

# Inspection of a good school: Dean Trust Ardwick

345 Stockport Road, Ardwick, Manchester, Lancashire M13 0LF

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Inspection dates: 11 and 12 July 2023

## **Outcome**

Dean Trust Ardwick continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Leaders have high expectations of all pupils at Dean Trust Ardwick. Pupils respond well. They engage positively with the education they receive. Pupils achieve well.

Most pupils behave well. They value the support they receive to help them to follow the school rules.

Pupils trust staff to keep them safe. They are confident that any issues they raise will be dealt with effectively. Incidents of poor behaviour, such as bullying, are dealt with fairly and supportively by leaders and staff.

Most pupils happily attend and enjoy school. They are well looked after by staff when they face challenges or need additional help. Pupils appreciate the care they receive. This helps them to get the most out of their time at school.

Pupils understand the differences that exist between people and how this diversity enriches their community. They are taught how to make connections across their different cultures. This helps them to develop into positive citizens of the world.

Many pupils enjoy and benefit from additional opportunities to take on responsibilities. They proudly aspire to serve others as, for example, prefects or librarians. Increasingly, they take part in a wide range of sporting, academic and other enrichment activities. Pupils are keen to celebrate the achievements of others when they encounter success.

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

Leaders, including members of the local governing committee and the trust, are committed to ensuring that pupils receive a high-quality education during their time at the school. They draw on helpful support from the trust to help them realise their ambition. Staff are well trained to deliver the ambitious curriculums. This means that pupils achieve

well. Most pupils successfully make positive gains in what they know and remember in the subjects they are studying. Pupils typically attain well, often from lower-than-average starting points. Pupils are ready for the next stages of their lives.

Leaders ensure that all pupils in Years 7 to 9, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), follow a suitably broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils eagerly pursue a wide range of academic and vocational subjects when they are in Years 10 and 11.

Staff confidently design ambitious subject curriculums that carefully set out the knowledge that pupils should learn. This ensures that pupils gain knowledge in a sensible, logical order.

Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach. This helps most teachers to design well-chosen activities that link pupils' previous and new learning. Teachers often present, explain and model the use of subject matter clearly. However, occasionally, some teachers' knowledge of how best to deliver the curriculum is less well developed. In these cases, pupils do not make the same gains in what they know and remember as securely as they do elsewhere.

In the main, teachers make effective use of assessment strategies to identify and support gaps in pupils' knowledge. This helps teachers to adapt the content of their lessons so that pupils learn well.

Leaders work closely with staff, pupils, parents and carers to carefully identify the needs of pupils with SEND. They ensure that staff get the information they need to support pupils in lessons. For the most part, staff adapt and refine their teaching well to help these pupils. Knowledgeable specialist staff provide additional support for pupils where necessary. Consequently, pupils with SEND achieve well across the subjects they study.

Leaders quickly assess and accurately diagnose gaps in pupils' reading knowledge. Suitably skilled specialists provide support that is well matched to pupils' needs. Experienced staff design and deliver carefully focused provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL). As a result, most pupils at the earliest stages of learning to read, or those who speak EAL, make increasing gains in their reading fluency and comprehension.

Pupils typically demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. Most pupils behave well around the school site and at social times. They are usually polite and respectful. When pupils' behaviour falls short of the expectations, staff confidently support and challenge pupils to help them get back on track. Where necessary, leaders work effectively with individual pupils and their parents to help them better understand the importance of good behaviour for themselves and for others in their lessons.

Pupils, including those with SEND, benefit from high-quality citizenship and personal, health, social and economic education opportunities. Pupils regularly reflect on and explore important aspects of their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. Pupils

gain important insights into life in modern Britain, including responsibility and service to others.

Pupils profit from a well-informed careers, education, advice, information and guidance programme. Pupils explore their futures in more depth as they move through the school. They are well prepared for the range of choices they will encounter at key points in their education.

Leaders carefully seek and listen to teachers' views and ideas. Where appropriate, they adapt their approaches to support staff and their workload. The vast majority of staff appreciate what leaders do to support them.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that pupils are well educated about what they can and should do to stay safe. Leaders ensure that this guidance is carefully informed by local risks and pupils' needs. This helps pupils to understand how to keep themselves safe.

Leaders diligently design and deliver training for all staff to ensure that they understand the risks that pupils may face. Staff are knowledgeable and vigilant. They quickly report concerns about pupils' safety.

Leaders carefully identify and provide the support that pupils need. Leaders make effective use of internal expertise to provide support for pupils and their families. They supplement this with well-targeted external expertise from specialist partners where it is needed.

Leaders regularly review the support that pupils have received. They make informed decisions about the extent to which further support is required.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- At times, teachers' knowledge of how to deliver the subjects they teach is underdeveloped. This means that some pupils make uneven gains in what they know and remember across some of the subjects they study. Leaders should ensure that all teachers have the subject and pedagogical knowledge that they need to deliver the curriculum consistently well.

## Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually, this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2018.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	141884
<b>Local authority</b>	Manchester
<b>Inspection number</b>	10290279
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,306
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Damian McGann
<b>Headteacher</b>	Steven Worthington
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://deantrustardwick.co.uk/">http://deantrustardwick.co.uk/</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	23 and 24 May 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Dean Trust Ardwick is part of The Dean Trust.
- Leaders make use of three registered alternative providers to provide full-time education for a small number of pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 11 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

- 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 met with the head of school and other senior leaders. They met with representatives of the academy trust, the local governing committee and the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: computer science, geography, mathematics, physical education and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's records of safeguarding checks and referrals. They met with leaders who have overall responsibility for safeguarding. Inspectors spoke with staff and pupils about the school's work to keep pupils safe.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders responsible for SEND and reading. They also looked at information about the support for pupils with additional needs.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in class and around the school site. They also scrutinised behaviour and attendance records.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils from all year groups and considered the responses of the pupils who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire for pupils.
- Inspectors held discussions with staff and considered the responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the comments received through the free-text facility. Inspectors also considered the views of parents who contacted them during the inspection.

### **Inspection team**

Michael Pennington, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Fiona Burke-Jackson

Ofsted Inspector

Craig Yates

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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