

Audenshaw School Academy Trust

Hazel Street, Audenshaw, Manchester M34 5NB

Inspection dates

23–24 February 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching and assessment varies too much. Pupils, including the most able, are not always engaged or challenged by their learning, which sometimes leads to low-level disruption in lessons.
- Pupils do not always receive the incisive feedback on how to improve their work, in line with the school's marking policy.
- Pupils who have difficulties with reading and writing do not receive consistently effective support to boost their progress.
- Pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable in some subjects, including science and modern foreign languages.
- Low-level disruption in some classes is not well managed by teachers. As a result, some pupils rightly feel they are treated unfairly.
- Governors do not hold senior leaders accountable stringently enough.
- Not all the money provided for the pupil premium is spent wisely. Some of these funds are being spent on creating a learning resource centre with only limited benefit for the pupils for whom it was intended.
- Standards achieved by learners on the 16 to 19 pathways are improving but they are not consistently good.
- The school self-evaluation is overgenerous and improvement planning needs to be sharper.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are making good progress in physical education (PE) and progress is improving in mathematics and English.
- Support for pupils who have special educational needs or disability is strong.
- Pupils appreciate the caring and supportive work of the pastoral team.
- The vast majority of pupils attend school regularly, have impeccable manners and are punctual to lessons.

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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Rapidly raise achievement in science and modern foreign languages.
- Improve the quality of teaching including for learners in the sixth form, by:
 - ensuring that all learning offers appropriate challenge, particularly for the most able
 - providing pupils with consistently high-quality assessment; telling them specifically what they need to do to make better progress
 - making sure that pupils who find reading and writing difficult always receive appropriate support for their literacy needs.
- Improve behaviour, by:
 - establishing a fair and effective procedure for classroom management
 - reduce low-level disruption in lessons
 - making clear expectations around behaviour management.
- Strengthen leadership and management, by:
 - making school self-evaluation and improvement planning sharper and more accurate
 - ensuring that all pupil premium spending has a direct and positive benefit on the progress of these pupils
 - supporting all governors to stringently challenge senior leaders.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Senior and middle leaders are highly ambitious for the school and have built capacity by raising standards since the previous inspection. However, they do not have the full support of staff or parents. A small minority of staff who responded to the survey feel the school is not well led and managed; this view was echoed by a minority of parents who responded to Parent View (Ofsted's online questionnaire).
- Self-evaluation and school improvement planning are not sharp enough. Self-evaluation is overgenerous and the school improvement plan is unwieldy; it does not focus in enough detail on the school's top priorities.
- Behaviour is not consistently well managed and this has a direct impact on the day-to-day quality of teaching that pupils receive. The lack of clear direction for managing behaviour in the classroom makes life more difficult for staff, particularly those who are less experienced or temporary.
- Leaders and managers have adjusted the curriculum to begin to improve progress. The biggest impact has been the much improved provision for those who are educated off-site. The removal of the triple science option for this year's Year 11 has restricted progress for the most able; however, this is a temporary measure in response to all the staff changes last year. New leadership of science has led to the introduction of more opportunities for scientific experiment both in and out of school to make the curriculum more engaging.
- There is a wealth of extra-curricular activities on offer. Pupils show great commitment to sports; teachers and governors regularly sacrifice their Saturdays in order to attend football and rugby fixtures. Pupils say that they enjoy physical education and sport. The school is also host to budding thespians and pupils speak highly of their most recent production, *Bugsy Malone*.
- Teachers enrich the curriculum with opportunities for social, moral, spiritual and cultural education. For example, there are visits to The John Rylands Library and the University of Manchester and many pupils take advantage of the foreign trips on offer.
- Performance management is in place for teachers and support staff. Targets are linked directly to the quality of teaching and a number of staff were denied pay progression last year.
- Middle leaders are monitoring the quality of teaching and assessment much more rigorously. Capacity has been built at middle leader level by the introduction of 'lead practitioners' who are models of good practice and support staff with planning and assessment.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Members of the governing body know what the key priorities are for improving their school and they are passionate about accelerating pupils' progress. They care deeply about the community they serve.
 - They can give examples of how they have challenged senior leaders but they have not held them to account stringently enough.
 - Approximately £40,000 per year for the last 3 years has been saved from the pupil premium funding. This is now being put towards creating a learning resource centre. Leaders and managers feel that this will have a significant impact on the progress of disadvantaged pupils. While this may be the case, it has not had a significant impact on the progress of those pupils who have already left and for whom the money was intended. The overwhelming majority of remaining pupil premium funding is spent on staff salaries for pastoral support staff and mathematics and English teachers. There is no thorough evaluation of the impact of these individual interventions on pupils' progress, so governors do not know which offers value for money.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The quality of teaching varies both in and between departments. Where teaching is weaker, pupils are not engaged or challenged by their learning and consequently misbehave. Pupils do not always receive the feedback they need, in accordance with the school's policy, to be able to make better progress.
- Pupils' learning is sometimes interrupted because behavioural issues are allowed to detract from learning. In a Year 8 mathematics lesson, for example, a few pupils arrived late. One boy's behaviour disrupted the learning of others. His behaviour was addressed by the teacher but he disagreed with the sanction given to him; he thought it was unfair. Consequently, his disagreement with the teacher further interrupted learning.

