room when they have been given permission to drop some subjects, typically modern languages and physical education.
- The quality of provision in the reflection room is poor because appropriate work is not always provided for students. It is sometimes inappropriately staffed by those who do not have the necessary knowledge and training.
- Leaders and managers want students to do well. The school improvement plan shows that they have readily identified some of the key areas for improvement highlighted by the inspection team. However, the most senior leaders were unaware of the scale and extent of failures in arrangements to safeguard students.
- There are some strengths in the leadership and management of teaching. Teachers work collaboratively to coach each other and share the best practice. Some underperformance in teaching and in some subject departments is being effectively addressed and inspectors observed evidence of teachers really improving their practice as a result of coaching.
- Senior leaders currently have an over-generous view of the quality of teaching because some middle leaders' judgments in lesson observations are inaccurate.
- Changes have been made to the way students are supported within the school. A new system linking learning support assistants to year groups allows a more consistent approach to support. It is too early to judge the full impact of this change on learning but the school's records show an improvement in attendance for this group.
- Social, moral, spiritual and cultural education are promoted by a number of school visits, foreign exchanges, an active school council and opportunities for students to take on leadership roles. The programme for personal, social and health education and citizenship does not have enough impact in combatting prejudice and discrimination in school. At the time of the inspection the school was seeking to gain external accreditation for their work around inclusion including for those students who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender.
- The local authority is aware of the disproportionate number of permanent exclusions this year and has offered some support to school leaders. Prior to that and since the previous inspection, the school has received light-touch support from the local authority.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have identified many of the school's strengths and weaknesses and can point to examples of holding leaders and managers effectively to account. Governors rightly recognised that procedures for safeguarding students were not working as well as they should and in

response have recently reviewed many of the school's policies. However, governors were not aware of the scale of safeguarding and behaviour concerns amongst the student body; nor were they aware of the full picture of behaviour over time in school. This is because opportunities for governors to establish close links with students and teachers to gain a day-to-day understanding of life in the school are under-developed. Governors are beginning to evaluate the benefits that the pupil premium funding and the Year 7 catch-up premium bring to the school.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	105568
<b>Local authority</b>	Manchester
<b>Inspection number</b>	427720

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	990
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sue Downey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Amanda Thain
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 October 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 2244625
<b>Fax number</b>	0161 2561170
<b>Email address</b>	office@levenshulmehigh.org

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