

Manchester Enterprise Academy

Simonsway, Wythenshawe, Greater Manchester, M22 9RH

Inspection dates 12–13 March 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Although students are making better progress than they were at the time of the previous inspection, their achievement requires improvement.
- Students' attendance, although much improved in recent times, is well below average.
- From low starting points on entry to the academy, students' attainment remains significantly below average overall when they leave. There remains a considerable amount of catching up to do because the improvements already made are only recently beginning to bear fruit in students' better rates of progress.

The school has the following strengths

- The inspirational leadership of the Principal is widely acknowledged as a key factor in the academy's rapidly improving performance. Staff morale is high; students have more belief in themselves and a growing confidence about their futures.
- The academy and its sponsors are at the heart of the local community and know it well. They are determined to provide the highest levels of care and education that the young people in this community need and deserve.
- Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. This is due to excellent leadership of teaching and learning and the enthusiasm and commitment of teachers to improve their practice continually.
- Students' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. They feel safe in the academy and recognise for themselves how much it has improved in the last 18 months.
- The small sixth-form provision is successful in helping those students who need more time or support to improve their GCSE grades.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 23 lessons, of which three were joint observations with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with leaders, teachers and three members of the governing body, representing the academy's main sponsor and partner sponsors.
- Discussions were held with several small groups of students, gathering the views of over 60 students in this process.
- There were no responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to take into account.
- Inspectors gathered the views of 51 members of staff who completed the optional Ofsted questionnaire for staff.
- The inspectors observed the academy's work and looked at a number of policies and other documents, including: the academy's own data on current students' progress; improvement plans and monitoring information; records relating to behaviour and attendance; minutes of recent governing body meetings; and safeguarding arrangements.

Inspection team

Marguerite Murphy, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Kathleen Harris

Additional Inspector

Clarice Nelson-Rowe

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Information about this school

- The academy is much smaller than the average-sized secondary school. Its specialism is in enterprise and its main sponsor is Manchester Airport. Partner sponsors are Willow Park Housing Trust, Manchester City Council and Manchester College.
- Over 85% of students are White British, the remainder from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. A very small proportion of students do not speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of students supported through the pupil premium, at more than 75%, is very high. The pupil premium is additional funding based on the number of students in local authority care, from service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- A well above average proportion of students have additional needs that are supported through school action, school action plus or a statement of special educational needs.
- In two of the last three academic years, the academy did not meet the current government floor standards, which are the minimum standards expected for attainment and progress.
- The academy offers alternative provision for a small number of students. These services are managed by Manchester City Council and are: Ed Start, PRU and Greenacres.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on the recent improvements made to students' rates of progress so that attainment rises, particularly in English and mathematics, and students' overall achievement improves by:
 - making sure that improvements in the quality of teaching continue, to secure teaching that is never less than good and increase the proportion that is outstanding
 - using every opportunity to raise the profile of reading and act quickly to narrow the gaps in students' literacy skills on entry to the academy
 - capitalising on students' more positive attitudes to learning to make sure that their attendance rates improve further.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The academy's examination results in 2012 were affected by the national concern about English GCSE grades and meant that one of its key targets was not met despite some improvements, for example in mathematics. The achievement of some students was poor and reflected their lack of progress over a sustained period of time. This does not tell the full story, however, as most students are now making good progress in lessons.
- The gap between the performance of those supported by the pupil premium and other students was larger than typically found in 2012 and equivalent to a full GCSE grade lower. However, this information varies in significance due to the high proportions of eligible students across the academy and the different numbers of students in Year 11 cohorts. The academy's most recent data show that the gap is narrowing significantly in the current Year 11.
- Similarly, disabled students and those with special educational needs attained lower standards in English and mathematics than the same group nationally but this is also improving for the current Year 11.
- The academy has an early entry policy for GCSE examinations that is used appropriately in the students' best interests and does not limit their potential. Students are only entered for examinations when they are confident of meeting their personal target grades.
- Students in the sixth form make similar progress to others in the academy and some make good progress to improve on previous GCSE grades. Students have raised aspirations; more are now taking advantage of the opportunity to take Level 3 courses and consider university.
- Specialist support for the small but growing number of students who speak English as an additional language is provided on a regular basis. This helps them to improve their understanding across the different subjects studied, so that they make similar progress to their peers. The small proportion of students from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds also progress at a similar rate to their peers.
- Too many students have well below average reading skills on entry to Year 7 and are not able to catch up quickly enough, despite the good range of interventions and support provided. Students are generally willing and confident to try hard to improve their reading, as staff encourage and support them to do so. Students' progress is hindered to some extent by a lack of opportunity or motivation to read a range of books beyond those encountered within the academy day.
- Despite this, students' communication skills are continually improving, as evident in their speaking and listening in lessons. Students enjoy opportunities for questioning and discussion, often offering mature and articulate responses. It is evident in most lessons that students' talking is completely focused on the task set by the teacher and therefore adds to the quality of their learning.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The regular and systematic monitoring of lessons, backed up by high expectations and well-tailored professional development, have led to significant improvements in teaching and learning. Inspection evidence supported the academy's view that teaching is now good in around 75% of lessons and continues to go beyond that, as some is outstanding and none is inadequate.
- Very good relationships between adults and students contribute to the calm, busy and enjoyable working atmosphere in lessons. Teachers are not only knowledgeable but also often quite passionate about their subjects, so that this enthusiasm rubs off on the students too. There is a mutual respect that enables enough friendly banter to take place in lessons without students

overstepping the mark.

