

# Manchester Academy

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	134224
<b>Local authority</b>	Manchester
<b>Inspection number</b>	381637
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 January 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Marguerite Murphy HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Academy
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	897
<b>Of which number on roll in the sixth form</b>	56
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mark Job
<b>Principal</b>	David Bromfield
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 March 2009
<b>School address</b>	Moss Lane East Moss Side Manchester M14 4PX
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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Marguerite Murphy  
Jacqueline Rothery  
Sheila Kaye  
Ray Biglin

Her Majesty's Inspector  
Ofsted Secondee  
Additional inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors spent 32 hours in full lesson periods, observing 32 teachers and the work of support staff. Three of these lessons were observed jointly with members of the academy's staff. During the course of each lesson, students' work and data on their progress since joining the academy was scrutinised. In addition, each inspector selected small groups of students to speak with outside the classrooms towards the end of the lessons. Through this and other incidental discussions with students around the academy, inspectors gathered the views of over 100 students directly. They also analysed the questionnaires returned by 94 parents and carers, 130 students and others completed by staff. Meetings were held with a member of the governing body and several staff, including senior and middle leaders. Discussions took place with all teachers whose lessons were observed.

## Information about the school

This is a slightly below average size secondary school with almost twice as many boys as girls on the student roll. A much higher proportion of students than is usual starts the academy after Year 7, with many of these arriving from overseas. Over 85% of students are from minority ethnic backgrounds, with the largest group being of African heritage. A high proportion, over 65%, speaks English as an additional language. The percentage of students known to be eligible for free school meals, over 58%, is high. The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is above average, although a below average number has a statement of special educational needs.

The academy is sponsored by the United Learning Trust (the ULT). It has specialist provision for students with hearing impairment and is currently supporting six students to enable their full access to class lessons. The academy's specialist subjects are Business and Enterprise and The Arts. The Principal was appointed on 31 October 2011 following the previous Executive Principal's appointment to a national role within the ULT.

The academy meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress. It has a number of awards, including Healthy School and International School accreditation.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate**  
 Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key Findings

- Manchester Academy is a good school with some particular strengths, for example in its good and improving leadership and management and its commitment to the inclusion of all learners. This is demonstrated in the excellent quality of care and support for students, for example the relatively large proportion whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable. Students achieve well, making good progress in their learning from low starting points. This is particularly so in literacy and communication skills, where progress is sometimes outstanding. Students’ achievement in mathematics, although rising steadily, is more variable across the academy, including in the sixth form.
- The academy’s positive and reflective ethos supports its outstanding promotion of students’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Its aspiration to ‘bring out the best in everyone’ is evident in most students’ confidence to participate and express their views, and their understanding and appreciation of the cultural diversity represented in the academy’s community.
- Teaching is good overall across all key stages and in a growing proportion of lessons it is outstanding. However, evidence from this inspection and the academy’s own evaluations indicate that teaching is sometimes satisfactory and the rare examples of inadequate teaching have not been fully eradicated.
- Behaviour across the academy is generally positive. However, leaders, staff and students consider that it ‘could be better’. This view was also reflected in over 25% of the questionnaires returned by parents and carers and confirmed by inspection evidence, leading to a judgement of satisfactory behaviour. Despite excellent attention to keeping students safe in an orderly environment and with clearly-understood expectations of good behaviour and attitudes, a minority of students finds these difficult to live up to.

- The academy's sixth form is good. It provides well for the diverse needs of its individual students, contributing to the well above average proportion of post-16 students accessing further education, employment or training.

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

- Raise attainment in mathematics across the academy, including the sixth form, to close the gap between students' levels of progress in English and mathematics by:
  - evaluating the full impact of existing intervention programmes on the proportion of students set to achieve grades A\* to C in GCSE mathematics in 2012
  - building on the most successful elements of these programmes in subsequent years, including the plans for intensive support, similar to that in English for groups of students, to plug the gaps in their basic mathematical skills.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching to accelerate students' rates of progress by:
  - ensuring that all teachers consistently provide tasks that are closely matched to the needs of all groups of students
  - using questioning and marking more precisely to check students' understanding and anticipate where intervention or additional challenge is needed.
- Implement and embed the academy's plans to improve students' behaviour, eradicating the incidents of low-level disruption seen in a small minority of lessons.

## **Main Report**

### **Achievement of pupils**

Over the last four years, the proportion of students gaining five A\* to C grades at GCSE with English and mathematics included has risen from 35% to 48%. Although still below the national average, this represents good and sometimes outstanding progress from students' starting points. The academy's current tracking information shows that this is set to continue on an upward trend in 2012. The vast majority of parents and carers who completed questionnaires agree that their children are taught well and are making good progress. Most students who spoke to inspectors also say that they are achieving well and know what they have to do to improve their work. The significant proportions of students who enter the academy with low attainment in reading and writing make good progress because of the well-planned foundation curriculum in Year 7 and an intensive focus on promoting literacy and communication skills across the academy. Students in a Year 10 English lesson were observed making outstanding progress in analysing features of language and how these are used for effect. In a personal and social education lesson with a philosophy focus, Year 8 students made outstanding progress in thinking about and expressing

their ideas, adding that 'We've learned that friendship is a thing you shouldn't waste'. Students who speak English as an additional language, disabled students and those with special educational needs, are all supported well in their learning and make similarly good progress. Although there are minor variations from year-to-year, for example, in mathematics and for White British students, the academy is working successfully to close gaps between different subjects and groups of students.

