

# Oasis Academy John Williams

Petherton Road, Hengrove, Bristol, BS14 9BU

**Inspection dates** 29–30 January 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The passion, drive and commitment of the Executive Principal are at the heart of the strong improvement seen in this academy.
- GCSE results for Year 11 students have improved significantly over the last few years, at a much faster rate than seen nationally. This is particularly the case for English and mathematics.
- Students eligible for additional funding do very well and get similar examination results to other students.
- The sixth form is good. Students make good progress in the small range of subjects currently offered, particularly dance.
- Leadership at all levels is highly effective. It has brought rapid improvement in the quality of teaching and in students' achievement.
- Teaching is good. Teachers are committed to improving students' achievement and give freely of their time to support pupils' learning.
- Students' progress is checked very regularly. Those who are not making the progress they should get help very quickly.
- Students behave well. Exclusions have greatly reduced and attendance has increased.
- Excellent systems are used to check the academy's work so that it improves. Training activities are very well matched to teachers' needs.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all teachers provide work that is pitched at the right level for everyone in the class, particularly the most-able students.
- Some teachers do not give students opportunities to develop their understanding in practical activities.
- The improvements in the results for a small number of subjects are not as strong as those seen generally across the academy.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed the teaching in 41 lessons, of which 30 were jointly observed with members of the academy’s leadership team.
- Meetings were held with groups of students, the Chair of the Academy Council and another of its members, school staff, including the Executive Principal, the head of school, members of the senior leadership team, subject and student progress leaders, and teachers. An inspector also heard some students read. One inspector held a meeting with a representative from the academy chain.
- Inspectors observed the academy’s work, and looked at a range of other evidence, including data on students’ achievement, planning and monitoring documentation used by teachers to check on how well the academy is doing, academy council documents, records of behaviour and attendance and documents relating to safeguarding. Inspectors also scrutinised students’ books.
- Inspectors considered the 21 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), which were made at the time of the inspection. The results of the most recent survey of parents, undertaken by the academy in October 2012, were also analysed. Inspectors also considered responses to questionnaires completed by 56 members of staff.

## Inspection team

Robert Pyner, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Robin Sidaway

Additional Inspector

Shahnaz Maqsood

Additional Inspector

Terence Payne

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Oasis Academy John Williams is smaller than the average-sized secondary school. It has a very small, but growing, sixth form with a focus on the visual and performing arts.
- The academy serves an urban area of south Bristol and has a specialism in the visual and performing arts. The school does not use alternative places for students to learn away from the academy.
- Most students are of White British heritage and few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or pupils with a parent serving in the armed forces, is well above the national average. The pupils eligible for free school meals represent over half of the students attending the academy.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is well above average. The proportion of students supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average. Students' needs include moderate learning difficulties, communication difficulties, and behaviour, emotional and social difficulties.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards for secondary schools, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The academy is a member of the Oasis Community Learning group. The Executive Principal provides support for other academies in the region.

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

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching, particularly in weaker subjects, by ensuring that all teachers:
  - plan work in lessons that is at the right level for everyone, particularly so that most-able students are stretched and challenged
  - create more opportunities in lessons for students to develop their understanding in practical activities
  - use marking to provide clearer guidance to students on how to improve their work and then make sure they act upon it.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Students make good progress as they move through the academy from below-average starting points when they join at Year 7. Standards have improved significantly over the last few years. This is due to better teaching, very thorough checking of students' progress and the provision of highly effective support if it is needed. For example, the proportion of students gaining five or more A\* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, improved greatly between 2010 and 2012, more than halving the gap with the national figure.
- Examination results for most subjects show a strong upward trend but some are uneven, for example, in business studies, design and technology, modern foreign languages and music. Senior leaders check the performance of each subject. This ensures that subject leaders and teachers are held to account for their results.
- The achievement of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is good, particularly in English and mathematics. They make similar progress to all other students. This is because they receive good individual attention. Parents and carers greatly appreciate this support.
- Pupil premium funding is being used in a range of ways to support students. A recent innovation is 'Period 6' at the end of four days of the week when all students can take part in specific targeted support for their learning as well as sporting and cultural activities. The academy's data show that most students who are supported through pupil premium funding attend these sessions regularly. As a result of this specific help, the progress and GCSE results of students known to be eligible for free school meals match those of other students. In 2012, these students made better progress in mathematics than the national average for all students.
- Students generally understand their targets and can talk about the improvements they have made in their work. The academy has highly effective systems for checking on students' progress, for example through the student progress leaders. This means that extra support is available when students are not making the progress they should. However, some, particularly the most-able students, are not making the progress they could.
- The sixth form is developing and the first round of examination results for the small range of subjects offered shows that, overall, achievement is good, particularly in dance.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers ask students probing questions based on good subject knowledge. Good relationships with teachers mean students answer questions confidently and share their thinking about the work. A significant proportion of teaching is outstanding, with challenging activities which help students to extend and apply their understanding and skills. For example, students in Year 11 drew on their teacher's excellent subject knowledge and built up a good understanding of the use of imagery in poetry, using their own examples.
- Teachers have high expectations for students' work and behaviour. Students work hard because they recognise that their teachers are committed to helping them achieve their best. They know that all in the academy community are working to meet the standards set out in the 'Bristol Framework' (guidelines for work and behaviour for students and staff).

