

# Oakwood Academy

Chatsworth Road, Eccles, Lancashire, M30 9DY

**Inspection dates** 16–17 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Determined and skilled strategic leadership by the governors ensures that the provision made for all pupils goes from strength to strength.
- Staff are wholly committed to improvement and this is reflected in the outstanding teaching across the academy.
- No teaching is less than good and this high degree of consistency is sustained by supportive monitoring by the academy's senior leaders.
- The contribution of teaching assistants is excellent but they are not always deployed to maximum effect.
- Not all marking in all subjects is at the standard of the very best.
- Progress made by pupils of all abilities is outstanding because teachers plan lessons precisely tailored to their learning needs. As a result, no pupil leaves without a qualification.
- A majority of pupils leave the academy with a good range of passes at GCSE level, including in English and mathematics.
- Pupils of all ages make a huge contribution to their own excellent progress because of their exemplary attitudes and behaviour.
- The vast majority of pupils attend the academy whenever they can.
- The safety of pupils is outstanding because of the rigorous and robust application of all the statutory requirements, allied with the outstanding levels of care provided by staff.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is promoted exceptionally well in and out of lessons. The curriculum is outstanding.
- Partnerships with parents, other schools and agencies are outstanding.
- The inspirational headteacher leads an outstanding team who motivates all staff, as reflected in the very high morale. The governing body is exceptionally well led by the Chair and vice-chair. They challenge academy leaders and have an excellent understanding of the academy's performance.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in 21 lessons and senior leaders were included in nine of these observations.
- The inspectors scrutinised pupils' work, listened to them read and talked to them about their work.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, academy leaders and staff, and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors could not take account of the responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, because, at less than ten, there were too few to register. They talked to several parents in person and on the telephone. They also received the outcomes of the academy's own recent survey of its parents.
- Questionnaires completed by 61 members of staff were analysed.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation including those about: safeguarding policies and practices, information about the progress pupils make, the academy's view of its performance, information about pupils' attendance and behaviour and about the targets set for teachers to improve their work, and how they are rewarded.

## Inspection team

Henry Moreton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Christine Potter

Additional Inspector

John Ellwood

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The academy makes provision for pupils with a range of complex learning difficulties.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- The vast majority of the academy's pupils are White British.
- The academy receives the pupil premium, which is additional government funding, for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those who are looked after by the local authority. A high proportion of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. A few are in the care of the local authority. There are no children from service families on roll.
- The academy has Arts, Technology and Sports Specialist status.
- Oakwood Academy converted to become an academy school on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2012. When the predecessor school, Oakwood High School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding. The academy will provide for sixth formers from September 2013.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure the teaching assistants are deployed even more effectively so that the impact of their excellent work is better targeted.
- Make sure the overall excellent quality of marking is sustained by all teachers in all subjects.

## Inspection judgements

### **The achievement of pupils** is outstanding

- The attainment of pupils on entry to the academy is low. All make rapid progress because of the outstanding teaching and high quality levels of care they receive.
- The academy's outstanding promotion of equality of opportunity ensures there are no differences in outcomes between girls and boys or those from different ethnicities.
- Pupils of all abilities make outstanding progress in their reading, writing and mathematics. The progress they make in speaking and listening, and their social development, is also outstanding.
- Pupils with additional needs, such as in their behaviour and in their emotional and social development, make outstanding progress. The academy is free of barriers and pupils with physical difficulties also make outstanding progress.
- Pupil premium funding is used very well to ensure those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those in the care of the local authority make excellent progress, in line with others. It is used to pay for targeted support to improve reading and for hand-held computers to support learning generally. It is also used to pay for vocational training to ensure pupils of all abilities are very well prepared for life outside the academy.
- Pupils' communication skills are improved exceptionally well because the staff have the highest expectations of them, simply not accepting anything other than their best. The handwriting and spelling of the more able pupils, in particular, reflects outstanding progress from their starting points. All pupils listen to instructions very well. They enjoy contributing to discussions and are keen to offer their viewpoints.
- Pupils of all abilities make excellent progress in developing reading skills because of the one to one and small group support they receive. There is a strong focus on phonics (the letters and the sounds they make) and this alongside the regular use of the well-resourced library means that pupils enjoy reading.
- The teaching of mathematics ensures that pupils have many opportunities to develop their understanding of the ordering of numbers and their use. This makes a major contribution to the development of pupils' independence and preparation for the next stages of their lives.
- Virtually all parents are appreciative of how the school works with them and their children. One parent commented about the, 'wonderful levels of support in a holistic manner'.
- This approach is well reflected by the academy's curriculum which is rich and vibrant. Art, technology and physical education are particularly strong features. The extensive range of visits and visitors exposes pupils to many social and cultural experiences.