- Pupils do not always receive appropriate support for literacy in lessons and some still struggle to write in full sentences, paragraphs and to use full stops and capital letters effectively.
- Literacy is promoted well through the library with many Year 7 and 8 pupils taking out books regularly. Pupils who have special educational needs or disability receive effective support in lessons when a teaching assistant is present.
- When pupils receive and act on high-quality 'next steps' feedback, in line with the school policy, the quality of their work improves. For example, scrutiny of disadvantaged pupils' books in English showed that they received consistently high-quality feedback not only on their piece of work but on aspects of spelling or writing that were weaker. Pupils then act on this feedback and the quality of their writing and spelling improves.
- Some effective learning was seen by inspectors and some teachers promote social, moral, spiritual and cultural education well. For example, in a Year 11 religious education lesson, pupils pondered the moral dilemma of euthanasia. Open-ended questions from the teacher prompted some articulate and powerful responses. They were so engrossed by their learning that their behaviour was exemplary.
- Similarly, pupils were well engaged in a Year 10 English lesson in which they analysed a video of 'Kevin the Teenager'. Pupils reflected on stereotyping and were able to provide strong written responses due to the helpful explanation by the teacher, who modelled writing effective answers in full sentences so that pupils were clear about exactly what they needed to do.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- A small minority of parents who responded to Parent View feel that bullying is not dealt with effectively. A few pupils echoed this view and that they did not feel safe in school.
- Some pupils get away with using derogatory language, even though senior leaders and managers have held assemblies explaining why it is unacceptable. This is because the guidelines for teachers on how to address behaviour both in and outside of the classroom are not specific enough and this leads to some pupils rightly feeling the behaviour system is unfair.
- Some pupils report that bullying occurs between older and younger pupils. Senior leaders have taken action to reduce opportunities for poor behaviour at lunchtimes by creating separate areas for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 pupils. Inspectors observed orderly behaviour at social times both in the school canteen and on the yard.
- The majority of pupils spoken to by inspectors felt that if bullying did occur, they would report it and it would be dealt with effectively by the pastoral team.
- There are many strengths to the school's pastoral work. The student support centre is popular at break and lunchtimes; it is a calm and well-organised resource.
- The physical education department promotes a strong sense of teamwork, cooperation and togetherness. Pupils are rightly proud of their sporting prowess.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Parents, pupils and staff report that low-level disruption in lessons is not rare. Pupils report that in some sets, their learning is regularly interrupted by pupils who do not behave well.
- Logs of behaviour incidents and referrals to the inclusion room show that behaviour is not consistently good and some pupils repeatedly misbehave and disrupt the learning of others.
- Behaviour is not well-managed in some lessons. Some pupils are sent out without warning, others have their misbehaviour ignored. This is because there is no effective system to manage behaviour in class fairly and consistently.
- Most pupils behave well, show respect for teachers and have good manners.
- Attendance is well above average overall and securely above average for almost all groups. There is a very pupil-focused approach to attendance and some highly effective multi-agency working to help pupils stay safe.
- Pupils who attend alternative provision have good attendance and improved behaviour.

