Inspection of Q3 Academy Tipton

Alexandra Road, Tipton, West Midlands DY4 7NR

Inspection dates:	29 and 30 April 2025
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Sixth-form provision	**Good**
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Adam Slack. This school is part of the Mercian 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), Dan Parkes, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Kevin Davis. There is also an executive director of education, Lois Kelly, who is responsible for this school and eight others.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and sixth-form students enjoy coming to this school. They value the improvements that have taken place over the last two years. Pupils routinely behave with respect and consideration for staff and each other. They are confident that every member of staff will take action if behaviour does not meet the high standard expected. Pupils say this is now a place where they feel safe, supported and heard.

Expectations are high for every pupil and sixth-form student, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils are becoming motivated and resilient learners who show pride in their achievements. Importantly, pupils say that they now enjoy their learning. However, published outcomes at the end of Year 11 and Year 13 do not reflect these more recent positive changes.

There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their interests and talents. They become involved in a wide range of clubs, projects and sporting activities. The recently established pupil parliament has provided them with a real sense of being able to make a difference to their school. It has given them confidence that their voices are important to school leaders.

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

The school is committed to improving outcomes for all pupils. Improvements made to the curriculum and to teaching and learning are starting to have a positive impact. There is an ambitious, coherent and carefully sequenced curriculum in all subjects. This takes the needs of pupils, including those with SEND, into account. Carefully considered strategies and routines which support the delivery of lessons are valued by pupils and have made learning accessible to all. These are consistent across the school. Current pupils, including those in the sixth form, are now achieving more positively than previous published outcomes would indicate.

The school has put in place systems for checking pupils' learning and understanding. This ensures that they are building on their prior knowledge securely. Staff are very positive about the impact of these on pupils' motivation. However, implementation is not consistent across the school. In some lessons, opportunities to revisit learning or secure pupils' knowledge are missed.

The school has worked at pace to improve the identification of needs for pupils with SEND. There are now clear referral routes in place. Processes to investigate, diagnose and support are understood by all. Strategies to support pupils are shared with teachers. However, the confidence and expertise to implement these strategies by adapting teaching activities are not consistent across the school.

Reading is at the heart of the whole curriculum, from Year 7 through to Year 13. Those who may struggle with aspects of reading are quickly identified. Carefully targeted support is put in place and regularly reviewed. Consequently, pupils make rapid progress.

The school promotes a love of reading through the many ways in which it is woven into the wider curriculum.

Staff apply the school's behaviour policy consistently. Pupils appreciate the calm and purposeful environment this creates. They value the rewards they can earn for positive behaviours, as well as the impact that good behaviour has on their own learning.

Pupils attend well. Attendance is a high priority in the school. Leaders are rigorous in identifying if particular groups of pupils are attending less well. They take effective action.

Personal development is a priority in the school. Pupils and students are very positive about their learning in personal, social, health and economic lessons. More widely, leaders carefully consider the activities, projects and initiatives that will offer pupils the best opportunities to broaden their experiences and develop their cultural understanding. Pupils learn to respect the beliefs and values of others in innovative ways. Leadership roles, such as champions for each protected characteristic, support pupils to recognise and celebrate diversity.

Careers guidance is very well designed. Pupils are introduced to a range of options from Year 7 onwards. Every year group has dedicated career-focused time built into the curriculum. This continues into the sixth form and beyond if students need further support once they have left the school.

Leaders are driven by a commitment to provide the best they can for their pupils. The improvements made in a short space of time are a testament to that drive. The majority of staff feel that workload is taken into account and that their well-being is demonstrably important to leaders.

Those responsible for governance ensure that their statutory duties are met. Clear systems are in place to enable accountability and challenge. School leaders, trust leaders and the local governing body work together well. They effectively communicate with parents and carers and the wider community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, the significant improvements made to identify pupils' needs quickly and accurately are not applied consistently across subjects. Therefore, pupils are not supported in their learning as well as they could be in some lessons. The school should ensure that staff have the knowledge and confidence to adapt learning activities successfully to meet the needs of pupils.

- The school's processes for checking what pupils have learned at the end of each lesson are not followed consistently by all teachers. This means sometimes pupils who have missed a lesson or who have not understood what has been taught do not get the help they need quickly enough. The school should ensure that the systems put in place for this purpose are used consistently.

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	146383
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10344151
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,587
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	103
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Kevin Davis
CEO of the trust	Dan Parkes
Headteacher	Adam Slack
Website	www.q3tipton.org.uk/
Dates of previous inspection	6 and 7 December 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, a new headteacher and new deputy headteachers have been appointed. The headteacher has been in position since January 2023.
- The school uses five registered alternative provisions.
- The school uses three unregistered alternative provisions.
- 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.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. 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.

- 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 met with the headteacher, deputy headteachers and other senior leaders in the school. The lead inspector also met with the CEO, the chair of the board of trustees and two other trustees, the executive director of education and the chair of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, history, design and technology and art. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also visited a sample of alternative provisions used by the school.
- Inspectors reviewed the personal, social and health education curriculum provision, spoke with the curriculum leaders and visited tutor time.
- Inspectors also reviewed the support provided for pupils at the early stages of reading.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised, including leaders' plans to improve the school and their self-evaluation of the school's work.
- 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.

Inspection team

Mel Ford, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
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Sarah Steer	Ofsted Inspector
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His Majesty's Inspector

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