- Improvements in English and mathematics have driven developments in other subjects. An accelerated programme for students in Years 7 and 8 has strengthened their reading. The result of this initiative is the improving progress made by students because they have better literacy skills.
- The teaching in a small minority of lessons is less effective. The most common weakness in these lessons is that work is not at the right level for all students. This is particularly the case when the teacher does not plan carefully enough to ensure that the most-able students can move ahead more quickly or attempt harder work. In some lessons teachers miss opportunities to use practical activities to reinforce learning. Students who spoke with inspectors said that they learn more when they have to apply and use the skills they have learned in practical activities.
- Teachers are good at telling students how they can improve their work when they speak to them, but the quality of written marking varies too much. Effective marking in some books noted 'What went well' and 'Even better if' but this was not consistent between, or within, subjects. Few students had used teachers' marking to develop their learning on a specific point.

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

- This is a calm and purposeful academy. It is a friendly and welcoming place for staff, students and visitors. Students get on well together and are courteous and polite.
- The good standard of behaviour is based on the focus on the 'Bristol Framework' with its set of guidelines for conduct, attitude to work and progress to be made whilst at the academy. Students are aware of these expectations and understand that academy staff will do their best to enable students to succeed and achieve. There is a strong ethos of care for individual students and strong liaison with their families.
- This level of behaviour has taken time to establish. Two years ago exclusions were high but the last academic year saw a dramatic reduction in all types of exclusion to below national rates. This reflects the improvement in individualised support for students. This support is being further enhanced through the establishment of The Annexe to provide specialist help for very vulnerable students.
- Students say they feel very safe and secure. Parents and carers responding to the online questionnaire, Parent View, agree. Survey data from the academy also supports this view.
- In lessons, behaviour is typically good although some students can be distracted if work does not challenge them or there are not sufficient opportunities to apply their learning in practical activities. For example, in a history lesson students lost interest because they could not keep up with the volume of notes that they were expected to write and there was no time to review the most important aspects to be learned.
- Students know what constitutes bullying and the different kinds that may occur, such as homophobic and cyber bullying. Students are clear that the academy deals effectively with any bullying incidents. This is reinforced by parents and carers in their responses to Parent View and in the latest survey undertaken by the academy.
- There are strong systems for ensuring students' attendance. Attendance has improved rapidly over the last three years.

**The leadership and management are outstanding**

- The academy has an excellent sense of purpose. The Executive Principal has driven improvement with her passionate beliefs that only the best is good enough for the students and that the community around the academy should play an integral part in its work. The academy's track record of success and the high quality of its plans for development indicate strongly that it is well able to continue to improve.
- The head of school has been highly effective in developing the roles of senior, subject and student progress leaders who share her commitment to improvement. Staff morale is high and the excellent quality of leadership and management is appreciated by parents.
- The success of the improvement strategies in motivating staff are reflected in a comment from a member of staff who responded to the inspection questionnaire for staff: 'It has been a real privilege to be part of the journey from the start. The leadership from the top has been inspiring and clear. Staff are now committed to shared goals and want to do their personal best.'
- Subjects are taught throughout the school in a way that promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Option choices meet students' needs and they appreciate the advice and guidance they receive to help them choose which subjects to study.
- The work of each subject area is checked and monitored carefully. Effective action is taken ensure that any weaker areas improve. Work is continuing to support and challenge the very few subjects whose performance is not consistently good or better.
- High quality processes are in place to maintain and improve the quality of teaching. Leaders visit lessons regularly to check on the quality of teaching. There is a very effective support programme for teachers whose teaching is not consistently good or better. Senior leaders take further action if their teaching does not improve.
- Teachers are expected to teach well and pay increases are only given when their performance justifies it. Specific and personalised targets are set for teachers which are linked to students' achievement at the end of Year 9 or Year 11.
- Students are set challenging targets. Information about students' progress in subjects is collected and analysed by senior and subject leaders. This is used to identify students who need extra help. The success of this help can be seen in the strong improvement in students' attainment and progress, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Students are offered a wide range of additional activities, many of which involve the academy's specialism. This enrichment programme is being further developed through the 'Period 6' initiative. There are very close links with the community, for example students host a lunch club for residents from a local care home.
- Oasis Community Learning, the academy's sponsor, rightly judges it to be a thriving institution which requires minimal support. The sponsor is using the expertise and skills of the Executive Principal to support other academies and schools in the region.
- Procedures to keep students safe meet requirements well.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The academy council (the academy's governing body) has an excellent vision for the

development of the academy, based on councillors' (governors') clear understanding of the needs of the community. The Executive Principal and head of school provide high-quality, comprehensive reports about the academy's strengths and weaknesses. The academy council ensures that weaknesses are followed up. For example, councillors are aware that there are weaker results in a few subjects and what procedures they have put in place for improvement. They also fully understand the procedures for performance management and the structures for improving the quality of teaching. The Chair of the Academy Council is involved in the sponsor's strategic review programme. Councillors bring a range of skills and experience. Some have a background in the community and others bring educational or legal skills. This provides a strong balance which enables very effective support and challenge for senior leaders.

## 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>	135663
<b>Local authority</b>	City of Bristol
<b>Inspection number</b>	406620

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>	Non-maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11-18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	641
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	36
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Chloe Brunton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rebecca Clark (Executive Principal) Victoria Boomer (Head of School)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 February 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01275 894680
<b>Fax number</b>	01275 832883
<b>Email address</b>	info@oasisjohnwilliams.org

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