

Inspection of Manchester Young Lives

The Addy Young People's Centre, Woodhouse Lane, Manchester M22 9TF

Inspection dates: 1 to 3 March 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

What is it like to attend the school?

Pupils see the school as a haven. They talked confidently to inspectors about always feeling safe. Pupils form strong bonds with staff and each other. They enjoy learning with their friends and relish educational trips and visits to local museums, art galleries and sports centres.

Pupils told inspectors that when bullying happens it is dealt with immediately by staff. Pupils understand the harm that discriminatory behaviour, such as sexism, racism and homophobia, can cause. They are adamant that no such behaviour happens at the school.

Pupils' attendance improves as soon as they start at the school. Leaders and staff expect pupils to behave well and to achieve highly. Pupils live up to these high expectations. They benefit from a broad curriculum which engages them in learning.

Pupils understand what it means to be a member of British society. They raise funds for charitable causes and have a deep sense of social justice.

Pupils are encouraged to pursue their talents and interests. They make the most of the school's facilities. These include the multi-use games areas, sports hall and football pitches. Pupils particularly enjoy honing their woodwork, food technology, boxing and footballing skills.

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

Senior leaders, governors and the proprietor have ensured that there is a high-quality curriculum in place in most subjects. The curriculum is designed to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Most pupils start school with large gaps in their learning. Effective procedures for assessing pupils' skills and abilities are in place. These help teachers to establish what pupils know and can do in each subject. This helps teachers to understand what to teach next.

Teachers are clear about the knowledge and skills that pupils should be taught and in what order. However, in some subjects, teachers do not follow the intended curriculum closely enough. As a result, in these subjects, pupils do not develop their knowledge and skills as well as they should.

Staff follow the school's behaviour policy well. Pupils who are new to the school settle in quickly, develop trusting relationships with staff and their peers, and learn to abide by the rules. Pupils' behaviour usually helps to ensure that the school is calm and purposeful. However, some pupils are late to lessons and take unscheduled

breaks. This interrupts the flow of classroom activities and leads to a small number of pupils missing some key learning.

Leaders have effective procedures in place to identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Staff provide extra support to improve pupils' communication and calculation skills. Staff work well in partnership with parents, carers and a range of specialists. This ensures that pupils get the support that they need.

The curriculum extends beyond the classroom. Pupils enjoy rock climbing and horse riding at a local farm. They learn about their rights, responsibilities and fundamental British values through different aspects of the curriculum. They are encouraged to air their views. For example, pupils make suggestions about lunchtime menus and educational visits.

Reading is central to the curriculum. There is a sharp focus on making sure that those who are still developing their reading skills quickly gain the knowledge and skills they need to become confident, fluent readers.

The strong pastoral support provided by staff helps pupils to develop the personal, social and emotional skills needed to lead productive lives. For example, during the inspection pupils confidently prepared and served pancakes to staff and their peers to celebrate Shrove Tuesday.

Staff enjoy working at the school and their morale is high. They feel well supported by governors and senior leaders, who they said are mindful of their well-being, mental health and workload. Staff appreciate the professional development and training available to them. They said that this helps them to improve the delivery of the curriculum.

Parents and carers are complimentary about the school. Those who spoke with the lead inspector said that their children are happy, safe and make good progress.

Leaders make sure that all pupils receive helpful information about careers education and guidance. This helps to ensure that pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education. The mentoring support available helps pupils to stay on course with their studies. Typically, at the end of Year 11, all pupils go into further education and training.

The proprietor and governors carry out their duties diligently and ensure that all the independent school standards are met. They know the school well and are aware of its strengths and priorities for improvement. The proprietor makes sure that the school's accessibility plan complies with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Leaders have a safeguarding policy in place. The policy takes account of the government's recent guidelines on keeping pupils safe and is published on the school's website. A written risk assessment policy is in place. This outlines the responsibilities of staff and leaders and provides a suitable framework for protecting

pupils from risk. Leaders ensure that pupils are provided with effective relationships, sex and health education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Senior leaders and the proprietor body leave nothing to chance when it comes to minimising risks and harm to pupils. Staff are trained well in all matters relating to safeguarding. Leaders collaborate closely with other agencies and partners to make sure that pupils get the support that they need.

Staff understand pupils' vulnerabilities. They know how to spot potential signs of neglect and abuse. Staff know exactly what to do if they are concerned about the safety or welfare of a pupil.

Staff help pupils to stay safe. For example, pupils learn about the potential dangers of using the internet and social media.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school proprietor)

- Some pupils are not punctual to lessons. Occasionally, they leave lessons for short unscheduled breaks. This causes some disruption to learning and prevents some pupils from gaining the depth of knowledge that they could otherwise achieve. Leaders should ensure that pupils are punctual and that they do not spend time out of class on unscheduled breaks. This will help to ensure that their learning is not interrupted.
- In some subjects, the intended curriculum is not delivered in the sequence that leaders intend. This means that some pupils do not develop the knowledge and skills that leaders want them to learn. Leaders should monitor these curriculum subjects more closely to ensure that the intended curriculum is being delivered. This will help pupils to remember more of their learning and will deepen their understanding in these subjects.

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.

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	136264
DfE registration number	352/6071
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	10210352
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	13 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	12
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Manchester Young Lives
Chair	Christopher Duncan
Headteacher	Paul Fletcher
Annual fees (day pupils)	£12,025
Telephone number	0161 4375923
Website	www.manchesteryounglives.org.uk
Email address	info@manchesteryounglives.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 to 15 March 2018

Information about this school

- At the time of the previous inspection, the school operated from three sites. Now the school operates solely from its main site in Wythenshawe.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher. Meetings were held with other staff members, focusing on personal development and careers information, advice and guidance. The lead inspector held a meeting with two trustees.
- Inspectors held telephone conversations with the deputy headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator from the Manchester Pupil Referral Unit.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into these subjects: English, including reading; history; citizenship; and food technology. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke with leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. The lead inspector held telephone conversations with parents, to gather their views about the school, and considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were no responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey or the Ofsted pupil survey.
- Inspectors examined a range of policies and schemes of work. They also scrutinised safeguarding information, including the school's safeguarding policy. The lead inspector spoke to safeguarding leaders, and the headteacher, about the reporting and recording of any safeguarding incidents. He also talked with pupils about their safety, welfare and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Lenford White, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lindy Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

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