

Cedar Mount Academy

Address: Gorton Education Village, 50 Wembley Road, Gorton, GREATER MANCHESTER, M18 7DT

Unique reference number (URN): 138097

Inspection report: 27 January 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.

Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard 

Leaders' close analysis of attendance patterns has led to sharply focused initiatives, such as 'FOMO Fridays', which have encouraged more pupils to attend regularly. On the whole, pupils' attendance is in line with the national average and there has been a reduction in the number of pupils who are persistently absent. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are persistently absent is lower than that seen nationally for similar pupils. Although the attendance of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities remains below national figures, leaders have made great strides in reducing rates of absence for this group.

Leaders have recently established a culture that prioritises pupils feeling welcome and settled in school. For example, pupils do not worry about bullying or discrimination because they know that leaders do not tolerate such behaviour. A clear sense of belonging, combined with leaders' clear expectations of pupils' conduct, has helped to create a calm and respectful environment in which pupils typically behave well. When incidents do occur, staff address them promptly and in line with the school's agreed approach. Pupils increasingly value their education. They are attentive to staff. The impact of leaders' work to improve pupils' behaviour is reflected in the notable reduction in suspensions over the last academic year, including for disadvantaged pupils.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard 

In recent years, the trust rightly identified that the quality of the curriculum and teaching and pupils' achievement were not improving quickly enough. It took decisive action. Although some staffing turbulence hampered progress, these issues have now largely been resolved. Several recent leadership appointments have strengthened capacity. With clear support and effective challenge from those responsible for governance, the school is now on the right track. Leaders make decisions with pupils' best interests at heart and consider carefully how their actions will improve pupils' experiences and outcomes.

Leaders at all levels have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and the areas that require further development. They work closely together and take timely, well-considered actions to secure sustained improvement. This is making a difference. For instance, the curriculum has been strengthened, leaders have established appropriate processes to identify pupils who may need additional help and the number of suspensions for unacceptable conduct has reduced sharply. Nevertheless, some aspects of leaders' work to improve teaching are not fully embedded.

Leaders provide a carefully designed programme of professional learning. Informed by evidence, this focuses on the aspects of teaching that will most help pupils to learn well. Teachers, including those early in their careers, benefit from this programme. Although the impact remains variable, leaders have a thorough understanding of the support that individual staff need to develop further.

Despite a period of considerable change, most staff appreciate leaders' actions to help them manage their workload. Staff are proud to work at the school and, in the main, they are supportive of the ongoing journey of improvement.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard 

Leaders place great emphasis on ensuring that pupils benefit from opportunities and experiences that broaden their understanding of the world beyond their local area. To this end, leaders remove barriers that may prevent pupils from taking part in the enrichment activities on offer. For instance, all pupils visit the theatre and take part in geography fieldwork. Pupils can also explore new interests, such as cheerleading, chess and debating. They embrace these opportunities. Leaders are making further changes to encourage even greater participation.

Leaders provide a suitable curriculum of personal, social, health and economic education. Pupils learn a wealth of useful information, including how to recognise healthy relationships and how key concepts, such as democracy, relate to life in modern Britain. Leaders provide opportunities for pupils to learn about and celebrate each other's faiths and cultures. This promotes tolerance and respect. Pupils' learning in lessons is reinforced through assemblies and form-time activities. This helps them to develop a secure understanding of this important information. Leaders consider local risks carefully and weave these into pupils' learning so that they know how to keep themselves safe, including when online.

Leaders provide an appropriate careers programme, beginning in Year 7. This helps to raise pupils' aspirations and improve their understanding of the education, employment and training options available to them when they leave school. Pupils particularly value work experience opportunities that help them to understand different careers and the world of work. Leaders have strengthened their approach to tracking pupils once they leave school so that they can offer support where needed. The majority of pupils successfully progress into further education, employment or training.

Needs attention

Achievement

Needs attention 

Pupils make uneven progress through the curriculum. Inconsistencies in teaching, coupled with weaknesses in the previous curriculum, mean that some pupils do not learn as well as they should.

Over time, pupils have not achieved well in national examinations at the end of key stage 4. However, there are early signs of improvement, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, who often achieve closer to the national average. In addition, leaders have increased the number of pupils who move into education, employment or training when they leave school.

Leaders have strengthened their approach to identifying any gaps in pupils' literacy and numeracy knowledge. Pupils who are furthest behind now receive targeted support to help them to catch up. The school has a large proportion of pupils who speak very little English

when they join. Leaders' work to develop these pupils' spoken and written English is particularly effective. This helps them to take part in lessons more confidently.

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention 

Teaching is not consistently effective across the school. Some teachers do not use what they learn from checking pupils' understanding to inform their teaching. As a result, some gaps in pupils' knowledge are not swiftly addressed. At times, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to apply or deepen what they know, which limits how well they meet the ambitious aims of the curriculum. There is also variability in how well teachers support pupils who need additional help to access their learning.

Recently, leaders have prioritised strengthening the curriculum. The important knowledge pupils should learn in each subject has been identified and logically ordered. Leaders are well informed about the quality of teaching. They use this information to target professional development carefully to develop teachers' expertise. This is beginning to have a positive effect. Teachers, including those who are not subject specialists, are knowledgeable about the subjects that they teach. However, improvements in teaching are not embedded or consistent.

Pupils' prior achievement is typically lower than their peers nationally, and many pupils have gaps in their reading, writing and number knowledge. Leaders provide regular 'Mount mastery' sessions, which help pupils revisit and practise this essential learning. Pupils with the biggest gaps in this knowledge also benefit from additional support to help them to catch up. That said, some teachers do not reinforce this learning well enough through curriculum lessons, which slows the progress some pupils make.