- There have been no permanent exclusions for two years and fixed-term exclusions remain well below the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Pupils enter the school with abilities above those typical for pupils their age. The proportion of pupils who left the school in 2015 with 5 GCSEs at grade C or above including English and mathematics was similarly above the national average.
- Leaders and managers are predicting much improved results in a range of subjects including English, mathematics, science and modern foreign languages this year. However, predictions were overgenerous last year and while some external moderation of assessment has taken place, there remains too much variability in assessment to make these predictions wholly reliable.
- Pupils do not make good enough progress in science, particularly the most able. Senior leaders have addressed this by appointing new leadership for science, including a curriculum leader to provide extra support around aspects such as marking and assessment.
- The school's own information shows that pupils are set to make better progress this year in core science. However, the most-able Year 11 pupils who had started single science courses will not complete them as the curriculum has been changed to mitigate for the learning lost last year. Current progress in science remains variable; a mixture of strong and weak practice was observed by inspectors.
- After poor results last year, the modern foreign languages department is forecasting better progress this summer. Some pupils are making very strong progress but others do not make the progress of which they are capable. Once again, leaders have changed the curriculum in an attempt to boost progress but it is too early to see the impact.
- Gaps remain between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and their peers. However, current tracking shows that the gaps are beginning to close.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make good progress due to the high-quality support they receive. Pupils who attend off-site provision are now making the same progress as their peers.
- Approximately one quarter of pupils choose to stay on into the sixth form. Some are unable to stay on because they do not achieve high enough grades in academic subjects and many decide that they want some vocational element of study so they move on to local colleges, apprenticeships, training or employment.

16 to 19 study programmes

require improvement

- The progress learners make varies too much at AS and A level. While pupils achieve well in some subjects, for example English, there are still a number of subjects where outcomes fall below national expectations.
- There are opportunities for work experience and work-related learning but too much of the responsibility lies with learners to arrange their own placements. There is no enrichment programme for learners in their final year in the sixth form, although a programme is in place for those in Year 12.
- The quality of teaching mirrors that in the lower school. Inspectors observed some high-quality learning, such as in mathematics, but also weaker quality where teaching fails to engage learners.
- The leadership of the sixth form has high expectations and leaders have begun to implement systems to track underachievement more closely. Current tracking shows that progress is broadly in line with expectations and this summer's A level results are predicted to show an improvement on the inadequate results from last year.
- The sixth form study programmes are strongly focused on academic subjects. As a result, the majority of lower school pupils choose not to stay on. Some learners want a vocational element to their studies, some are precluded from staying on by the entry requirements and others say they want 'a change of scene'.
- No learners retake English and mathematics GCSE because the school does not accept pupils who gained less than a C grade in these subjects at GCSE. The proportion of learners who complete the study programmes on which they enrol is increasing.
- Learners have access to impartial careers advice and guidance and many go on to have a successful university career.

School details

Unique reference number	136273
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	10008513

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,069
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	179
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Terence Hall
Headteacher	Jeanette Saw
Telephone number	0161 336 2133
Website	www.audenshawschool.org.uk
Email address	admin@audenshaw.tameside.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	7 October 2014

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium is below the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding provided by the government to support pupils eligible for free school meals and looked after children.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is below average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11.
- A very few Key Stage 4 pupils attend off-site provision at North Outdoors.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors considered a vast array of evidence including through speaking with over 150 pupils both formally and informally. Inspectors held discussions with parents, members of the governing body, senior leaders, middle leaders, bus drivers and welfare staff. They took account of 97 responses to the staff questionnaire and 62 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in lessons and observed behaviour at social times. Inspectors scrutinised a wealth of documentation including: assessment information, pupils' books, information about teachers' performance management, school improvement plans, self-evaluation information, school policies, attendance and behaviour information, minutes of meetings of the governing body, information on the school's website and records relating to safeguarding. A meeting was held with North Outdoors, which provide alternative provision for Key Stage 4 pupils.

Inspection team

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Alyson Middlemass	Ofsted Inspector
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