

Inspection of Co-op Academy Leeds

Stoney Rock Lane, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS9 7HD

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 November 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

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

What is it like to attend this school?

One pupil told inspectors that 'it is all about our education at this school'. Inspectors agree. Leaders' work to improve behaviour means pupils feel safe at school. There is a sense of pride among pupils because they can see that the school has improved rapidly in recent years. This means there is more time for leaders and teachers to focus on the curriculum.

Leaders are determined that all pupils access a high-quality, broad curriculum, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who speak English as an additional language. Leaders ensure that they have a very good understanding of pupils' starting points. They use this information to ensure that pupils get the specific help and support they need to progress.

Pupils are proud to be part of a diverse community. All backgrounds are valued. Pupils respect each other because leaders ensure that all pupils see themselves represented in the curriculum and activities that are planned. This helps to ensure that bullying is not a problem. There are thriving extra-curricular music clubs which pupils enjoy. Leaders provide sports equipment so that pupils can participate in school and local competitions. Pupils feel cared for by their teachers.

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

There has been a strong focus on curriculum development recently. Consequently, leaders at all levels have clearly mapped the 'powerful knowledge' they want pupils to gain. In some subjects, such as history, leaders ensure that the topics covered are relevant to the backgrounds of the pupils. Pupils therefore value the experiences they have in lessons. Teachers receive, and use, clear information about pupils with SEND. As a result, pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers. Leaders ensure that the curriculum remains broad for all pupils across both key stage 3 and key stage 4.

Across subjects, leaders have sequenced the curriculum so it builds on previous learning. In mathematics, for example, pupils begin Year 10 by focusing on algebra and number to ensure they have remembered important information from key stage 3. In art, pupils develop the ability to use shading and blocking in different ways as the curriculum progresses.

In lessons, teachers consistently give pupils examples of how to complete the activities that are planned. Inspectors saw the 'I do, we do, you do' model being used by teachers across the school. Every lesson begins with a task that helps pupils to recall previous learning. This builds pupils' confidence as they work independently. It also helps teachers to understand where there are gaps in pupils' knowledge. Sometimes, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to demonstrate that they can connect the important knowledge that they have learned.

Reading has a high priority. Many pupils at the school are in the early stages of learning to read. Teachers are trained in the phonics programme used by the school. Pupils therefore receive expert support. Leaders have employed multilingual staff to aid communication with some pupils as they begin to learn to read in English.

The values of the Co-op Academies Trust underpin leaders' work to build a strong school community. The idea of equality, in particular, is strong. Pupils are proud of being part of a multicultural school community, and leaders ensure that all pupils are valued. For example, an LGBTQ+ forum has been organised to give a voice to these pupils. Leaders have adapted behaviour policies so that movement between lessons is smoother. The atmosphere around school is calm and respectful. In lessons, pupils focus on what teachers are telling them. However, some pupils still need a lot of adult support to help them understand and follow the school behaviour systems.

When leaders identify a problem, they act swiftly. For example, staff presence on corridors has helped to significantly reduce the number of pupils out of lessons. Leaders know that pupils' attendance is not good enough. They have a range of well-developed systems and approaches to improve it. For example, over 600 home visits have been made this term. This is having an impact on ensuring that attendance rates improve. Leaders know this must continue.

Governors and trustees understand how the school needs to improve. They receive clear information about leaders' actions. They focus particularly on work to support pupils with SEND, pupils who speak English as an additional language and disadvantaged pupils. Most staff feel that leaders take account of workload issues. A small number feel that there needs to be more thought given to how new policies are introduced in order to ensure that they can implement them effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a very large safeguarding team to support pupils. Record-keeping is meticulous and actions around safeguarding are swift. Pupils receive support from school specialists as well as external agencies.

Leaders listen carefully to the views of pupils about what makes them feel unsafe. They use this information to develop training, plan assemblies and adapt the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. Leaders' work to raise awareness of harmful sexual behaviour has been particularly successful.

Leaders ensure that appropriate checks are carried out on adults who work with children. Staff receive regular updates in a weekly briefing, which helps them to understand the local risks to children.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, pupils are not given sufficient opportunity to demonstrate the cumulative knowledge they have gained. This means that some pupils do not remember how important knowledge connects together. Leaders should ensure that there is a consistent approach so that pupils can demonstrate age-appropriate, subject-specific knowledge that matches the aims of the curriculum.
- Some pupils are not able to demonstrate high levels of self-regulation. This means that they cannot play as positive a role in the life of the school as they might. Leaders should ensure that they develop strategies and actions to enable pupils to manage their own behaviour and emotions.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	137065
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10241155
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	877
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Russell Gill
Principal	Natalie Jones
Website	https://leeds.coopacademies.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 December 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous monitoring visit, two vice-principals have been appointed. They have responsibility for the quality of education, attendance, personal development and behaviour. There have also been three new appointments at the level of assistant principal. Leaders are also in the process of making further appointments to the attendance team.
- The school has a sixth form but there are currently no pupils who access this provision.
- The school uses two alternative providers for a small number of pupils, one of which is unregistered.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information 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.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other senior leaders. They also met with the chair of trustees and members of the academy governing council, including the chair of the academy governing council. Inspectors also spoke with the chief executive officer of the Co-op Academies Trust and the regional director of education for the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, history, science, and art and design. They met with subject leaders to discuss curriculum planning. Inspectors talked with pupils about what they have learned in these lessons. Inspectors visited lessons, talked with teachers and looked at pupils' work. Inspectors listened to pupils read and looked at plans to support those at the early stages of reading.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum planning in geography and mathematics as well as looking at the work that pupils produce in these subjects and visiting some mathematics lessons.
- Inspectors met with leaders for attendance, PSHE and careers and spoke with wider support staff.
- Inspectors spoke with early career teachers and their mentors.
- Inspectors spoke with the special educational needs coordinator and scrutinised the information that teachers receive about pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders with responsibility for safeguarding and scrutinised safeguarding records. They spoke with staff about how they keep children safe and looked at training records. Inspectors also scrutinised the single central record.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils both formally and informally, including single-sex groups of pupils.
- The views of parents, staff and pupils were considered through surveys, including Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Matthew Vellensworth, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Garry Stout	Ofsted Inspector
Gordon Watts	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Hubbard	His Majesty's Inspector

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