

Dixons Newall Green Academy

Address: Greenbrow Road, Manchester, Greater Manchester, M23 2SX

Unique reference number (URN): 149697

Inspection report: 30 June 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders have deliberately engineered all aspects of the school's provision to be inclusive. For example, the school's classrooms and pupils' uniforms are intentionally designed to take account of pupils' sensory needs. The curriculum ensures that pupils who find it harder to remember their learning have lots of chances to practise and rehearse what they know. Subtle adjustments to the school's expectations for conduct help pupils to meet leaders' high standards despite any social or emotional difficulties. These decisions all contribute to a school, where pupils can thrive, overcoming the barriers they may face. Leaders and staff know pupils as individuals and take great care to understand the most helpful ways to support their learning and wellbeing. For most pupils, leaders firmly believe that this support is best delivered in the classroom. Leaders keep a close eye on how well this support is working. They do not hesitate to seek expert advice or specialist help if it is needed. This is equally the case for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, disadvantaged pupils or those facing other challenging circumstances in their lives. Leaders ensure that decisions about how to spend additional funding to benefit these pupils are deeply rooted in what is likely to make the greatest long-term difference to pupils' success.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

The trust has provided comprehensive, coherent and highly effective support for school leaders at all levels. This has included deploying resources astutely and investing in high-quality training and professional development for staff. Trustees and trust leaders have overseen the appointment of skilled leaders and staff, who are well aware of the difficulties that opening a new school might present. Trustees demonstrate acute knowledge of the school's development. They draw on a wealth of experience and expertise to provide insightful and supportive challenge to leaders, which ensures that any potential problems are anticipated through careful planning. Overall, in the 3 years that the school has been operating, this sharply focused alignment between the trust and the school has secured a rapid trajectory of development. Many of the school's systems are firmly embedded and having a highly positive impact on pupils. In the aspects of the school's provision that are still developing, gaps are closing quickly.

Staff benefit from a collegiate and supportive culture in the school. This helps them to act in pupils' best interests with the same clarity of purpose that leaders model for them. Although staff reflect that their workload can be high at times, leaders take steps to minimise this as far as possible. Staff are universally clear about how well leaders support their wellbeing.

As a new school, leaders have faced some negative views from parents, carers and the wider community. Leaders have worked relentlessly to build trust and confidence. This work has been largely successful. Many more families are now choosing the school for their children than in the past.

Leaders have created a culture of belonging, responsibility and care. Pupils' personal and social development permeates the day-to-day routines of the school. For instance, pupils serving meals to each other supports teamwork, communication and leadership. Reading together as a group broadens pupils' horizons and encourages reflection on important themes, such as peer pressure and prejudice. In ways such as these, pupils' daily experiences align seamlessly with the taught curriculum to support a deep and interconnected understanding of moral and social issues. Pupils' learning about fundamental British values emphasises links with the school's own values and pupils' experiences of the city where they live. The curriculum for relationships and sex education and health education ensures that pupils learn what they need to about keeping themselves safe emotionally, physically and when online.

Leaders and staff encourage pupils to have the highest aspirations for their futures. This is further developed through a comprehensive programme of careers education. Pupils currently in Year 9 have drawn on this to make informed choices about the GCSEs they will study. They are already considering where these options might take them when they finish Year 11.

Leaders are acutely aware that many pupils do not have ready access to enriching creative or cultural opportunities in their own community. They have designed these opportunities into the school's curriculum so that everyone can benefit equally. Any barriers to joining in are systematically dismantled. Pupils delight in trying new things, for example learning to cook, taking part in musical theatre or visiting a foreign country.

The school's pastoral work on resilience and mental health is commendable. Staff are highly attuned to difficult situations that pupils may face, and use their knowledge of pupils' individual needs to ensure that pupils get the right kind of help when they need it.

Expected standard

Achievement

Expected standard 

On the whole, pupils learn well and make progress through the curriculum. They build appropriate knowledge and skills, including fundamental skills in reading, writing and using numbers. This provides a solid foundation for pupils' future learning. Pupils in Year 9 are typically well prepared for the rigours of their GCSE studies. Disadvantaged pupils and those who speak English as an additional language are successfully overcoming their barriers and producing work of a comparable standard to others in the school.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are largely making suitable progress in their academic, social, emotional and communication development. Some older pupils' achievement has been hindered by their previously poor attendance. Now that many of these pupils are in school more often, they are making greater gains in their learning. In the main, gaps in their knowledge are closing quickly. However, for some

pupils, these gaps are large. These pupils are not as well prepared for key stage 4 as they could be.

