



**EDUCATIONAL OVERSIGHT INSPECTION OF PRIVATE FURTHER  
EDUCATION COLLEGES AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE SCHOOLS**

**MONITORING VISIT**

**MC ACADEMY**

**(FORMERLY MANCHESTER CENTRAL SCHOOL OF ENGLISH)**

**(Company registration no. – 08392893)**

Full Name **MC Academy (formerly Manchester Central School of English)**

Address 21–23 Oldham Street, Second Floor, Manchester M1 1JG

Company Name MC Academic Limited

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Website www.themcacademy.co.uk

CEO and Founder Mr Abdul Majid Abufares

Proprietor Mr Abdul Majid Abufares

Age Range 10+

Total number of students 65

Numbers by age and type of study 16–18: 07

18+: 58

EFL only: 65

Inspection date **27 August 2024**

## PREFACE

This inspection report follows the Framework for Educational Oversight Monitoring Visits and Extended Monitoring Visits of private further education colleges and English language schools. The focus of the visit is to confirm that the quality standards reported at the last full inspection are being maintained.

The ISI is an approved Educational Oversight body authorised by the Home Office to inspect privately funded further education colleges and English language schools in England and Wales offering courses on the Qualifications and Credit Framework. It is designed to improve the quality of education on offer to international students who attend UK colleges through student visas.

ISI inspections are required to:

- Report on the extent to which colleges comply with the published Educational Oversight Standards;
- Assess and report on the quality of educational outcomes and provision;
- Where applicable, make recommendations outside the scope of the Standards to support continued improvement of quality.

Inspection provides objective and reliable reports on the quality of colleges and, by placing reports in the public domain, makes this information available to students, Government and the wider community. Inspection takes account of the context of each individual college, and of how it evaluates its own performance and demonstrates its success.

The inspection of the college is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, though inspectors will comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on students. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit;
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the college, its services or other physical features;
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the college or its accounting procedures;
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the college's compliance with employment law.

A monitoring visit is for those colleges found at the last inspection to have met or exceeded the Standards for Educational Oversight. Inspectors will make judgements on progress against any action points and recommendations made at that time. The inspection will not examine all other Standards in detail but will sample to confirm that previous Standards have been maintained and that there are no contrary indicators to those quality judgements.

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## 1. CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTEXT

- 1.1 MC Academy is an English language school established in 2005. In 2019, it changed its name from Manchester Central School of English to MC Academy. The academy is located in the centre of Manchester and moved to its current location in December 2023. In February 2024, the academy opened a new school in the centre of Liverpool. However, this school did not form part of this inspection and is not covered by ISI Educational Oversight for Home Office purposes.
- 1.2 Governance is provided by the sole director, who is also the principal. He is supported by a small senior management team, which includes the executive director, a director of studies and an administration manager. The language school aims to motivate, support and guide students by providing the best possible language education in a stimulating and supportive environment.
- 1.3 MC Academy offers a range of general English courses at different levels. The school also offers more specialist courses to students over the age of 16 years, for example English for academic purposes, business English and pre-sessional programmes. The school offers examination preparation classes for the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), Cambridge English qualifications, and the Occupational English Test (OET), along with the Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CELTA) programme.
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection, 65 students were enrolled. The large majority are over the age of 18 and male. The majority of students come from the Middle East and all speak English as an additional language. No students are currently enrolled on Student visas for Home Office purposes or have been identified with learning difficulties or disabilities.
- 1.5 English courses and examination preparation classes last for different lengths of time and students may enrol for them on a weekly basis. The CELTA programme is offered at specific times of the year and has published entry requirements. In the summer, closed groups of students from the age of 10 years are accepted.
- 1.6 The school was previously inspected on 8 August 2023, when it met all Key Standards and the quality of education was judged to meet expectations. The recommendation from the previous report:
  - Systematically analyse performance data to accurately prioritise actions which further improve the quality of provision.