### **The quality of teaching** is outstanding

- Teaching and learning is at least good throughout the academy. Often it is outstanding. This is because the governors and leaders have set a first class tone and direction. As a result and without exception, all teachers are highly committed. The inspectors found that all teachers were very keen to know how they could improve even where outstanding teaching had been observed.
- The high quality teaching has come about because of the rigorous monitoring and the targeted provision of training to all staff. The excellent links with other schools broadens horizons. Several teachers take part in moderation work with other schools to ensure their own assessments are accurate, while others teach elsewhere furthering their skills and subject knowledge.
- Assessment of pupils' starting points and ongoing progress is exceptional. This is because the academy leaders are innovative, unwilling to accept second best and take expert external advice. As a result, they have ensured the progress of each pupil is measured accurately and regularly, and benchmarked against national standards. This reflects high aspirations.
- Pupils are made aware of how to improve their work, but some of the daily marking falls a little

short of the very best in all subjects.

- Staff are excellent role models. They use a wide range of strategies, including the excellent use of information and communication technology, to ensure pupils are fully involved in their own learning.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to develop their independence but sometimes, largely because of their enthusiasm and eagerness to learn, they get help when it is not needed.
- Communication skills, literacy and numeracy are taught very effectively in all subjects in all years. In an outstanding lesson, the focussed tasks set for pupils embraced the key skills of listening, reading and speaking. In another, pupils retrieved information from 'Macbeth' showing their understanding of the meaning of words such as, 'virtuous' and 'benevolent'.
- Learning in all lessons is at a brisk pace and expectations for pupils' outcomes are high. This is exemplified by the range and levels of the passes at GCSE achieved by most leavers by the time they are 16.
- Members of the school council told an inspector they find lessons, 'fun and interesting because there are lots of chances to make and do things'. This is illustrated by the exceptional quality of display work around the academy which shows the exceptionally wide range of activities the pupils engage in.
- The academy ensures pupils receive high quality support from a wide range of specialists. These include speech and physical therapies.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- The pupils are universally positive about the academy. Although the online survey, Parent View, at the time of the inspection did not have enough registered views, all the other evidence shows that parents are of the same positive opinion.
- The training provided to staff ensures they have the skills to manage challenging behaviour linked to pupils' additional learning needs. Incidents of bad behaviour are rare and are expertly dealt with.
- Incidents of bullying are also rare because pupils are taught about what is, and what is not, acceptable. They know the different types of bullying. The academy places great emphasis on teaching pupils about the potential dangers of internet and mobile telephone use. The academy's governors take a leading role in this, always alert to keeping pupils safe.
- Relationships throughout the academy are first class. All staff are firm and fair, and tolerate no nonsense. Class routines are well embedded and pupils respond very positively to the rewards for good progress and behaviour.
- Risk assessments are fully in place and pupils take increasing responsibility for their own well-being as they get older.
- Pupils enjoy coming to the academy and this is reflected in their outstanding attendance. If they can, by and large, they attend.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceedingly well as a result of an exciting curriculum. Every Friday all pupils take part in enrichment activities with their peers, fostering cooperation. The academy has a range of specialist facilities including for art, dance, music and sport ensuring pupils' interests are stimulated.
- Pupils enjoy many opportunities to work with their peers in mainstream school and to extend their personal development through a range of trips, including to the theatre and local businesses. International links are particularly effective, as is the opportunity to learn Mandarin.

### **The leadership and management** are outstanding

- The headteacher has created an exemplary climate for learning. She inspires loyalty which is characterised by the number of positive comments in the staff questionnaires returned in confidence to the inspectors. Typical comments are, 'I have never experienced such a well run,

driven, aspiring organisation and I am extremely proud to work here'; another, 'I have been offered numerous courses and supported by leaders at all levels'; and another, 'I have been given opportunities that I wouldn't necessarily have in other schools as they believe in people here, and in trying new things'.

- The headteacher is very ably supported by a team of dedicated leaders, all of whom share the same goals and aspirations. They complement each other well, each able to contribute their particular interests and expertise. Their sole motivation is school improvement, and their key strength is teamwork
- The academy has a completely accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses. Planning is strategic and is underpinned by the drive for continual improvement.
- Academy leaders and the inspectors were in full agreement in all of the lessons they jointly observed, and in the areas for development in those lessons. These include the deployment of teaching assistants and the need to ensure consistent high quality marking.
- The performance of teachers is checked regularly and excellent professional training for staff at all levels ensures outstanding capacity for further improvement.
- The curriculum is outstanding and pupils of all abilities are prepared exceptionally well for the next stage of their lives.
- The local authority has a light touch approach for this outstanding and very highly regarded academy.

■ **The governance of the school:**

-The governing body makes an outstanding contribution to school leadership. It is expertly led and recent appointees bring a wealth of expertise to complement those that exist. Governors have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching. They ensure there is a close link between teachers' performance and their pay. Governors know how the pupil premium is spent and check regularly about how effectively it is being used. They are forward thinking driving through some key developments, including the move to academy status last year and the provision for sixth formers which is shortly to commence. Governors do not hesitate to take difficult decisions in the interests of the academy and its pupils. They do not settle for less than the best. For example, they sanctioned an overview of how academy leaders manage data which has led to significant improvement. They are supported in this by an external consultant who provides high quality advice. Governors receive regular training and ensure that safeguarding requirements are met.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138130
<b>Local authority</b>	Salford
<b>Inspection number</b>	408586

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Academy special
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	181
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Laurence Cooper
<b>Headteacher</b>	Amanda Nicholson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 921 2888
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