

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



27 September 2017

Ms Victoria Boomer-Clark
Executive Principal
Oasis Academy John Williams
Petherton Road
Hengrove
Bristol
BS14 9BU

Dear Ms Boomer-Clark

Short inspection of Oasis Academy John Williams

Following my visit to the school on 19 September 2017 with Stuart Wilson, Ofsted Inspector, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in January 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

You continue to lead the school with an undiminished commitment to securing the best possible education for the pupils. When you talk about the school and the journey of improvement it has been on, your passion and determination to improve the life chances of the children in the community you serve shine through. This outlook is shared by all who work at the school.

You are very clear about the school's successes and also about the areas it still needs to work on. You and the senior leaders, who ably support you, have a commitment to honest self-evaluation and this provides a secure foundation for further improvement. Since the previous inspection, the school has continued to move forward. The teaching for the most able pupils, for example, has improved, but you are also aware that there is further work to do in this area.

Other important changes have occurred since the last inspection. The school took the decision to close its sixth form in 2016 and now has no post-16 provision. Over time, the prior attainment of pupils entering Year 7 has changed. This has brought the average prior attainment closer to the national average in the lower years, although Years 10 and 11 still have significantly lower prior attainment.

Oasis Community Learning, the multi-academy trust of which the school is a

member, exercises the statutory role of governance through the person of its regional director for the south west. He has a strong understanding of the school and provides a good balance of challenge and support to the school. In this, he is helped by the academy council, which plays an important part in linking with the local community and promoting the ethos of Oasis Community Learning. Overall, therefore, governance is secure.

Oasis Academy John Williams is a happy school. Pupils are polite and conduct themselves very well both in and outside lessons. Attitudes to learning are positive and pupils want to do well. The strong relationships between staff and pupils provide the bedrock on which pupils can build success. The responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, indicate that parents are happy with the education and care their children receive.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed and of high quality. Indeed, the culture of safeguarding in the school is highly developed. The designated safeguarding lead has a very good understanding of her role and of the particular safeguarding issues that are relevant to the local community. The key message that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility is clearly articulated across the school and well-established systems are in place to refer, record and respond to any concerns staff raise. This ensures that a culture of vigilance is in place. The vast majority of parents, when surveyed, agree that their child is safe at the school.

Inspection findings

- In our discussion at the start of the day, you identified that the school regards the programme of training and support for new and recently qualified teachers and more established staff as a strength of the school. We agreed that this should be a key line of enquiry. Newly qualified teachers (NQTs) feel very well supported by the school. There is a comprehensive programme of support, including subject-specific mentoring and support from senior leaders. Regular sessions for all NQTs together allow them to develop their understanding of teaching and learning. These meetings also provide a useful forum in which they can discuss and reflect on their teaching and learn from each other.
- For more established staff, training is also good. In particular, senior leaders are quick to identify talent and to develop it. Many of the middle leaders in the school have reached their current positions as a consequence. Taken overall, therefore, school leaders are right to consider the way staff are trained and developed as a strength of the school.

- A second line of enquiry concerned the extent to which teachers pitched the work they set pupils at the right level, particularly for the most able. This was an area for development identified at the previous inspection in 2013. Teachers' planning indicates that they identify the most able pupils and take their needs into account when setting appropriate work. In discussion, the most able pupils can give examples of the ways in which they are challenged in individual lessons and particular subjects. The extent of challenge across all subjects and year groups is a little inconsistent, however, and there is not yet a coordinated approach to teaching the most able across the whole school. One indicator of this is that the results of the 2017 GCSE examinations show some substantial variations in the proportion of pupils achieving the higher grades. For example, three times as many pupils received at least a grade 7 in mathematics compared with those who did in English language.
- The inspection's third line of enquiry looked at the performance of disadvantaged pupils. Historically, disadvantaged pupils have made good progress overall and in the core subjects of English and mathematics, as have all pupils. Progress for disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, has tended to be weaker in science, humanities (notably history) and Spanish, key subjects in relation to the English Baccalaureate (EBacc).
- Where teaching is strong, disadvantaged pupils make progress in line with that of other pupils and this progress compares favourably with that of other pupils nationally. Where teaching is less strong, the two groups again make similar progress but it compares less favourably with the national average. Observations in lessons support this conclusion and the key challenge for the school is to ensure that the overall good progress that disadvantaged pupils make is reflected more consistently in each subject. In addition, too many disadvantaged pupils are persistently absent and are thus not taking full advantage of the educational opportunities the school offers.
- The final line of enquiry investigated whether the curriculum meets the needs of the pupils. School leaders have reacted well to address the pattern of variation in outcomes across subjects. The curriculum has been redesigned and pupils make their option choices earlier. One effect of this is that larger numbers of younger pupils are choosing subjects that will make them eligible for the EBacc (although in the current Year 11 the figure is very low).
- There is now greater emphasis in the curriculum on mastery and pupils developing a secure knowledge base from which to use their skills. This aspect of the curriculum redesign is in its early days but its impact is already seen in, for example, the approach taken in Year 7 to the study of 'Oliver Twist' in its wider social context. Overall, the curriculum of the school remains broad and balanced and it meets the needs of pupils.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- a coordinated approach to teaching the most able is developed across the school

- outcomes in science, history and Spanish improve, especially for disadvantaged pupils
- the rate of persistent absence for disadvantaged pupils reduces.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, the chief executive officer of the multi academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for the City of Bristol. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Lee
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

At the start of the day, we met to discuss the school's self-evaluation and to draw up the key lines of enquiry that would be followed up during the remainder of the inspection. Inspectors visited lessons, during which they looked at pupils' work and talked to them about their learning. In addition, one inspector talked more formally to a group of pupils. Inspectors met with you, your senior leadership team and other staff to discuss aspects of the school's work. The lead inspector met with the regional director of Oasis Community Learning and the chair of the academy council. Inspectors took into account the results of the electronic surveys of parents, pupils and staff when making their judgements.