## 2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 **The school meets expectations.** At the previous inspection on 8 August 2023, the school was found to meet expectations and the quality of education as judged at that time has been maintained.
- 2.2 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is good. The school has clear educational aims, with well-defined objectives and a well-planned curriculum. Initial assessment prior to, and on arrival, is excellent. Students are given a comprehensive placement test, followed by a one-to-one speaking placement test, before their class allocation is finalised. This information is shared with teachers to inform planning, and to ensure students are placed on suitable courses, allowing them to make good progress. The suitability of course provision and curriculum is good. Courses are well organised, flexible and are effective in meeting the English language needs of the students. English language courses are aligned to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Courses on offer to students on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance. Teaching and its impact on learning is good. Teachers are well qualified and have comprehensive subject knowledge. They use a wide range of effective teaching methods to ensure that students are engaged, build new knowledge and effectively develop their English language skills. As a result, students make good progress in class and achievement rates are high.
- 2.3 Arrangements to support students' welfare, including health and safety, are good. Health and safety are well managed, with any identified issues quickly addressed. The premises are fit for purpose, well maintained and of a good quality, providing a safe and secure learning environment. Classrooms well equipped and furnished to a good standard. A wide range of appropriate policies and procedures effectively reduce the risks from fire and other hazards and ensure good levels of health and safety are maintained. Fire precautions, drills and evacuations are systematically undertaken and are clearly understood by all students and staff. Student registration and attendance records are accurate. They are well managed, and staff are highly effective in monitoring attendance and taking any necessary action. Procedures for reporting to the Home Office are highly secure and fully understood by relevant staff. However, there are no such students currently enrolled. Pastoral support and guidance for the students is excellent and in accordance with the schools aims. Students report that they feel safe at the school and very well supported. Arrangements for the safeguarding of students under the age of 18 years are good, fully implemented and reflect official guidance.
- 2.4 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is good. The proprietor and senior management team provide effective oversight of all aspects of the school's work and discharges their responsibilities well for financial planning and investment in the future. As a result, they have been effective at ensuring that good levels of education, welfare, and health and safety are maintained. A clear vision for the school is shared by all staff, who work very well together for the good of the students. A detailed management structure, with well-defined roles and responsibilities, ensures

that the school is well run and meets all its legal obligations. Procedures for the recruitment of staff in accordance with legal requirements, with all appropriate checks undertaken. As a result, all required employment and suitability checks are completed on staff before their employment is confirmed.

### **3. THE QUALITY OF THE CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENTS**

- 3.1 The quality of the curriculum, teaching and learners' achievements is good. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 3.2 Initial assessment prior to, and on arrival, is excellent. Students are given a comprehensive placement test, followed by a one-to-one speaking placement test, before their class allocation is finalised. This information is shared with teachers to inform planning, and to ensure students are placed on suitable courses. The process is accurate and ensures that students are placed on the most appropriate programme of study in accordance with their English language skills and level. As a result, students make good progress and report that they are highly satisfied with their course.
- 3.3 The suitability of course provision and curriculum is good. The school has clear educational aims and objectives and a well-planned curriculum. Courses are well organised, flexible and are highly effective in meeting the English language needs of the students. English language courses are aligned to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Programmes of study on offer to students on Student visas meet the definition of an approved qualification, as set out in the Home Office guidance. The school ensures that students enrolled on Student visas are studying at an appropriate level on an approved full-time programme which includes at least 15 hours a week of classroom-based, weekday daytime study. However, there are no such students currently enrolled.
- 3.4 Teaching and its impact on learning is good. Teachers are well qualified and have good subject knowledge. They plan lessons well and use a good range of effective teaching methods to ensure that students are engaged, build new knowledge and effectively develop their English language skills. Teachers ask searching questions that prompt students to think and respond successfully. Students work well individually and in small groups, showing good co-operative learning and independence. Classroom resources are of a good quality, quantity and range and are used effectively by teachers to support learning. As a result, students make good progress in class and achievement rates are high.
- 3.5 Teaching is inclusive and effectively promotes fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. It encourages respect for other people including those with the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.



