

# Oasis Academy MediaCityUK

King William Street, Salford Quays, Manchester, M50 3UQ

**Inspection dates** 27–28 September 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Rates of progress, although improving, are still variable. Higher-ability students tend to make less progress than others. Students on school action plus do not progress as well as might be expected in mathematics.
- While teaching is improving strongly, there is still insufficient good or outstanding teaching to accelerate students' progress. Teachers know the abilities and potential of their students, however, too often teachers do not adapt their teaching to challenge the full ability range in their class.
- Some teachers do not fully engage students in their learning because the pace of lessons can be variable or consistently slow. Too often activities centre on a few students giving others the opportunity to opt out of learning and their minds drift. Opportunities are sometimes missed to engage students through interesting activities, topics and courses.
- Students' skills in reading and talking are improving, however, their skills in writing are underdeveloped. Students do not tend to write at length, explain or justify their ideas. Basic errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar are not routinely corrected by all staff. Students tend to lack confidence and too often do not take pride in their work, resulting in poor and inaccurate presentation.

### The school has the following strengths

- Throughout the academy there is a deep sense that lives, learning and community can be transformed. There is a strong commitment to open communication and equality of opportunity.
- The aspirational leadership and management teams throughout the academy structure have had clear priorities for development and have skilfully effected significant and rapid improvement. Students and parents value the positive improvements have had on attainment, behaviour and on the quality of teaching.
- Examination results have improved considerably over recent years and last year all students leaving gained a place in education, employment or training.
- Students' attitudes to their learning are improving, their attendance rates are much better. Positive action has been taken to achieve a cohesive culture for learning where everyone is respected.

## Information about this inspection

- On day 1 of the inspection, inspectors worked with senior staff while observing teaching and learning in lessons and reviewing work previously completed by students. Inspectors spoke to many students.
- The academy had a planned training day which coincided with day 2 of the inspection. Other inspection activities were conducted:
- Meetings were held with members of the academy chain, senior leaders and with staff. Inspectors looked at a wide range of documentation, including internal and external data about students' progress, school development planning, behaviour and attendance records, minutes of governing body meetings and students' work. They investigated safeguarding procedures.
- When planning the inspection, there were no responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View). However, some responses were made during the inspection and were taken into account. The academy's survey of students' views was also considered. Inspectors scrutinised questionnaires completed by members of staff.

## Inspection team

Neil Mackenzie, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Christine Addison	Additional inspector
David Thompson	Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this academy

- Oasis Academy MediaCityUK moved to a new site in Salford Quays in September 2012. Its specialisms of digital media, business and enterprise reflect local commerce and employment opportunities. The academy is sponsored by Oasis Community Learning, part of the Oasis Global family. The academy's ethos is based on Christian values, it accepts students from all faiths and those with no religious conviction. It has no entry requirement based on ability.
- The academy is smaller than the average-sized secondary academy. It no longer offers courses for students older than 16.
- The proportion of students supported at school action is much higher than that found nationally as is the proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational need.
- Few students are from minority ethnic groups, and very few are at an early stage of learning to speak English.
- The proportion of students attracting additional support through the pupil premium is above average.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standard, which is the minimum expected for students' attainment and progress.
- A very small number of students attend alternative provision for part of their education at Salford City College and at Salford City Reds.

