

Inspection of Arbour Academy

Canterbury Gardens, 640 Eccles New Road, Eccles, Salford, Greater Manchester, Greater Manchester M5 5AG

Inspection dates:	3 and 4 June 2025
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Inadequate

The executive headteacher of this school is Lindsay Regan. This school is part of the Kings Academy 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), Amanda Nicholson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Laurence Cooper.

What is it like to attend this school?

Arbour Academy is a welcoming and friendly school. Despite the considerable barriers that pupils have faced before joining the school, they quickly settle when they get there. Pupils develop warm and supportive relationships with staff. This helps pupils to feel comfortable, happy and safe.

The school has considerably increased the level of ambition that it has for pupils' achievement. It has overhauled the curriculum. This has led to many positive changes to the quality of education that pupils receive. While it is too soon to see the full effects of these changes on how well pupils achieve, there is also some variability in the teaching of the planned curriculum. This means that sometimes pupils are not achieving as well as they could.

Pupils enjoy attending school. The school atmosphere is calm and harmonious. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They demonstrate empathy and kindness towards each other. Lessons are purposeful, and pupils typically focus on their learning.

The school supports pupils' personal development well. Pupils enjoy many opportunities to extend their learning outside of the classroom. Opportunities to strengthen pupils' resilience and social skills are wide-ranging. Pupils develop their own interests and talents through a range of activities that include gardening, drumming and darts.

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

With the support of the trust, the school has swiftly rebuilt and strengthened the curriculum, which is now ambitious for all pupils. In the main, subject content is well sequenced to help pupils know and remember more. However, in some subjects, the school has not identified the key knowledge that it wants pupils to learn over time. As a result, some pupils' understanding in these areas is less secure than it should be.

Teachers typically have secure subject knowledge and provide clear explanations. Most design learning that meets pupils' current needs well. However, teachers do not have enough information about the gaps in pupils' subject knowledge that existed prior to them joining the school. At times, the delivery of the curriculum does not take enough account of pupils' widely varied starting points. This means that some pupils do not have secure foundations on which to build future learning, which hinders how well they achieve.

Teachers check pupils' understanding more frequently than they did in the past. However, some of these checks still do not identify pupils' missed or forgotten learning well enough. Areas of missed or insecure learning can go unaddressed, and sometimes widen, especially for those pupils with lower rates of attendance. When this happens, pupils' learning slows.

Improvements to the school's reading programme mean staff provide effective support for pupils who struggle to read. These pupils are identified quickly and receive targeted help

to catch up. However, pupils who attend the outreach provision do not receive the same level of support. As a result, gaps in their reading knowledge can go unnoticed.

The school has effective systems to identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) promptly. Staff are well informed and, in most cases, meet these needs successfully in the classroom. However, weaknesses in how well the curriculum is delivered overall mean that some pupils with SEND do not achieve as well as they should.

The school has raised its expectations of pupils' conduct and enhanced the support that it provides to pupils that may need help to manage their own emotions and anxieties. This has led to a rapid reduction in lost learning time. Pupils are motivated by rewards, including tuck-shop tokens redeemable in the school shop.

Overall, attendance has improved significantly. Pupils now access a full-time education, where this had not been the case previously. Greater stability in staffing and clear routines help pupils to feel that school is a safe space. The school works closely with families, carers and external agencies to promote regular attendance. It continually seeks new ways to support pupils with lower attendance to overcome the barriers that prevent them from attending school regularly.

The provision for personal development is a strength of the school. The personal, social and health education curriculum, alongside assemblies and workshops, equips pupils with essential knowledge to stay healthy and safe. Pupils engage in a wide range of outdoor experiences, including raft building and volunteering, which build confidence and self-belief. Pupils receive valuable careers information and guidance about next steps and future opportunities in education and employment. However, pupils who attend the outreach provision do not consistently receive the same level of careers support.

Trustees, the local governing body and school leaders work together to ensure rigorous oversight of all aspects of the school's work. The trust provides supportive challenge to ensure that the school takes effective action to further improve. Leaders at all levels are ambitious for the future of the school. Staff value the support they receive for their professional development. A strong team ethic helps the school to achieve its ambitions for pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the school has not outlined the key knowledge that pupils need to learn and remember over time. This means that pupils struggle to build on what they know and to link ideas together. The school should take steps to ensure that the key knowledge in each subject is clearly defined.
- At times, the delivery of the curriculum is not fully adapted to reflect pupils' starting points. As a result, some pupils do not have secure foundations on which to build future learning. This hampers how well they achieve. The school should ensure that teachers have the necessary expertise to identify existing gaps in pupils' knowledge and use this information to ensure that learning is well designed to reflect pupils' starting points.
- At times, teachers' checks on learning, especially when pupils have been absent, are not timely enough to spot gaps in pupils' knowledge. As a result, some pupils are insecure in their learning. The school should ensure that teachers swiftly identify and address gaps in pupils' knowledge so that they can learn well.
- The school's oversight for its outreach provision is not well developed. As a result, pupils who attend this provision do not consistently access careers education and support for reading. The school should implement its plans to ensure these pupils are fully included in all aspects of the school's work.

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	149590
Local authority	Salford
Inspection number	10367072
Type of school	Alternative provision
School category	Academy alternative provision converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	54
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Laurence Cooper
CEO of the trust	Amanda Nicholson
Headteacher	Lindsay Regan
Website	www.arbouracademy.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 June 2024, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Kings Academy Trust.
- A new headteacher was appointed in May 2024.
- The school uses eight unregistered alternative provisions for a small number of pupils.
- The school provides 15 places in outreach provision. These places are commissioned by the local authority. At the time of the inspection, 13 pupils attended outreach provision. The outreach provision makes use of the eight unregistered alternative providers used by the school. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Year 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a graded (section 5) inspection under the same Act. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders and other members of staff. The lead inspector also spoke with the CEO of the trust, the chair of the board of trustees and members of the local governing body, including the chair. In addition, an inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons across all key stages, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- An inspector met with the SEND coordinators and reviewed samples of documentation relating to pupils with SEND.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 took account of the views of parents expressed through Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Kate Bowker, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Ben Hill

His Majesty's Inspector

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