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Although pupils' overall attendance is below the national average, leaders' high-quality work over the past 2 years has brought about improvements at an impressive rate. Leaders leave no stone unturned in their analysis of pupils' absences. They notice any dips and take action quickly to stop them becoming patterns, for example, by offering support to parents and carers of some pupils in Year 7, who were finding regular attendance difficult. Some older pupils have been in irregular attendance habits for longer. Nevertheless, leaders and staff have been resolute in their approaches to helping these pupils to re-engage with learning. The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school has fallen sharply.

Positive social conduct is integral to the school's approach. Leaders and staff take every opportunity to reinforce the highest expectations of behaviour. For example, by modelling social skills, when staff and pupils sit to eat lunch together. Leaders' consistent and predictable routines help to ensure that the school is a calm and orderly place. Incidents of misbehaviour, including those leading to suspensions, have dramatically reduced since the school opened. Pupils are confident in how staff tackle any bullying, discrimination or occasions when learning is disrupted. Pupils who find it more difficult to control their emotions independently get the support that they need to do so.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard 

Leaders have constructed a highly ambitious curriculum, which is well designed to build pupils' knowledge of a wide range of subjects. Regular opportunities to return to earlier learning, whether this is in the classroom or in the dining hall at the beginning of the day, mean that any gaps in pupils' knowledge typically do not become misconceptions. Teachers draw on their extensive training and subject expertise to connect new information to pupils' prior understanding. This helps most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to learn well.

Teachers use information about what pupils already know to help them make astute decisions about when to return to a topic or when to move on. Pupils who are most in need of extra support for their reading benefit from well-considered help, which keeps going until it has been effective. Teachers understand that subtle changes in how they teach can often be enough to make sure that pupils with SEND, or those who struggle to read, write or work with number, can learn on an equal footing to their classmates. That said, in a minority of classrooms, the ways in which teachers make such changes are not fully effective. This means that, on occasions, some pupils find it more difficult to learn.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Most pupils consider themselves fortunate to attend this new school. They have quickly developed a keen sense of belonging and a pride in the school's community. This is evident

through the positive relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils are safe and feel supported at school. Most attend regularly. They know that if they have a problem they can turn to staff who will help. On the whole, pupils treat each other with the same high levels of respect and kindness that they are shown by staff. On occasions when this does not happen, pupils know that staff will resolve issues, including incidents of bullying, quickly and effectively. Pupils appreciate the chances that staff give them to 'get it right' if they have made a poor choice.

Pupils value their learning and strive to uphold the school's value of 'hard work'. Their positive experiences in classrooms typically help them to progress well through the curriculum. Pupils in Year 9 are ready to tackle the rigours of their GCSE studies. The school ensures that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those facing other difficulties in their learning, benefit from the same high expectations as their peers. This helps these pupils to aspire highly for themselves and the successes that they can achieve.

The school ensures that all pupils are involved in opportunities and experiences that they might not encounter elsewhere. For example, the opportunity to learn a musical instrument or to go on a trip overseas. These help pupils to develop into well-rounded young people, ready to take their place in society. Pupil leaders are proud of the work they have done with civic leaders and the police service, which has helped to improve their local area.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that teaching strategies consistently take account of pupils' differing starting points, including their special educational needs and/or disabilities, reducing any inconsistencies in the quality of pupils' classroom experiences. This is to ensure that gaps in pupils' knowledge reduce so that all pupils progress through the curriculum as smoothly as they should.

About this inspection

This school is part of Dixons Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by a chief executive officer (CEO), Luke Sparkes, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Michael Blackburn.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the principal and other senior leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator and the designated safeguarding lead, during the inspection. Inspectors also spoke with representatives of the local authority, a group of trustees, including the chair of the trust board, the CEO and other trust leaders.

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 inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

This school opened in September 2023 for pupils in Year 7. It is not yet at its full capacity. At the time of this inspection, the oldest pupils on roll were in Year 9.

There was previously a school on the same site called Newall Green High School, which closed in 2021. There is no connection between that previous school and this current one.

The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision.

Principal: Jo Whitworth

Lead inspector:

Ben Hill, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Zarina Connolly, Ofsted Inspector

Katie Kinrade, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 30 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

252

Well below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,067

School capacity

700

Well below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 1,154

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

60.32%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 28.9%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

7.14%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.09%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

29.37%

Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 13.4%

Location deprivation

Above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	10.2%	8.4%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	14.5%	8.9%	Above

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	33.3%	23.4%	Above
2023/24 (3 term)	43.2%	25.6%	Above

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted
© Crown copyright 2026



© Crown copyright