

# Oasis Academy Brightstowe

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	135671
<b>Local Authority</b>	N/A
<b>Inspection number</b>	364407
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 May 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mary Massey HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Academy
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	512
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Murphy
<b>Principal</b>	Matthew Butler
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Penpole Lane Shirehampton, Bristol BS11 0EB
<b>Telephone number</b>	0117 353 2600
<b>Fax number</b>	0117 353 2601
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:lisa.quinn@oasisbrightstowe.org">lisa.quinn@oasisbrightstowe.org</a>

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. They observed 26 lessons taught by 25 teachers, and held meetings with staff, groups of students and a representative of the academy's sponsor. A telephone call was made to the Chair of the Academy Council. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at the academy's planning and monitoring documentation, minutes of meetings and responses to questionnaires from 149 students, 31 staff and 25 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the academy's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Has the improvement in the rate of progress evident from GCSE results in 2010 been sustained for current students, especially in mathematics and English?
- How effective is the current Year 7 curriculum in ensuring progress for students of all abilities?
- How well is the academy using assessment data to secure improvement for all groups?
- How effective are the academy's systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, identifying priorities and then planning for improvement?

## Information about the school

Oasis Academy Brightstowe opened in September 2008 and has specialist status in mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). The academy roll is rising, with higher numbers of students in Years 7 and 8 than in other years. The predecessor school had already moved into a new building in January 2006. The building is shared with the Kingsweston Centre, which is not linked to the academy. This centre offers provision for 43 students with autistic spectrum disorder.

The academy is sponsored by Oasis Community Learning, which operates a community office from the building. A new principal was appointed for the start of this academic year, following the retirement of the previous post holder. At the same time the senior leadership team was reorganised and some new appointments were made. The academy's governing body is known as the academy council.

The vast majority of students are White British and very few speak English as an additional language, although the number is rising. About a third of all students have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, and these students have a wide range of different needs. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is about twice that found nationally.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

The rapid pace of improvement at the academy since it opened is clear from students' rising achievement and improving behaviour, attitudes and attendance. The success of the academy's leaders in generating the drive and ambition to improve outcomes for students is outstanding. In a very short time, the new principal and the rest of the largely new leadership team have created a sense of shared purpose and direction throughout the whole academy community, with a relentless ambition to ensure that students have the best possible opportunities for the future. Teachers can see the benefits of the changes and, as a result, they subscribe to the vision, so the atmosphere is very cooperative and morale is high. Expectations of students and staff are both very clear and everyone knows what is expected of them.

As their main priorities, the academy's leaders have focused on improving the quality of teaching and creating a positive culture for learning. Teaching is now securely good and shows a clear correlation with the amount of progress that students make both in lessons and over longer periods of time. Although GCSE results in 2010 were low, the progress that students made from their starting points was good, and in some cases outstanding. The rate at which students in all year groups make progress is accelerating and is now good, because the quality of teaching has improved so substantially. As a result, attainment across the academy, as seen from the academy's own data and from lesson observations, is now average. GCSE results in 2011 are predicted to be close to and, for some measures, above the national average. Progress for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good, because their needs are clearly recognised in lessons and the interventions provided to support individuals are tailored to their needs. Teaching assistants provide high-quality support, especially for students who are at the early stages of learning English.

The proportion of outstanding teaching has increased over the last year and the skills of the practitioners who deliver it have been used to provide coaching and training for others. In all lessons seen during the inspection, students were clear about what they were expected to learn, knew what their targets were and monitored their own progress. In the best lessons, because there is an absolute focus on how well students are learning, the work provided is challenging, interesting and stimulating, with activities extremely well-matched to the needs of individuals, including those who are more-able. However, this is not the case in all lessons. In addition, in some lessons, the amount of time the teacher spends talking is too long, and students do not have enough opportunity to work independently for extended periods. Teachers do not all have the confidence to use assessment from marking, or from observation of students during the lesson, to adapt their lesson plans so they can respond quickly to misunderstandings. Across the academy, homework is not consistently provided or used effectively to support learning in the classroom.