#### **4. STUDENTS' WELFARE, INCLUDING HEALTH AND SAFETY**

- 4.1 Students' welfare, including health and safety, is good. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 4.2 Health, safety and security of premises are good. It is well managed, with any identified issues quickly addressed. The premises are fit for purpose, well maintained and of a good quality. Classrooms are clean, with good lighting, heating, sound insulation and ventilation. They are well equipped and furnished to a good standard. As a result, they provide a comfortable, safe and secure learning environment.
- 4.3 Health and safety, first aid and fire safety policies and procedures are detailed and effectively implemented. All necessary measures to reduce the risk of fire and other hazards have been taken. Fire precautions, drills and evacuations are systematically undertaken and are clearly understood by all students and staff. An appropriate number of fire marshals and staff trained in first aid are in place, with full details available on noticeboards throughout the school, including in each classroom. Free drinking water is readily available throughout the school.
- 4.4 Systems for recording registration and attendance are good. Admission procedures are detailed and ensure that accurate admission registers and records are maintained. Electronic student files are accurately maintained and provide a clear record of checks on identification, previous academic experience, and visa status. Attendance records are accurate and daily attendance is closely monitored. Procedures for reporting to the Home Office are highly secure and fully understood by relevant staff. However, there are no such students currently enrolled.
- 4.5 Pastoral support for students is excellent. On arrival students receive a comprehensive and effective induction which includes detailed information about their studies, the school and health and safety and welfare arrangements. As a result, they know who to go to if they have a problem and settle quickly in their course, the school and the local area. Students' report that any educational support needs are met quickly and any personal issues discussed. Relationships between staff and students, and amongst the students themselves, are excellent. A wide range of policies and procedures reinforce a culture of mutual respect, integration and tolerance and the expectations of appropriate behaviour and conduct.
- 4.6 Safeguarding arrangements for students under the age of 18 are good. Arrangements have proper regard to official guidance and the implementation of safeguarding and recruitment strategies are appropriately checked and regularly reviewed by senior managers. There are two designated child protection officers in place who are trained to the required level. All staff that have access to students under the age of 18 are subject to an appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) suitability check prior to or on appointment. Staff teaching students under 18 years undergo basic safeguarding training at the start of their employment. However, arrangements to provide subsequent updates to their training are informal.

## **5. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

- 5.1 The effectiveness of governance, leadership and management is good. All Key Standards continue to be met.
- 5.2 The recommendation in this area from the previous inspection report is:
- Systematically analyse performance data to accurately prioritise actions which further improve the quality of provision.
- 5.3 Satisfactory progress has been made against the recommendation. A range of performance data is reviewed and analysed by senior managers to inform self-evaluation and to identify and prioritise actions which will further improve the quality of the provision.
- 5.4 The proprietor and the senior management team provide comprehensive oversight of all aspects of the school's work and discharge their responsibilities well for financial planning and investment in the future. Consequently, they have been effective in ensuring that good levels of education, welfare, and health and safety are maintained. A clear vision for the future development of the school is in place and is shared by all staff, who work very well together for the good of the students. Relationships between the proprietor, managers and staff are excellent.
- 5.5 The quality of leadership and management is good. A detailed and appropriate management structure is in place and understood by staff. As a result, roles and responsibilities are clear, ensuring that the school is well run and meets all its legal obligations. Policies and procedures are well defined, appropriate and regularly reviewed by senior managers.
- 5.6 Procedures for the recruitment of staff are good, in accordance with legal requirements, with all appropriate checks undertaken. As a result, all required employment and suitability checks are completed on staff before their employment is confirmed.
- 5.7 The provision of information is good. The school's website is clear and user-friendly. Prospective students can access accurate and relevant information to inform their study choices. The school was highly responsive in providing information for the inspection in a timely manner.

## 5. ACTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The school has maintained the good quality found at the last inspection.

### **Recommendations for further improvement**

In order to further improve the good quality provided, the school should:

- Formalise the arrangements to update staff safeguarding training, including set timeframes.

## INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons and conducted formal interviews with staff and students. They held discussions with senior members of staff and attended registration sessions. The responses of staff and students to confidential pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

### Inspectors

Dr Nigel Chambers	Lead Inspector
Mr Benjamin Llewelyn	Team Inspector