

Oscott Manor School

Old Oscott Hill, Kingstanding, Birmingham, B44 9SP

Inspection dates 16–17 October 2012

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Not enough pupils make good progress in lessons.
- The school does not have an accurate picture of how well pupils are doing. This means that it appears pupils are making better progress than they really are.
- Not enough teaching is good. Teachers do not set out clearly enough for pupils what it is they should be learning. Signing is not used consistently by staff for those pupils who need it.
- Teachers' marking for more able pupils does not tell them how to improve.
- The post-16 department requires improvement. It does not do enough to help students to develop the skills they need to lead independent lives when they leave school, in a mature enough setting.
- Governors do not visit regularly to check different aspects of the school's work so that they can ensure that pupils do as well as they can.
- The setting of targets for teachers has not focused on making sure that there is good teaching throughout the school.

The school has the following strengths

- The school places a strong emphasis on pupils' rights and their dignity is highly valued. It provides a very safe and nurturing environment for pupils.
- Pupils behave well and enjoy school.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are positive. Pupils greet visitors with enthusiasm and are courteous and friendly.
- The school is going through a period of change by educating more pupils with autistic spectrum disorders. The school is coping with this change by developing the knowledge and skills of staff. Some pupils make impressive progress as they settle in.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted strongly.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed twelve lessons, of which six were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition inspectors observed pupils in informal settings such as lunchtimes and breaktimes.
- Meetings were held with two members of the governing body and discussions were held with the school council.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders of the school and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of parents' responses from the school's own survey. Parents were not able to access the online questionnaire (Parent View) due to technical difficulties.
- The inspection team looked at a range of school documentation including the school's data on pupils' progress, its self-evaluation and development plans. Records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance were also examined.

Inspection team

Frank Price, Lead inspector

Lead Inspector

Andrew Phipps

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Oscott Manor School educates pupils with severe and complex learning difficulties and those pupils with autistic spectrum disorders.
- The school was damaged by fire in July. There are plans to relocate the school in the summer of 2013 to better meet the needs of pupils.
- The proportion of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds is higher than average, with just under a quarter of pupils learning English as an additional language.
- An above-average proportion of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Nearly half of the pupils have autistic spectrum disorders. This proportion has risen sharply over recent years.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- The school has links with a local mainstream secondary school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils make at least good progress by ensuring that:
 - there is consistent signing throughout the school for those pupils who need it
 - in all lessons, teachers set out clearly for pupils what it is each of them should be learning
 - marking gives more able pupils, a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their work
 - staff and leaders have an accurate picture of the progress pupils make over their time at the school.
- Improve the post-16 department by providing opportunities that better equip students with the skills and experiences they will need when they leave school.
- Improve the governance of the school by ensuring that governors:
 - visit regularly to check on the work of the school and to get a first-hand view of teaching and learning
 - check more closely that leaders' management of teaching leads to pupils making faster progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The school's assessment information shows that the majority of pupils are making better than expected progress. However, evidence from lesson observations shows that this is not the case. Most pupils make only expected progress. Inaccuracies in measuring pupils' progress, particularly when pupils start at the school, do not help senior leaders or teachers to have a true picture of how well pupils are actually doing. Nevertheless, all pupils, regardless of their background, gender or special educational needs, make similar progress.
- The post-16 provision does not promote students' maturity as young adults strongly enough, for example by preparing meals for themselves or others on a regular basis. Although students in the post-16 department follow a good range of subjects and are able to gain qualifications, there are not enough opportunities for them to develop and practise the skills they need to prepare them for their next stage of life. Work-related and college experiences are too limited and the post-16 provision is not distinct enough from the rest of the school.
- Pupils enjoy reading and some more able pupils are confident readers. However, less able pupils who are older, read from books which are not suitable for their age or interests.
- The supportive and positive relationships that staff develop with pupils enable them to gain confidence and develop into enthusiastic learners. Some pupils with autistic spectrum disorders join the school with significant emotional difficulties which hinder their learning. They are helped to settle quickly and, as a result, some make big strides in their learning.
- Some pupils attend a local mainstream secondary school with support in order to provide greater challenge in subjects such as science.
- Nearly all parents and carers who responded to the school's parents' survey were positive about the progress their children make. Pupils themselves enjoy school and feel that they make progress.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching varies across the school. Occasionally teaching is outstanding, but too much requires improvement. This is because there are some common weaknesses in teaching across the school which slows pupils' learning.
- Often the instructions for a lesson written out by the teacher are far too complex for pupils to understand. Symbols are not used enough to help pupils to comprehend the writing. Signing is not used consistently enough to help those pupils who need it. As a result, pupils do not always understand what is required of them.
- There is some good use of highly personalised targets for pupils in lessons. These set out clearly and precisely exactly what pupils are expected to achieve in each lesson. However, this practice is not universal across the school.
- The marking of work, particularly for more able pupils, offers encouragement but does not give pupils a clear idea of what they need to do in order to improve further.
- The teaching of reading has improved the reading and literacy skills of some pupils. However,

staff have not yet been trained on how to teach letters and the sounds they make (phonics) and word recognition. This training is planned for in the near future. The teaching of reading to older pupils who are at the very early stages of learning to read is weaker.