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The confidence that the academy's leaders and staff have in students is demonstrated through the very positive way in which expectations are made clear, and the personal interest staff take in every individual. As a result, students are increasingly self-confident, loyal and proud to be at the academy. Their attendance has improved to broadly average and the proportion of persistent absentees has reduced. The constructive way in which behaviour is managed encourages students to take responsibility for their own actions. They show high levels of social and moral awareness and are mature and sensible in their attitude to one another and to their learning. This ensures that behaviour is good, both around the academy building and in lessons, so the atmosphere is very calm and purposeful. The care, guidance and support provided, particularly for those whose circumstances make them vulnerable, make a substantial contribution to students' well-being.

Senior leaders know the strengths and weakness of the academy very well and are very self-critical. Their procedures for monitoring are thorough and robust, so their self-evaluation is accurate. The changes they have already made to provision have resulted in rapid improvements in achievement, behaviour and attendance, which all demonstrate that the academy has a good capacity to sustain further improvement.

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

- In order to improve attainment and accelerate progress further, raise the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
  - ensuring that activities in lessons consistently provide a high level of challenge, especially for those who are more-able
  - providing more opportunities for students to work independently
  - planning creatively to ensure that lessons are stimulating and exciting, and that activities meet students' individual needs
  - encouraging teachers to be flexible in their teaching so they can respond quickly to students' misconceptions and misunderstandings as they arise
  - ensuring that marking is used effectively to maximise its impact on learning
  - making constructive use of homework to support learning.

## **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**2**

Students' attainment on entry to the academy is low and many have poor literacy skills when they arrive. In Year 7 there is a strong focus on improving reading and writing so that all students have the skills to gain access to the rest of the curriculum. The academy has a robust tracking system which is used to monitor and analyse students' progress regularly. Information collected shows that the improvements in teaching across the academy and well-targeted intervention for those who are underachieving have resulted in rapid improvement in the rate at which students are making progress, particularly in English and mathematics. Students who are known to be eligible for free school meals make better progress than their peers. In 2010 the GCSE results of these students in Year 11 were significantly better than the national average for this group and their progress was outstanding. In lessons, students are encouraged to monitor their own progress, and can see clearly what they have achieved. This process motivates them and they can talk

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confidently about their learning. Teachers are provided with very clear information about strategies they can use to support students with special educational needs and/or disabilities in lessons. As a result, some of these students, particularly those with less serious needs, make exceptional progress.

Students' are increasingly aware of the important effect of attendance on their achievement and the absence rate is reducing rapidly. Improving literacy, numeracy and ICT skills all contribute effectively to students' future economic well-being. Some imaginative opportunities are provided within the curriculum for students to develop financial awareness and an understanding of the world of work. They work cooperatively in groups. Many students make a positive contribution to the academy and local community, including primary schools. For example, some act as 'heroes' who volunteer to act as ambassadors and support others. Others are sports leaders or anti-bullying counsellors. Many participate in extra-curricular activities, especially sport.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

**How effective is the provision?**

The very large majority of lessons seen during the inspection were good or better. Relationships between staff and students are friendly but respectful. Teachers' expectations of behaviour and commitment to learning are exceptionally high and are consistent across the academy. Lesson planning is detailed and different targets are set for students with different needs. Students are given sequential tasks that build on

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previous learning to ensure that they make progress. High-quality questioning to deepen students' understanding is a characteristic of many lessons. Often students work together very cooperatively in groups. In some of the best lessons, teachers make the links between their subject and others explicit. The greatest variation is in the use of assessment to support learning. Teachers use the assessment data from tests well to plan work for different groups of students, but are less effective at adapting their lesson planning in response to the information they gain from talking with students and from marking.

The current curriculum is imaginative, meets students' needs and is clearly providing opportunities for students to make good progress. However, in response to the views of students, staff, parents and carers, a range of curriculum and timetable developments are planned for the next academic year. These include a wider range of GCSE pathways starting in Year 9 and a new off-site facility for some older students. The school also has plans to put in place different arrangements to support students whose circumstances may make them vulnerable in Year 7.

