

# Oasis Academy Oldham

Hollins Road, Hollinwood, Oldham, OL8 4JZ

**Inspection dates** 21–22 November 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that has serious weaknesses.

- Students' achievement is inadequate and their attainment is low in English, mathematics and science. The rate of progress made by students in GCSE English has declined.
- Behaviour is inadequate because low-level disruption reduces learning in a small minority of lessons. Too many students, especially boys, do not become involved with learning. A few lack basic skills, self-esteem and social confidence.
- Too much teaching is inadequate or requires improvement. There is not enough good or outstanding teaching to overcome students' past underachievement or their reluctance to become involved in lessons.
- Assessment is not sharp enough to raise standards, and teachers' planning is not precise enough to develop students' skills and understanding.
- The academy's targets for students are not ambitious enough. They are not based on current national expectations of student progress.
- The academy council has not had sufficient information and guidance to rigorously question leaders about the quality of teaching, behaviour and students' progress.

### The academy has the following strengths

- Following a long period of unstable leadership and major organisational change, the academy now has a permanent leader with a clear vision and strong drive to bring about more rapid improvement.
- Self-evaluation is now more robust and accurate and leaders have used it effectively to start bringing about essential improvements, for example, in the organisation of courses.
- Recent improvements in staff professional development have begun to effectively support improvements in teaching.
- A rigorous approach to performance management is in the early stages of improving accountability and tackling more accurately identified weaknesses in teaching and leadership.
- Attendance has improved. Behaviour around the new academy building is generally calm and orderly.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 47 lessons, including five joint observations with senior leaders.
- Inspectors observed the academy’s work and held meetings with the Principal, senior and subject leaders, the Chair of the Academy Council, and the Regional Director of the Oasis Community Learning Trust. Discussions were held with five groups of students about the quality of their educational experience and the quality of behaviour.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the academy’s monitoring and assessment information, improvement planning, records of behaviour and attendance, and records relating to safeguarding.
- The inspection team took account of staff questionnaires, the thirty eight responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the academy’s own records of consultation with parents.

## Inspection team

Bernard Campbell, Lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Susan Wareing	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Christine Birchall	Additional Inspector
Lynne Selkirk	Additional Inspector
Mike McLachlan	Additional Inspector

## Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

### Information about this school

- The academy opened in September 2010. It is sponsored by an educational trust, Oasis Community Learning.
- The members of staff appointed were almost all from the two predecessor schools. In July 2011, the Principal left. An interim Principal was in post until Easter 2012 and an interim associate Principal until July 2012. A new Principal took up post in April 2012. In September 2012, an associate Principal was seconded to provide external support for the leadership team for three days a week.
- Many support staff and 20 teachers left the academy last summer term. Nineteen teachers, including 10 newly qualified teachers, joined the academy at the beginning of the autumn term. New subject leaders in English and mathematics also started in September 2012.
- The academy moved from two school sites to a new building on a new site in September 2012.
- The academy is a larger than average secondary school with a smaller than average proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds. A small number of students, mainly of Czechoslovakian heritage, are in the early stages of speaking English as an additional language.
- Over half the students are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is high compared with most schools (this is additional government funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals or in local authority care).
- The proportion of students with disabilities or who have special educational needs supported at school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The Aspire Centre, sited at a local primary academy, caters for a very few students at risk of permanent exclusion.
- In 2011, the academy met the government's floor standard, which sets the minimum expectation for students' attainment and progress.

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

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching by making sure that:
  - teachers assess students' work accurately and use this information on the progress of individuals and groups to plan activities that closely match the range of learning needs
  - teachers make more precise use of learning objectives to teach specific skills and to evaluate learners' success
  - lessons get off to a quick and interesting start and provide a clear challenge
  - frequent marking consistently identifies specific strengths and targets for improvement.
- Raise standards, especially in English, mathematics and science by introducing, and meeting, academy targets that are based on students making at least three or more levels progress from age 11 to 16.
- Eradicate persistent low-level disruption in lessons:
  - by making sure the academy's expectations of behaviour are clear to all staff and students,

and that rewards and sanctions are applied consistently by all staff

- by increasing students' self-esteem, verbal confidence and skills in literacy, and their understanding of how to learn; especially the boys
- leading to a reduction in temporary exclusions from the academy and from lessons, and contributing to a further reduction of persistent absence.

