

# The East Manchester Academy

30 Grey Mare Lane, Beswick, Manchester, M11 3DS

**Inspection dates** 12–13 December 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The principal is an inspiring leader at the helm of a skilled, highly driven and well-respected senior leadership team.
- Leaders and governors recruit then develop members of staff who 'sign up to' the academy's ambitious vision and passionate commitment to its students and the local community.
- All groups of students achieve well and some are making outstanding gains from their starting points in Year 7. The academy is taking successful action to reduce gaps in performance between those who may be more disadvantaged and other students.
- All students have equal access to a good range of subjects and extensive enrichment activities, including outdoor education and sport.
- Teaching is good and an increasing proportion is outstanding. Teachers are confident in their subjects and plan their lessons in detail. They feel valued and supported by the academy leaders and are keen to continually improve their skills.
- There are high expectations of all who work at the academy; performance is rigorously monitored and any weaknesses are promptly tackled. Morale is high and staff at all levels feel proud to work here.
- Students behave well and feel very safe. They understand the academy's high expectations of their behaviour and say that only a small minority finds these difficult to meet at times.
- The academy has a rapidly growing reputation and popularity among parents and the community.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There are insufficient numbers of students making outstanding progress in their lessons and over time.
- A small number of students does not always have positive attitudes towards learning.
- There is some variability in the quality of teaching and occasionally the work set is not carefully matched to students' capabilities.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 26 lessons and spoke with over 50 students in small-group meetings towards the end of some lesson periods. Two observations were carried out jointly with the Principal or Vice-Principal.
- Meetings were held with the Principal and members of the leadership team, teachers and the Chair of the Governing Body.
- Inspectors took account of the 16 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), and to 80 questionnaires completed by staff. They also took into account responses in the academy's most recent survey of parents' views.
- Inspectors observed the academy's work and looked at a number of documents. These included records of monitoring, self-evaluation and improvement planning, policies and procedures for safeguarding, behaviour and attendance, curriculum information, governing body minutes and data on the assessment and tracking of the students' progress.

## Inspection team

Marguerite Murphy, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Kathleen Harris

Additional Inspector

Charles Lowry

Her Majesty's Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The East Manchester Academy opened as a brand new purpose-built academy in September 2010 for students in Year 7. That cohort of 180 is now in Year 9 and the subsequent cohorts in Years 7 and 8 are also full as the academy is over-subscribed. It is projected to be an average size secondary academy when the gradual intake of students is complete in September 2014.
- The academy's lead sponsors are Laing O'Rourke and Lend Lease. Its co-sponsors are The Manchester College and Manchester City Council.
- As the first students have not yet reached Key Stage 4, there are no national test or examination results available by which the academy can be judged to have met the government's floor standards (the minimum expectation for students' attainment and progress).
- The proportions of disabled students and those supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational need are much higher than the national average. A well above average proportion is supported at school action.
- A high proportion, over two thirds, of students is known to be eligible for pupil premium (additional funding provided for those who are looked after by the local authority, or eligible for free school meals, or children of service families).
- Around three quarters of students are White British. Of the other ethnic heritages represented, the main groups are of Black African, Chinese or Other White or Mixed backgrounds. A below average number speaks English as an additional language.
- The academy does not use any off-site alternative provision (training at places away from the academy itself) for students.
- The academy has a specialism in the built environment and is developing a centre of excellence in the performing arts. In 2011 it received an award for outstanding contribution to physical education and sport in Manchester.