- Where teaching is good or better, it is lively, fully involves pupils and practical activities are used to make learning interesting. In a mathematics lesson, pupils were engrossed in using mirrors to work out lines of symmetry. Questioning was used well to test and extend pupils' thinking.
- Sensory activities are used well for those pupils who have more profound learning difficulties. This enables pupils to make responses, through reaching out to feel objects of different textures or to react to water spray when planting seeds.
- Staff are skilled in supporting pupils in their behaviour. For example, those pupils who have difficulty controlling their behaviour are encouraged sensitively to participate in lessons.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' enjoyment of school is evident. They enjoy 'Funky Fitness' at the start of each day and this helps them to be in a good frame of mind for learning. The school provides some novel experiences for pupils to enjoy, such as tap-dancing.
- Pupils' behaviour is typically good in lessons and around the school. Lunchtimes are pleasant, sociable occasions, and pupils are keen to speak to visitors. They talk with pride about their school.
- Pupils feel very safe. They trust staff and are confident that any concerns can be shared with them and will be addressed. They feel safe from bullying and know how to keep safe online. For example, they have been taught to only talk to known people on social networking sites.
- Some pupils have difficulty controlling their behaviour and a small class has been set up to manage them well. This is well run and pupils show improvements in their behaviour over time by becoming more cooperative and having fewer outbursts.
- Where pupils' attendance is below average, this is due to prolonged medical or life-threatening conditions.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. The activities on offer and values of the school place a strong emphasis on improving pupils' social skills and their personal development. As a result, pupils develop into polite and welcoming young people.
- Pupils take on some responsibilities. For example, the school council has made suggestions for improvement such as more play activities at break times and facilities for the new building. Nevertheless, there are not enough opportunities for older students to get more involved in taking on responsibilities in both the school and the wider community.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The school's self-evaluation is over-generous. This is because of the inaccuracy of measuring pupils' progress. Leadership and management require improvement because the checks that leaders make of teaching quality have not given teachers clear enough pointers to successfully improve their teaching.

- The setting of targets for teachers has not had enough impact on improving teaching and learning, partly because targets are not matched closely enough to the current Teachers' Standards and partly because targets have not focused sharply enough on making sure that teaching is consistently good throughout the school.
- The headteacher has the confidence of staff and parents. The school now educates pupils with a much wider range of complex learning difficulties than in the past. The headteacher has, over a short period of time, organised staff and resources to make sure these pupils settle into school and that their needs are met.
- All staff have undergone considerable amounts of training to adapt to the new context of the school. On the whole this training has been effective, but some aspects such as use of signing and symbols are not consistently used. Further staff training needs have been identified, particularly for the teaching of reading and letter sounds.
- Pupils for whom the school receives additional funding have extra support in the form of music therapy, laptops or tablet computers. This has enabled them to improve their emotional or communication problems, and for some pupils to produce better work such as graphics. One pupil commented, 'It is easier to correct mistakes.'
- Subject leaders are keen to develop their areas of responsibility. The range of subjects offered for older pupils at Key Stage 4 and post-16 has been improved and there are now better levels of accreditation available. The school has also identified that more able pupils in Year 9 will be able to follow GCSE courses and has put in place arrangements to enable this to happen.
- The local authority has provided limited support to the school, providing help as requested. However, the school now requires increased visits and advice to support its move to becoming good.
- The governors and headteacher realise that the relocation of the school to new premises presents opportunities to address some of the limitations of the current accommodation, particularly the restricted and dilapidated outside areas and the need for more appropriate post-16 facilities.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are supportive of the school and well intentioned. However, they do not challenge the school enough and check aspects of the school's work in enough depth. Focused visits by governors are too infrequent and left to just one or two members of the governing body. As a result, the governing body does not have a clear view of the quality of teaching across the school.
 - The governing body manages the overall school budget well but are unclear how pupil premium funding has been used and what effect it has had on pupils' progress. Governors have not ensured that the way teachers' performance is checked has led to better teaching across the school, nor that teachers' pay is tied to the effectiveness of teaching closely enough.
 - Governors have ensured that procedures for pupils' safety are good and these were tested in the recent fire, when all pupils were evacuated quickly and safely.

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

Unique reference number	103628
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	400635

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	71
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	20
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Cardinali
Headteacher	Joy Hardwick
Date of previous school inspection	15 March 2010
Telephone number	0121 3608222
Fax number	0121 366 6394
Email address	enquiry@kingstnd.bham.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