■ Improve the impact of academy's leaders by:

- eradicating inadequate teaching and reducing the proportion that requires improvement, as well as tackling inconsistencies in the quality of leadership through more rigorous performance management and stronger accountability of staff
  - further reviewing and adapting the provision of courses and activities beyond the academy day to better meet students' needs and interests, and more effectively promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
  - strengthening the role of the academy council in critically questioning the performance of leaders, staff and students and the impact of particular initiatives, such as those funded by the pupil premium.
-

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is inadequate

- In 2012, the proportion of students gaining five GCSEs at grades A\*- C, including English and mathematics, fell compared with the previous year, from 37% to 32%. Attainment was lower than in the predecessor schools.
- Achievement in English declined in 2012 and GCSE results were very low. Students made less progress in English from their starting points at age 11 than in previous years. This was due to weaknesses in teaching and teachers' inaccurate use of assessment.
- In 2012, student's progress in GCSE mathematics improved a little but their overall achievement remained low. One reason was because the majority of students were entered early for GCSE mathematics in Year 10, and few improved on their results in Year 11.
- Achievement is low in science because of low expectations and unstable staffing.
- Weak teaching and assessment led to exceptionally low GCSE results in some technology subjects.
- Too many students, especially boys, are not engaged in learning. Too many do not achieve their potential because the academy has not motivated or enabled them to succeed. Some students have not taken responsibility for their learning because they lack the personal skills and confidence to take advantage of what is on offer. They also lack guidance to help them learn well.
- The achievement by students supported, and not supported by, the pupil premium is similarly weak. Both groups made limited progress and gained low GCSE average point scores.
- Disabled students and those who need extra help underachieve. New systems for identifying and meeting students' special educational needs are at an early stage of development. There is early evidence of small improvements in the reading ages of students who have taken part in a literacy programme.
- Students achieve well in art and design because they are inspired by the teaching and have good practical opportunities to develop their skills.

### The quality of teaching

### is inadequate

- Teaching is inadequate because students, including disabled students and those needing extra help, have not made sufficient progress in their learning since the opening of the academy.
- Because of weaknesses in the teaching of English, including basic skills in literacy, students do not communicate, read or write as well as they should. Students' presentation of work is often brief or untidy.
- The weakest teaching is slow and boring, and includes undemanding activities with the result that some students sit idly or chat and interrupt the learning of others. Students are allowed to talk over the teacher too often.
- In lessons where teaching requires improvement, lessons get off to a slow start and do not engage students sufficiently. In these lessons, teachers do not refer to the starting point for learning and do not focus sufficiently on the range of levels in the class. Lesson plans and objectives are not clear enough about what skills are to be learned, and typically, teachers fail to show students how to succeed.
- In mathematics, there is too much emphasis on recalling prior learning, and not enough emphasis on new learning.
- The assessment of students' skills does not play a strong enough role in informing teachers about how best to plan the most appropriate learning activities that will meet students' needs.
- Teachers' marking is inconsistent in frequency and quality in most subjects. Marking has improved recently in English with more specific praise and identification of targets for improvement.

- Where teaching is good and in the small proportion that is outstanding, teachers have strong and confident relationships with the class which they use effectively to provoke students' thinking and responses. This teaching develops interest and enthusiasm through dialogue, accurately pitched activities, and well-planned resources which enable students to learn well and demonstrate the skills they have developed.