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

- In order to raise standards, ensure that teaching and learning are consistently at least good across the academy by:
  - securing a closer match between students' current levels of attainment and the level of difficulty of the work that is provided in lessons
  - reviewing the way students are grouped together in lessons to ensure that students of all abilities are able to make at least good progress
  - maintaining the academy's drive to make sure that students' behaviour and attitudes to learning are consistently good or better.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- When students enter the academy their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is typically below and sometimes well below average, although the prior attainment of the current Year 7 is only just below average. Students are making good progress, particularly in Years 8 and 9. The Year 9 cohort is now reaching standards that are near to the expected levels for 14-year-olds at the end of Key Stage 3, which represents excellent progress for some.
- The academy is effectively improving students' literacy skills in particular. This is evident in lessons across most subjects, where opportunities are provided to promote students' confidence and skills in speaking, listening and reading. Consequently, most students' progress is not held back by an inability to read accurately and fluently and they enjoy reading a wide range of books, including in the popular 'Access' reading sessions.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs, including those who are at risk of not doing well due to emotional or behavioural problems, make similarly good progress to that of their peers. They receive precisely targeted additional support that meets their academic and social needs and their progress is carefully monitored.
- More-able students respond well to higher expectations and the more challenging and independent tasks set in many lessons. This is shown in the increasing proportion of students who are beginning to reach above average standards in their work.
- Academy leaders are using pupil premium funding well to tackle disadvantage. This includes providing additional staffing for pupil support, and 'Access' lessons, that are having a significant impact on the improvements in students' progress in English. Also, the academy's tracking data on the progress made by Year 9 students since their arrival in Year 7 indicates that a good proportion made rapid progress to narrow the gap between their attainment and that of other groups of learners.
- Although students make most progress in English, this is now extending to mathematics, science and other subjects as improvements made to teaching expertise and other aspects of the provision are bearing fruit.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is usually good and an increasing proportion is outstanding, because the academy's expectations are high and underperformance is not accepted. There is a positive rapport between students and teachers that enables lessons to proceed at a brisk pace with good levels of enjoyment.
- Effective teaching of reading, writing and mathematics provide students with the basic skills necessary to access all other subjects. Teachers' planning places emphasis on helping students to use and understand subject-specific language and vocabulary. The presentation of students' work is variable, however, and teachers do not always take the opportunity to encourage students to improve their handwriting or the accuracy of their spelling and grammar.
- A common feature of lessons is the teachers' enthusiasm for their subject and a keenness to engage and interest the students in order to promote good quality learning. Teachers in mathematics lessons in Years 8 and 9 provided good opportunities for students to work on their own when solving problems. The teachers' skilful use of questioning pushed students to think carefully and extend their answers. This improved students' depth of understanding.
- On occasions, teachers talk for too long and plan too many activities. As a result, students do not always have enough time to think for themselves or complete their tasks. Some of the more-able students are not given more difficult tasks soon enough and so do not complete enough work that stretches their capabilities. Similarly, when the work set for lower-attaining students is not at the right level, they become frustrated and can give up or become restless.
- Although some subject departments are committed to maintaining mixed-ability class groupings

right through Key Stage 3, this requires teachers to have expert skills in providing a wider range of tasks for the different groups within each class. The academy is aware of the need to keep these groupings under review to check that they are successful and have the best possible impact on students' rates of progress.