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

- Increase the amount of good or better teaching so that progress accelerates for all groups of students, especially the most able by:
  - using assessment information to plan learning activities that provide suitable challenge and specifically match the needs and potential of every student in the class
  - all teachers improving students' skills in producing clearly structured and extended writing that develops their analytical and evaluative skills
  - increasing student engagement through stimulating activities, topics and courses
  - maintaining good pace throughout lessons, eliminating opportunities for students to opt out of learning or becoming passive
  - developing students' confidence to work independently
  - ensuring that students produce work of which they can be proud and which is presented accurately.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- The proportion of students gaining five good qualifications including English and mathematics has increased by twenty-six percentage points over three years. Last year, all students left with at least five C grades in GCSEs or their equivalent. These results helped all move on to the next stage of their education or employment. This is commendable as students tend to join the academy with significantly below average attainment.
- The rate at which students make progress is variable. In 2011, students in English tended to make good progress, although their performance was not quite as strong in 2012. In mathematics, rates of progress require improvement, particularly for those students who are on school action plus because some teaching is not tailored sufficiently to their particular needs. The few students who are educated partly off site achieve well.
- Students who are supported by the pupil premium do not perform as well as others, but the achievement gap is narrowing.
- More able students achieve good grades in their qualifications, but too few gain the highest grades and so their rates of progress require improvement.
- When teaching is good, students make good and sometimes outstanding progress. In a Year 8 science lesson, for example, students were debating the effects of smoking. Their achievement was excellent because the activities were stimulating and the teacher set high expectations. The pace of the lesson was rapid and all were involved. Planning was thorough and students used a wide range of resources including books and laptops. Progress was, however, stronger in Years 10 and 11 where the quality of teaching was stronger. The greatest scope for improvement is at Key Stage 3.
- When students join the academy their basic skills are weak. The academy has developed a programme to improve reading which is having a positive impact and reading skills are developing well. Numeracy and oracy skills are improving too. However, for many students, weak writing skills limit their progress.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching has improved over recent years due to the effective action to manage performance and well targeted staff development. Nevertheless, teaching still requires further improvement in order to be good.
- Relationships between staff and students are positive and respectful. However, many students are too dependent on their teachers for praise or acknowledgement, restricting their ability to develop independent learning skills. Students lack confidence in their ability to produce work of quality, and this is often reflected in inaccurate and poor quality of presentation.
- Teachers generally use questioning well and the most skilled teachers develop conversations that help their students fully understand difficult concepts.
- Where teaching is weakest, teachers do not prepare lessons adequately for the whole range of students' abilities. This usually results in the most able not being sufficiently challenged and occasionally the least able not being able to do much of the work set. The pace of learning is variable; too slow to engage and occasionally rushed. Too often learning is heavily directed by the teacher, or the teacher focuses on a few students, enabling others to drift from their task and to avoid their responsibility to learn.
- Teachers consistently use well structured assessment procedures and so students know their currently level of work and to which level they should be aiming. Students are usually given good guidance on how to improve. Teachers in too many subjects do not correct mistakes in literacy which restricts students' progress.
- Inspectors observed lessons where students were engaged fully in their learning because the teacher maintained a good pace and topics were interesting. On other occasions, lessons were

dull and students lacked concentration because the subject content and activities did not stimulate.

- Across subjects, students are not given sufficient opportunity to develop skills in writing, particularly extended pieces. Students are rarely given the challenge of explaining and justifying their opinions, whether through written work or in discussion. This restricts development of thinking and communication skills. In the main, this limits the progress of the most able.

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

- Leaders and managers have worked very successfully to improve behaviour. They have implemented good and effective structures to enable a positive culture to exist within the academy. The use of exclusion is rare.
- Movement around the academy is calm and everyone is courteous. Older students remark on how they have noticed a significant improvement in behaviour and in particular, levels of respect between staff and students and between themselves. Parents who responded on Parent View agreed that behaviour is good.
- Students told inspectors that there was little bullying. Where it did exist, no particular group was targeted and the academy dealt with the problem quickly and effectively.
- Students feel very safe within the academy and all have adults they can turn to when they need to discuss their problems. The academy's safeguarding and child protection procedures are secure, including for those few students who are partly educated off site.
- 'Being safe' is part of the curriculum and includes how to address potential risks from gun crime and extremism.
- Students' attitudes to learning are improving, and where teaching is good or better, students show curiosity and co-operate well with each other and staff.
- Attendance has improved rapidly and is now at national averages. This represents a significant improvement for those students who were persistently poor attendees.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- In recent years, the leadership and management of the academy has taken bold moves to improve teaching, behaviour and examination results. Senior leaders have made these improvements rapidly, and at the same time, made considerable financial savings to return academy spending to within their budget.
- Teaching staff say they have benefited from the delegated style of leadership, and appreciate open communication. They also say improvements are having a positive impact on the quality teaching, behaviour and pupil achievement.
- The academy's leadership has been able to implement change successfully because it can evaluate the quality of all aspects of the academy's work and performance accurately. Senior leaders are creative in finding solutions and base all decision making on what is best for the students and the community.
- The whole leadership structure, including academy governance, demonstrates excellent capacity to embed current improvement and implement successful improvement.
- The academy chain is well informed about the challenges the academy faces and the level of success it has had in improving educational provision. Its particular strengths are in holding the academy leadership team to account and providing high quality, informed support.
- Overall, the quality of the curriculum is good. However, some departments adopt dated courses which do not take advantage of the modern facilities and resources available. Consequently, teachers do not spark students' imagination or engage their interests. The academy has identified some weaknesses in the Year 7 curriculum and is considering

improvements.

- Students' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is a strong feature of the academy, particularly through additional and enrichment opportunities. There are clear links with the academy's aims and values. Through a multi-faith approach, students appreciate the range of cultures both locally, and through formal links, internationally. The development of leadership qualities in students is a priority and the academy currently has twenty five peace ambassadors. Students value the range of enrichment activities available to them.
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## 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>	135661
<b>Local authority</b>	Salford
<b>Inspection number</b>	406619

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11-16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	457
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Oasis Academy Council
<b>Chair</b>	Nick Bent
<b>Headteacher</b>	Patrick Ottley-O'Connor
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 November 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 886 6500
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