

Inspection of Co-op Academy Swinton

Sefton Road, Pendlebury, Swinton, Manchester, Greater Manchester M27 6JU

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 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 principal of this school is Zarina Ali. 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?

The school has improved the quality of education that pupils receive. Pupils appreciate the positive impact that the school has on their behaviour and on their learning. They value the high standards that the school expects of their academic achievement and conduct. Most pupils live up to these high expectations.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), follow a broad and ambitious curriculum. They achieve well in a range of subjects.

Pupils at the school are articulate and extremely polite. They interact well with staff and appreciate the support that they receive when they are experiencing difficulties or have any concerns.

Most pupils' behaviour in classrooms and around the school is calm and orderly. Pupils told inspectors that the school's approach to improving positive behaviour helps everyone to learn well. Pupils are happy in school.

Pupils benefit from the wide range of clubs and visits that are on offer. These include sewing, social action and reading clubs. There are also numerous sporting and musical enrichment activities. For example, pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, enjoy participating in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

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

All pupils at Co-op Academy Swinton benefit from a carefully considered and ambitious curriculum. The delivery of the curriculum is adapted well to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. The number of pupils following the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) group of qualifications is rising.

While the impact of the improved curriculum is evident in current pupils' learning, this is not reflected in the 2023 published outcomes. This is because the legacy of a weaker curriculum, destabilised staffing and pupils' poor rates of attendance have led to gaps in some older pupils' knowledge. In the main, current pupils, particularly those in key stage 3, learn well.

The school has set out the important knowledge that pupils should learn and when this content should be taught. Teachers are suitably equipped to deliver the curriculum well. Typically, teachers design learning that helps pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, to build a rich body of subject knowledge.

The school uses assessment strategies well to check that pupils have secured the knowledge in the curriculum. However, some teachers have not addressed the gaps in some older pupils' knowledge as effectively as they should. This hinders how well prepared these pupils are for the next stage in their education or training.

There have been noticeable improvements in the quality of support for pupils with SEND. Pupils' needs are identified appropriately and in a timely manner. Staff use information about pupils' SEND effectively. Staff make suitable adjustments to help these pupils to learn well.

The school places a high importance on reading. For example, the school assesses the reading skills of pupils in all year groups so that those who need additional help are identified accurately. These pupils receive bespoke support to become confident, fluent readers. Many of these pupils make rapid progress.

The school has implemented robust and effective strategies to identify and to better understand the barriers affecting pupils' rates of attendance. Increasingly, a coordinated, whole-school approach, where attendance is everyone's responsibility, is ensuring that most pupils are not missing education. Despite this, some pupils remain persistently absent.

Staff and pupils recognise and appreciate how much behaviour has improved over time. Most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They understand the school's behaviour policy and the consequences for not following the rules. A small number of pupils still do not behave well. The pastoral team puts a range of support in place to help pupils to improve their behaviour if it falls below the school's high expectations.

The school provides a suitable programme of personal development. Pupils learn about topics that are suitable to their age such as puberty, finance and managing emotions. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They learn about the differences between people, such as different faiths and cultures. Pupils benefit from a broad careers education. This includes virtual work experience, mock interviews and support to help them to apply for their next steps in education, employment or training.

Expertise from the trust has had a demonstrable positive impact on the curriculum and pupils' behaviour and attendance. Trustees and governors are committed to supporting the school to develop further. They have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for development.

Many parents and carers who communicated with Ofsted during the inspection expressed positive attitudes about the school's engagement with them. However, a minority of parents indicated that they do not feel that the school communicates with them as well as it could. This is because the school has not ensured that these parents understand the reasons behind the changes that have been made.

Staff said that their workload is manageable and that they feel well supported by the school.

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 has not ensured that parents understand the rationale for the changes that are being made, particularly around staffing and behaviour. As a result, some parents have a negative view of the school. The school should ensure that its communication with parents is clear and effective so that the school's vision and values are better understood.
- Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. Consequently, these pupils do not achieve as well as they should. The school should ensure that pupils attend school regularly.
- The school has not ensured that the gaps in some pupils' knowledge, due to weaknesses in the previous curriculum, have been addressed swiftly enough. This means that some older pupils are not as well prepared for their next steps as they should be. The school should ensure that teachers are fully equipped to identify and remedy gaps in pupils' knowledge quickly and effectively.

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	136987
Local authority	Salford
Inspection number	10337688
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1007
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Russell Gill
CEO of trust	Chris Tomlinson
Principal	Zarina Ali
Website	www.swinton.coopacademies.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	22 November 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Co-op Academies Trust.
- 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.
- The school uses seven registered alternative providers.

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 educational provision.

- Inspectors discussed the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors held meetings with the principal, other senior leaders, staff, pupils and representatives of the board of trustees. An inspector held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- An inspector held a telephone discussion with members of staff at the seven alternative providers used by the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, science, modern foreign languages, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning, and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- 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.
- Inspectors spoke to staff, including early career teachers, about pupils' behaviour and staff's workload and well-being.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online staff survey. They took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils shared through Ofsted's online survey for pupils and through discussions held with pupils during the inspection.

Inspection team

Rebecca Sharples, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Derek Yarwood	Ofsted Inspector
Rochelle Conefrey	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Rigby	Ofsted Inspector

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