Many aspects of the care, guidance and support for students are outstanding and shown by students' very positive attitudes. Students value the fact that the principal and senior team greet them at the main gate of the school every day and are always visible between lessons. Students with a wide range of different learning, health and emotional needs are supported very well, with efficient and appropriate use made of outside agencies to help. This aspect of the school is judged as good however, because there is still more work to be done in raising achievement and in ensuring that the off-site provision for older students is of the best quality. The academy is aware of this through its self-evaluation. Transition arrangements are exceptionally thorough. Year 7 students, particularly those due to start in September 2011, are well-prepared before they come to the academy and have had extensive contact with staff before they arrive. Year 11 students also say that they have had very comprehensive advice and guidance for their choice of future destinations. Systems for ensuring that students are safe and are attending regularly are thorough and effective.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

A year ago, at the time of the academy's first monitoring visit, it was making good progress. The retirement of the principal provided the opportunity for further development of the leadership team. Care was taken to appoint members with a range of complementary skills. Their approach is energetic, but also strategic, measured and

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practical, with very clearly articulated priorities, which build progressively on each success. The new principal provides inspirational leadership and is supported very effectively by the academy's sponsors and by the academy council. Monitoring systems are thorough and wide ranging. Senior leaders look mainly at the quality of teaching and learning, but middle leaders also take responsibility for monitoring and planning in their own subject area or year group. Pupils and their parents and carers are consulted regularly. Evaluation of the data collected is extensive and leads both to immediate change if necessary and to long-term plans, such as the re-organisation of the curriculum.

The academy council is relatively small, which limits the involvement of individual governors in the day-to-day life of the academy. However, the visits they make are reported back to the full academy council and they regularly challenge the academy's leaders. Statutory requirements are all met and arrangements for safeguarding, both in terms of child protection and of health and safety, are good.

Students say that the rare incidents of bullying, racism or homophobia are dealt with very swiftly and that they feel very safe in school, with everyone treated equally. The school has a very good range of data which it uses to analyse the achievement and progress of different groups of students. This information enables the senior team to target support to narrowing the gap between the academy's performance and the national average for that group. For example, the gap between the performance of boys and girls is less than that found nationally, and students known to be eligible for free school meals are making better progress than their peers.

The academy's sponsor is very involved with the local community and some overseas projects that provide many opportunities for student links. These raise students' awareness of socio-economic and cultural differences. Students' understanding of national issues and their place in multicultural Britain is more limited.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>



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## Views of parents and carers

Fewer than 5% of parents and carers responded to our questionnaire. Their views were overwhelmingly positive, with a small number adding written comments about the fact that there have been improvements in the academy recently. Similar responses have been obtained by the academy using the same questionnaire from a higher number of parents and carers which were collected at parents' evenings.

The most positive responses, reflected elsewhere in the report, were about these issues:

- how much their children enjoy school
- the safety of their children at the academy
- the quality of teaching.

Less positive responses were about the following:

- how much account the academy takes of their suggestions and concerns
- how the academy helps them to support their child's learning.

The academy is aware of these two issues from its own feedback, and already has plans in place to tackle them.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Oasis Academy Brightstowe to complete a questionnaire about their views of the academy.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the academy. The inspection team received 25 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 512 pupils registered at the academy.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	8	32	14	56	3	12	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	9	36	15	60	1	4	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	6	24	17	68	2	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	10	40	14	56	1	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	7	28	17	68	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	6	24	14	56	4	16	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	7	28	14	56	2	8	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	6	24	17	68	1	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	8	32	15	60	1	4	1	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	7	28	13	52	3	12	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	3	12	14	56	5	20	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	7	28	15	60	1	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	10	40	13	52	2	8	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



20 May 2011

Dear Students,

**Inspection of Oasis Academy Brightstowe, Bristol BS11 0EB**

Thank you very much for your help when inspectors visited recently. We were impressed by how you were taking responsibility for your learning and by the improvement in your attendance over the last year. You told us how much the atmosphere in the academy has improved because students behave well, and as a result, you are learning a lot and enjoying lessons. You also said how pleased you were that the principal had listened to your views about the curriculum and is going to make changes for next term.

We found that the academy is providing you with a good education. The principal and the rest of the senior team have made improving teaching a priority and this has made a difference to your achievement, because most of you are making good progress and some of you are making outstanding progress. We think they could make even more improvements to teaching so you make even more progress, so this is what we have asked them to do:

- make sure that activities are challenging enough
- give you the chance to work independently more often, so you are not so directed by teachers
- plan lessons that are stimulating and exciting, with activities that suit your ability
- ask teachers to be prepared to change their lesson if you don't understand, and spend time sorting out the problems
- make sure that your work is marked in a way that helps you to improve it
- make sure that homework is useful and helps the work you do in lessons.

I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mary Massey

Her Majesty's Inspector

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