- Teaching in the academy's specialist areas is making a positive contribution to students' skills in core subjects and in problem-solving. In a Year 9 engineering lesson the teacher's vast bank of knowledge and anecdotal evidence was a good resource for students to tap into when working at computers on their design brief. The teacher's skilful questioning and enthusiasm kept students motivated and extremely well-behaved, enhancing their learning experience.
- In performing arts lessons, students enjoy being actively involved and working in groups to develop drama and characterisation skills. Teachers encourage them to read with confidence, not only from scripts or other texts. Students also read from the interactive electronic boards when teachers were demonstrating how the different levels of performance are measured. Students discussed this guidance with the teacher and each other, and were able to suggest how their work could be improved.
- Teachers provide regular feedback to students about their current standards of attainment and what they should do to improve their work to move up to their next target level.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The view that students feel very safe is supported almost unanimously by parents, staff and the students themselves. They are cared for extremely well and feel valued as individuals because staff know them well. There are high levels of care and support for those who are at risk of not doing as well as they could in their academic or personal development. Students are aware of how to keep themselves safe, for instance in identifying and managing the risks associated with cyber-bullying and social networking sites.
- Students are mostly polite and respectful. They support each other and are generally confident to express their views as they know these are valued. In the best lessons in particular, students are highly engaged and motivated, so that their behaviour is exemplary. Good provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contributes to their consistently good behaviour around the building and in enrichment activities and assemblies.
- Students say that bullying, including that of a racist or homophobic nature, is rare. They understand the systems for reporting any incidents, and consider that these are dealt with quickly. The recently introduced tutor groups, where students from different year groups come together, and the house system contribute to students' good social development, as does the extensive range of after-school activities on offer. Students respond well to the good opportunities provided for them to develop their self-esteem, leadership skills and teamwork.
- Although a small minority of parents and staff does not think that behaviour is consistently good in the academy, students are very clear about what kind of behaviour is unacceptable and what the consequences are. They say that there is a high level of staff supervision around the academy that helps them feel safe and ensures that behaviour outside lessons is positive. Students say that it is in only a minority of lessons in some subjects that the negative attitudes of a few students can lead to minor disruptions to their learning.
- Most teachers implement the behaviour and rewards policies consistently. Incidents of poor behaviour are generally managed well, although some of those teachers who are more recently appointed are still adjusting to the academy's culture of high expectations. Similarly, as the newest recruits to the academy, the behaviour and attitudes of a small number of Year 7 students sometimes requires improvement in lessons.
- The attendance of most students is above average and punctuality is good. No students have been permanently excluded; the academy uses fixed-term exclusions appropriately and records show that it is reducing the number of students who re-offend successfully.

**The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The outstanding leadership of the principal and senior leaders is one of the key factors in the academy's early successes and its very strong capacity to sustain further improvement. Since HMI's monitoring visit a year ago, the leadership team has been significantly extended and the number of specialist subject teaching staff has increased across all faculty areas. Staff are held to account but excellent performance is recognised and rewarded through salary and career progression opportunities. The 'grow one's own' expertise culture contributes to the academy's strong capacity for improvement and its strategic plans for future staff recruitment.
- A commitment to equality is demonstrated in the excellent leadership of provision for students who have special educational needs or are at risk of not doing as well as others due to disadvantage or difficult circumstances. All available resources, including pupil premium funding, are used to overcome barriers to students' learning. The academy analyses information about the progress made by different groups of students with a clear determination to narrow gaps in their attainment.
- All statutory safeguarding procedures are met and staff receive regular training in safeguarding appropriate to their roles and responsibilities. Designated child protection members of staff have a good understanding of their role and work in partnership with outside agencies to safeguard students who may be at risk.
- The academy's curriculum is well-organised and imaginative with an appropriate emphasis on securing improvements in students' basic literacy and numeracy skills. Extensive use is made of collaborative arrangements or partnerships to enhance the activities on offer, as these make a very positive contribution to extending students' learning experiences and enjoyment.
- Many of the large proportion of new and recently qualified teachers are delivering consistently good lessons, considering that they are in the early stages of their career in a high pressure and potentially challenging environment. This is testament to the outstanding leadership of teaching and the support and professional development provided by the academy. Leaders have an incisive and accurate view of the quality of teaching as well as particular strengths and areas for development.
- Teachers' performance is monitored closely and support or training provided to achieve the academy's expectation that teaching should never be less than good or outstanding. Senior leaders regularly check on the work of teachers in charge of different subjects and hold them to account for the quality of teaching in that subject and the progress students make.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body, on which all of the main sponsors are represented, makes a very effective contribution to the academy's strategic vision for the future. It holds the principal and senior leaders robustly to account for all aspects of the academy's performance. Governors receive regular reports from the principal. They have a good knowledge of the data on students' progress and what is needed for the academy to compare favourably with other academies/schools by the time the first group of students reaches Year 11. They question the information thoroughly to gain a clear understanding of the academy's progress against its key priorities for improvement. The governing body uses performance management systems effectively to ensure that leadership and management are of the highest quality and are bringing about continuous improvement to the quality of teaching and learning.

## 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>	136089
<b>Local authority</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Inspection number</b>	399817

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>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	547
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Moran
<b>Principal</b>	Guy Hutchence
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 230 8039
<b>Fax number</b>	Not applicable
<b>Email address</b>	admin@temac.co.uk

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