Inclusion

Needs attention 

Leaders have not yet ensured that all pupils with additional needs receive consistently effective support. Staff do not always receive clear or useful information about how to reduce barriers to learning for some pupils. Training to help staff understand how best to support pupils with different needs is still underway, and not all staff have the knowledge that they need. As a result, support is variable. Barriers to learning are not reduced well enough for some pupils.

Although leaders have improved their processes for identifying pupils' needs, these improvements are not fully embedded. Leaders now recognise more quickly when pupils may need extra help, including by seeking advice from external professionals. Their work to support pupils who are new to speaking English is particularly effective. However, leaders have not had time to make all the improvements they intend.

Leaders have placed inclusion at the centre of their work. This is evident in how safe and cared for pupils feel, especially the high proportion who are disadvantaged or vulnerable. Leaders ensure that additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used to meet the school's priorities, including improving teaching. As part of their focus on inclusion, leaders have

reduced the number of pupils educated outside mainstream lessons. As a result, the use of alternative provision is now infrequent and only used in pupils' best interests.

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

Pupils are pleased with the changes that leaders have recently made. They appreciate that leaders' work to improve behaviour has helped to create calm and purposeful lessons. Pupils speak positively about what the school now offers, from their learning to the range of enrichment activities. Pupils know that they have to 'be in it to win it', and this motivates them to attend school regularly and engage in their education. Many pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities, such as becoming prefects or running the 'Cedar shop', where they exchange merits for small rewards. Pupils feel happy and safe in school.

Pupils are proud of the diversity in their school community. They value difference and show respect for one another. Bullying is rare and addressed quickly if it happens. A high proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language, including some who speak very little English when they arrive. These pupils are supported well to settle in, helping them to feel part of the school's friendly and harmonious community.

Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs and/or disabilities, have benefited from leaders' focus on inclusion. However, the support in place to reduce barriers to learning remains inconsistent. Some pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, receive effective support. Leaders' work to ensure that this is the case for all pupils is ongoing.

Leaders have strengthened the curriculum so that it is broad, ambitious and logically sequenced. Even so, variability in the quality of teaching means that pupils do not learn as well as they should across all subjects. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge and their achievement varies between subjects. This is reflected in pupils' achievement in national examinations, which is typically below the national average.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that improvements in teaching are embedded and applied consistently across the school, so that pupils learn and achieve well in every subject.
 - Leaders should ensure that staff use assessment information effectively so that teaching is informed by what pupils already know and can do, and build their knowledge securely over time.
 - Leaders should continue to strengthen staff expertise and ensure that they have useful information about pupils' needs, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, so that barriers to learning are reduced consistently well.
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About this inspection

This school is part of Bright Futures Educational 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), Lisa Fathers, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Robert Leggett.

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 designated safeguarding lead, during the inspection. Inspectors also spoke with a representative of the local authority, a group of trustees, the CEO and representatives of the local governing body.

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:

The school makes use of 3 registered alternative provisions.

A large number of new leaders and staff have joined the school since the last inspection. The current principal was appointed in April 2025.

Principal: Stephen Garvey

Lead inspector:

Sally Rix, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

David Roberts, Ofsted Inspector

Katy Robinson, Ofsted Inspector

Gil Bourgade, Ofsted Inspector

Paula Crawley, 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 27 January 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

820

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

900

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: 1,153

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

61.46%

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

3.17%

Close to 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

13.66%

Close to 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).

All pupils' performance

English and maths GCSE

Percentage of pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (provisional)	29.8%	45.2%	Below

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	22.7%	45.9%	Below
2022/23 (final)	22.7%	45.3%	Below

Attainment 8

A measure of pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (provisional)	37.0	45.9	Below
2023/24 (final)	35.0	45.9	Below
2022/23 (final)	35.8	46.3	Below

Progress 8

How much progress pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.71	-0.03	Below
2022/23 (final)	-0.34	-0.03	Below

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (provisional)	26.8%	25.6%	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	16.2%	25.8%	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	16.4%	25.2%	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (provisional)	33.1	34.9	Close to average
2023/24 (final)	32.8	34.6	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	33.1	35.0	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	-0.84	-0.57	Close to average
2022/23 (final)	-0.51	-0.57	Close to average

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils' English and maths GCSE grade 5 or above

Percentage of disadvantaged pupils who achieved grade 5 or above in English and maths GCSE.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (provisional)	26.8%	52.8%	-26.0 pp
2023/24 (final)	16.2%	53.1%	-37.0 pp
2022/23 (final)	16.4%	52.4%	-36.1 pp

Disadvantaged pupils' Attainment 8

A measure of disadvantaged pupils' point scores across 8 subjects including maths (double weighted), English (double weighted if both language and literature are taken), 3 EBacc measures and 3 GCSE or technical measures.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (provisional)	33.1	50.3	-17.2
2023/24 (final)	32.8	50.0	-17.3
2022/23 (final)	33.1	50.3	-17.2

Disadvantaged pupils' Progress 8

How much progress disadvantaged pupils made between the end of primary school (key stage 2) and the end of secondary school (key stage 4), compared to pupils across England who got similar results at the end of key stage 2.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2023/24 (final)	-0.84	0.16	-1.00

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2022/23 (final)	-0.51	0.17	-0.68

Destinations after 16

Destinations after 16

Percentage of pupils staying in education or employment for at least 2 terms after the end of secondary school (key stage 4).

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023 leavers (provisional)	85%	91%	Below
2022 leavers (revised)	83%	93%	Below
2021 leavers (revised)	85%	94%	Below

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 (2 term)	9.1%	8.1%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	8.9%	8.9%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	8.4%	9.0%	Close to average

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 (2 term)	22.9%	21.9%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	24.8%	25.6%	Close to average
2022/23 (3 term)	23.2%	26.5%	Close to average

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.

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