

Inspection of Co-op Academy Failsworth

Brierley Avenue, Failsworth, Manchester M35 9HA

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 June 2024 and
19 and 20 June 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Phillip Quirk. This school is part of the Co-op Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Chris Tomlinson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Russell Gill.

What is it like to attend this school?

Most pupils are happy to come to school. They enjoy making friends and they are supportive of each other. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), appreciate the support and care that is provided by staff. This helps pupils to feel safe.

Most pupils engage positively with their learning. They typically understand and follow the school's routines well. As a result, behaviour in class and during social times is usually calm and orderly.

The school and trust have high expectations of pupils' achievement. The school includes everyone. It is determined that all pupils, including those who receive their education in 'the hub', access a high-quality education. The curriculum considers pupils' needs and interests. Pupils are able to study for a range of appropriate qualifications. Pupils' achievement is improving year-on-year.

Many pupils value the vast range of extra-curricular activities that are available to them. For instance, pupils enjoy attending clubs such as badminton, drama and rock band. Through these clubs, pupils strengthen their sporting skills, team-working abilities and musical talents.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The curriculum is ambitious for all pupils, including those with SEND. Subject curriculums are well designed. The 'powerful knowledge' that the school wants pupils to learn is clearly identified. Subject content is introduced in a logical order so that pupils build their knowledge over time.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They select appropriate activities to support pupils to learn the intended curriculum. The school has introduced a rigorous and well-structured approach to assessment. This supports staff to deliver the curriculum effectively, by pre-empting pupils' difficulties, identifying misconceptions and the gaps in pupils' knowledge and then using this information to plan for future learning. The school has effective systems to identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND. Pupils with SEND are supported to access the same curriculum as their peers.

The school supports pupils to become competent and fluent readers. 'Family reading' time promotes the joy of reading. Teachers support the development of pupils' vocabulary, including technical terminology. However, strategies to support pupils' technical accuracy in their written work are not consistently effective.

The school's published examination results are improving year-on-year. Nevertheless, they remain below national averages. Current pupils achieve well. An increasing number of pupils are choosing to study the subjects that constitute the English Baccalaureate.

The school's behaviour management system is underpinned by the trust's values, including 'be yourself always' and 'succeeding together'. Most pupils live up to these values and are considerate towards each other. Learning is rarely disrupted by poor behaviour. The school supports pupils to overcome barriers to attending. Attendance rates are increasing.

Pupils benefit from a well-designed personal, social, emotional, health and economic education curriculum. They develop a strong understanding of how to avoid risks such as anti-social behaviour, drugs and unhealthy diets. Many pupils relish the wide range of opportunities that help them to learn about different cultures. For instance, pupils enjoyed tasting foods from different countries and learning about cultural traditions at the school's 'culture day'. This helps pupils to understand the importance of respecting diversity so that they are prepared well for life in modern Britain.

The careers programme is comprehensive. Pupils receive a vast range of opportunities to interact with different organisations and employers. This helps most pupils to make well-informed choices about their future career.

The members of the academy governing council and the trust have strong expertise. They use this to challenge and support the school effectively. The school consults with staff when introducing changes to policy and practice. This ensures that staff's workload and well-being are considered. As such, staff are motivated to support pupils as best as they can. Staff value the support and training they have received from leaders in the school and the trust.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum has undergone considerable development. Some pupils have not had enough time to benefit from these positive changes. This means that the published results are below the national average. The school should ensure that the recent changes are embedded fully across all year groups so that pupils' achievement continues to improve.
- The school's approach to identifying errors in pupils' written work is not fully effective. Sometimes, pupils' written errors are not identified or corrected. The school should ensure that pupils receive the necessary support to secure automaticity in writing accurately.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	144627
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10321458
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1434
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trustees	Russell Gill
CEO of the trust	Chris Tomlinson
Headteacher	Phillip Quirk
Website	www.failsworth@coopacademies.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	8 and 9 December 2021, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Co-op Academies Trust.
- The school uses two registered and three unregistered alternative providers for a small number of pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- The inspection started on 5 June 2024 [Ofsted inspections and visits: Deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence](#). Inspectors returned on 19 and 20 June 2024 to gather additional evidence in line with policy.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the CEO of the trust, the school’s headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders. Inspectors met with a range of other staff and leaders during the inspection.
- Inspectors spoke with representatives of the academy governing council and the board of trustees, including the chair of trustees and the chair of governors. Inspectors also spoke with a representative of the local authority and the alternative providers.
- The inspectors observed pupils’ behaviour across the school, including at social times.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, science, English, design and technology, history, modern foreign languages, art and design, physical education and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders and teachers, visited a sample of lessons, reviewed samples of pupils’ work and spoke with some pupils.
- Inspectors met with leaders to review other areas of the curriculum.
- Inspectors spoke with the leaders responsible for pupils’ personal development, behaviour and attendance, alternative provision, disadvantaged pupils, careers, the provision for pupils with SEND and reading.
- An inspector visited the school’s ‘hub’ provision and spoke with staff and pupils who access their education in this provision.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school’s self-evaluation and records relating to pupils’ attendance and behaviour.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils’ interests first.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to Ofsted’s online surveys for staff and for pupils.

Inspection team

Deborah Mosley, lead inspector 19 and 20 June 2024	His Majesty’s Inspector
Matthew Vellensworth	His Majesty’s Inspector
Stuart Voyce	His Majesty’s Inspector.
Amina Modan, lead inspector	His Majesty’s Inspector

5 and 6 June 2024

Neil Johnson	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Mitchell	Ofsted Inspector
Andy Burton	Ofsted Inspector
Geoff Baker	Ofsted Inspector

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