- Lessons are well planned to take into account students' previous learning and current skills, and most teachers build progressively on these, enabling students to make good progress. Teaching methods and resources are usually chosen appropriately to support students who may find the work difficult, while stretching those who are more able.
- The work of teaching assistants makes a valuable contribution to students' learning, particularly for those who lack self-esteem or require additional support.
- In the small minority of lessons when teaching is not yet good, there are few opportunities for students to take responsibility for their own work; teaching can be formulaic or mundane and therefore less motivating; and teachers do not probe the students' understanding or challenge them to their full capacity.
- Teachers assess students' work accurately and regularly. Their marking and verbal feedback to students ensure they are aware of what they need to do to move up towards the next grade. The academy's systematic tracking of students' progress allows pastoral and curriculum leaders to identify quickly students who may be falling behind and put measures in place to get them back on target.
- Most teachers have high expectations of students, who are usually keen to live up to these, working hard both independently and in group activities or discussions. This supports the students' improving pace of learning and levels of concentration. In most lessons teachers question students well, pushing them to expand on their answers and explain their reasoning in more detail.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The students have become proud of their academy and represent it well, gaining positive recognition for good behaviour and attitudes within and beyond the academy. Students understand that they are expected to set a good example to others and most are able to live up to the high standards of behaviour expected of them.
- The academy's 'Lifelong Learning Centre' is successful in supporting the students who are struggling to cope with some lessons due to behaviour, emotional or learning difficulties. The impact can be seen in students' improving progress and a reduction in the visits needed to the centre by some students. Similarly, short spells in the 'Resolve' room allow students to have supervised time and space to calm down and avoid being drawn into negative or angry behaviour.
- Students in the sixth form appreciate being 'treated like adults' by the teachers and have mature attitudes towards taking responsibility for their own learning. Students across the academy are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility, for example as school council members, student ambassadors, organising charity events, helping with sports coaching and extra-curricular clubs, to name but a few.
- Students have a very good understanding of the dangers that face them in today's society and of ways in which they can keep themselves safe. They know about all different forms of bullying but insist it is not a problem in the academy. Although attendance has risen significantly since the academy opened, leaders and students continue to work at this because they know that it should be better.
- Students' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is an important element of academy life that is well planned for across the curriculum: in subjects, form times and assemblies. It contributes to students' positive behaviour and is enriched, for example, by trips abroad; taking part in performances with professional musicians; drama workshops; enterprise activities; and by developing students' leadership skills.

The leadership and management are good

- The Principal and senior leaders articulate a clear and ambitious vision through the academy's medium- and long-term plans that express a relentless pursuit of excellence. The staff team shares that vision and is enthused by the possibilities ahead.
- The academy is well placed to achieve its aim of developing a 'world-class curriculum', delivered through a range of individualised pathways that meet all students' needs and aspirations. Students are encouraged to attend a range of extended learning activities and are rewarded for doing so. These activities have improved their personal organisation and independent learning skills. An impressive number of enrichment activities and study sessions are made available outside lesson times.
- The sixth-form curriculum reflects the strengths of the sponsors with travel and tourism, sport, business, and information and communication technology (ICT) studies at its core. Year 14 provision is offered, where appropriate, to ensure students can progress successfully beyond the academy into further education, employment or training.
- A large range of extended services and learning opportunities is available to students, their families and the community, demonstrating the academy's positive impact on the local community. Feedback from a questionnaire given to parents following parents' evenings showed that most agree that their child enjoys school, feels safe, is well supported and makes good progress.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively to supplement other sources of income, such as the Willow Park (partner sponsor) Endowment Fund, to ensure all students have equal chances to succeed and access all that the academy has to offer.
- The academy makes regular checks on the reducing number of students who require off-site provision due to more significant difficulties in managing their behaviour or engaging with education. The three providers used are regularly visited by a member of the leadership team to ensure they meet students' needs.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures are robust and meet statutory requirements.
- There are clear policies and procedures in place for the appraisal of staff. These make it clear how leaders will assess staff members' performance in relation to their professional development targets and the academy's priorities for improvement. The academy is committed to recruiting, retaining and rewarding high-performing staff.
- Through its links with the sponsors, the wider community and the world of business, the academy's enterprise specialism makes a positive contribution to the curriculum on offer. It is raising students' knowledge of the opportunities available to them both now and in the future, and the belief that they can achieve their goals in life.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body plays an important part in checking on the academy's performance, holding leaders to account for the progress students make. Governors are fully aware of the academy's strengths and areas for development. They share a commitment to tackling any underperformance and ensuring that high expectations are met.

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

Unique reference number	135874
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	399737
Type of school	Academy sponsor-led
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	488
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	60
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Olivia Clayton
Headteacher	Mr James Eldon
Date of previous school inspection	12 January 2012
Telephone number	0161 499 2726
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