### **Quality of teaching**

Teachers throughout the academy, including the sixth form, have high expectations, very good subject knowledge and plan well to meet the needs of all students. Relationships are positive, teachers use praise and encouragement well and students grow in confidence and raise their aspirations. Most lessons begin with brisk, lively introductions, engaging students in their learning, then maintaining this with a variety of well planned activities including opportunities for small group discussions. In the majority of lessons, this leads to demonstrable evidence of good progress. In the most successful lessons teachers have a detailed understanding of individual students' current skills or weaknesses, using this well to tailor questions and tasks to accelerate their learning. For example Year 9 students learning Spanish were challenged to expand on their answers when questioned about their understanding of particular words or phrases being taught. Many were then happy to stretch themselves by making good attempts at higher-grade questions.

In less successful lessons, teaching does not engage students well enough in their learning and a few become restless or engage in off-task behaviour that has a negative impact on the progress made by students in that class or group. The quality and impact of teachers' marking varies across the academy and leaders are aware of the need to develop this to be consistently good. The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire say that their children are taught well and make good progress, and inspection evidence confirms this.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Students say that they feel safe and have a good understanding of the risks to which they may be exposed, both within and outside of the academy. They are confident that, if they have any concerns, they can approach staff in the academy for support and guidance. Attendance is slightly below the national average, but improving as a result of robust procedures for encouraging good attendance and tackling absence. The number of students who are persistently absent, though higher than the national average, is reducing. Students arrive punctually to lessons and they conduct themselves in a courteous, friendly manner.

Incidences of bullying are rare and most parents, carers and students express confidence in the academy's systems for dealing with such occurrences. When asked about racist or homophobic bullying, students say it is 'not allowed' and would trigger 'really serious consequences' if it did occur.

Most students behave well in lessons and show high levels of motivation and enthusiasm, especially when the work is well planned and appropriate to their learning needs and abilities. However, a minority of students does not always behave

well and this disrupts the learning of others. This is more apparent in the behaviour of younger students. Older students assert that behaviour improves as students progress through the academy. The academy monitors behaviour carefully and as a result of the introduction of a new behaviour policy, the number of exclusions is reducing.

## **Leadership and management**

The principal is a strong strategic leader who promotes an open and honest culture where feedback is encouraged and valued at all levels, including from the students themselves. Rigorous monitoring by the principal and senior leaders makes good use of data on the progress of all groups of students. It informs the academy's ambitious targets for improvement and its continuous review of the good curriculum that meets students' needs. The monitoring process also incorporates the well-led sixth form, where decisive action is taken to review and increase the range of options available for students. For example, additional lesson periods are provided for those sixth-form students who speak English as an additional language and whose language skills needs are the greatest.

The governing body places a strong emphasis on setting high standards for quality and performance. It is provided with thorough analysis of information from which to hold leaders to account. The promotion of high aspirations and equality of opportunity is at the heart of the academy's work and discrimination is not tolerated. The academy engages with parents and carers to support students' achievement, behaviour and safety. The impact of this is evident, for example, in their good achievement and improving behaviour, particularly as students develop a closer affiliation with the academy community. Safeguarding procedures are robust. Effective monitoring systems and high levels of supervision around the academy, by leaders, members of its behaviour team and other support staff, result in an orderly and harmonious learning environment.

Middle leaders are increasingly involved in the academy's accurate self-evaluation. There is a relentless focus on shared accountability and checking for evidence of the impact of the academy's actions on improving students' outcomes. Intervention programmes for mathematics have been put in place to accelerate the progress made by particular groups of students who may be at risk of missing their Key Stage 4 target grades. The impact of these strategies is due to be reviewed after the next round of student assessments. Leaders recognise the need to make effective use of this information in future plans to narrow the gap between students' achievements in English and mathematics. An effective quality assurance system identifies strengths and areas for development in teaching. This leads to training and development plans to meet specific needs in improving the quality and consistency of teaching and learning. As a result, the academy can demonstrate its continuous improvement on many fronts and a good capacity to sustain and develop this further in the future.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add up exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



26 January 2012

Dear Students

### **Inspection of Manchester Academy, Manchester, M14 4PX**

Thank you for your help during the recent inspection of your academy. My colleagues and I enjoyed our visit and the opportunities to speak with so many of you during lessons and around the building. We did this because your views are very important to the inspection process and helped us to confirm the judgements that were made. You will see from the full report that we graded the academy as good with some particular strengths, such as the full inclusion of all learners and the high levels of care and support provided when you need it. Because of this and teaching that is good overall, most of you achieve well across a range of subjects, particularly in improving your literacy skills. The progress you make is better and more rapid in lessons where teaching is outstanding, so we have asked the academy to make sure that the proportion of outstanding teaching rises further. We also agree that the academy should increase its efforts to raise attainment in mathematics by making sure that all of you make good or better progress in this subject. The Principal, other leaders and the governing body provide good and improving leadership and management so that the academy runs smoothly and there is a clear vision to 'bring out the best in everyone'.

Inspectors understand why you were telling us that 'behaviour is okay, but could be better if there was no low-level disruption at all'. The academy is already committed to improving this and all of you can play your part by setting a good example to each other. Many of you have already improved your attendance and punctuality, so displaying positive attitudes to learning at all times in lessons and other activities will make the extra difference.

I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Marguerite Murphy  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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