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

- Persistent low-level disruption in a small minority of lessons regularly slows down the pace of learning. On occasion, a few students make inappropriate or disrespectful comments to teachers or to other students.
- A few students lack the skill, awareness and maturity to manage their own behaviour or to relate well to others. These students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is limited and they lack the self-esteem and verbal confidence to discuss issues or to reflect sensibly.
- Students, staff, and some parents and carers are dissatisfied with the quality of behaviour in lessons and how well it is managed.
- The academy's expectations of behaviour are not sufficient clear and the procedures for rewards and sanctions are not applied consistently. In some lessons, students are helpfully asked to focus on specific aspects of effective learning behaviour but this guidance is not applied consistently. Academy leaders have rightly identified the need to revise and re-launch the behaviour policy.
- Temporary exclusions from the academy and from lessons remain too high. A new off-site provision at a local primary academy has begun to have a positive effect on the social and emotional needs of the very few students at risk of permanent exclusion.
- A new long-term programme to develop students' social and emotional skills has recently been introduced and there are early indications of improving student attitudes and relationships.
- By and large, students feel safe and that any incidence of bullying is tackled effectively.
- There was a marked improvement in attendance from low to below average in the second year of the academy. Rates of persistent absence have decreased but remain too high.
- Two diverse school communities have been brought together fully and effectively for the first time this term. A few students had fears about this, but these have been dispelled. Behaviour around the new academy building is generally well controlled and orderly.

### **The leadership and management requires improvement**

- The instability of leadership, the scale and complexity of managing a merger while retaining two sites, implementing a major staff restructure, and the added burden of managing a move to a new site, have hampered the development of the academy.
- The Principal is energetic and highly visible and has quickly earned the loyalty and respect of students and staff. In recent months, a higher proportion of parents and carers have attended parents' evenings.
- The Principal's accurate and robust evaluation has provided clear direction to staff. His clear priorities and early action has started to drive improvement. Senior leaders have begun to carry out effective actions to strengthen performance management and improve teaching and learning.
- Leaders failed to anticipate or prevent the low GCSE results in 2012 because of the inaccuracy of assessment, poor management of data, and weaknesses in procedures for monitoring students' progress. In the last half-term, the leaders have introduced a new monitoring system which is more rigorous.
- The academy's approach to early entry exams in English and mathematics prevented students who gained a C grade from fulfilling their potential and gaining higher grades. Current leaders

have responded positively to these shortcomings and have changed the Key Stage 4 curriculum in these subjects to increase students' attainment and progress.

- In its first year, the use of pupil premium funding supported off-site provision that led to few qualifications, especially in English and mathematics. This funding has been appropriately redirected to support students at risk of exclusion and a few who have recently arrived from Czechoslovakia with little English.
  - At present, changes to the provision of courses and extra activities beyond the academy day are reactive. Courses and activities have not been reviewed or adapted sufficiently to meet all students' interests. The curriculum is not planned well to promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
  - Leaders recognise that the current system of setting targets for students' achievement is not fit for purpose because it is not benchmarked against national expectations. Plans are in place to set more ambitious targets for students and staff.
  - New leaders in English and mathematics started this term and are at an early stage of improving the quality of teaching, the organisation of courses and assessment. The inconsistency in the quality of subject leaders has begun to be tackled. Middle leaders contribution to the process of academy self-evaluation is underdeveloped.
  - Up to now the performance management of staff has not been sufficiently rigorous. A few members of staff who are on higher pay scales are not seen as good teachers by academy leaders. The Principal has introduced a new requirement that future promotion will be conditional on good teaching. Leaders have accurately identified weaknesses in teaching and are in the process of implementing action plans to bring about improvement. Recently introduced arrangements for coaching and staff development are clearly linked to performance management procedures.
  - **The governance of the school**
    - Members of the academy council have played an influential role in the strategic direction of the academy and its links with the wider community. The academy trust has not enabled the academy council to take a sufficiently strong role in actively monitoring, or rigorously challenging, academy leaders about the quality of teaching, behaviour, students' progress and performance management. The Principal has provided the council with a robust account of the academy's weaknesses. As a result, a more questioning dialogue between leaders and council members has been initiated. Safeguarding procedures meet requirements.
-

## 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>	136027
<b>Local authority</b>	N/A
<b>Inspection number</b>	399823

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>	1217
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Oasis Academy Council
<b>Chair</b>	Craig Dean
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Hayes
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 624 9630
<b>Fax number</b>	0161 785 8765
<b>Email address</b>	office@oasisoldham.org

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](http://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](mailto: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](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2012

