

Oak Wood Secondary School

Morris Drive, Nuneaton, CV11 4QH

Inspection dates 3–4 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leaders, students and staff benefit from the positive relationship of the 'Multi Academy Trust'. This provides continuity for many of the students and insights from staff and leaders who work with pupils of other ages.
- All groups of students achieve well because teaching is good. Staff use a wide range of approaches to overcome students' individual difficulties.
- Behaviour and safety are excellent. Systems to safeguard students are detailed and thorough.
- Students are very positive about learning and wherever possible develop choice and independence. Those with the most challenging behaviour learn helpful strategies to keep themselves calm and are supported and managed extremely well.
- The sixth form is good. This is because students are well prepared for later life and learning and engage in such a wide range of interesting, relevant activities.
- Students behave extremely well and have many first-hand experiences of life beyond school.
- Leaders, including governors, have an accurate understanding of the school. They use this well for school improvement, including the development of teaching.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well because students' attitudes to learning and to other people are outstanding, learn a great deal about other countries, cultures and beliefs and are highly engaged in stimulating, inspiring lessons.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching staff sometimes miss opportunities to reinforce basic skills such as reading, writing and mathematics within other lessons.
- Leaders do not always tackle issues systematically or completely.
- Staff do not always use a range of communication tools, including technology, signs and symbols consistently and effectively.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was conducted simultaneously with the inspection of Oak Wood Primary School. There are separate evaluations and reports for each school.
- The inspectors observed 15 lessons and part lessons, taught by 10 teachers and 30 teaching assistants. Five of these observations were done jointly with the headteacher, deputy headteacher or assistant headteacher.
- Discussions were held with students, governors, parents, carers, the school improvement adviser, teachers and other staff.
- There were too few responses to the online Parent View questionnaire to provide information from parents and carers, but inspectors considered their views through 34 responses to a recent school survey and informal discussions.
- They considered 36 responses to the staff questionnaire and the views of students, through both informal and pre-arranged discussions.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including: the school's information on students' current progress, students' work, leaders' reports on lesson observations, the school's development plan, other planning and monitoring documents, documents relating to safeguarding, and records of behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Jo Curd, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Hilary Green

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Oak Wood Secondary School is much smaller than most schools nationally although bigger than many special schools.
- The school converted to become a Multi-Academy Trust with Oak Wood Primary School in April 2013. When its predecessor school, of the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- The two schools have their own articles of governance but share a building, headteacher, senior leadership team, administrative staff and governing body.
- The headteacher joined the school in his current position in April 2011.
- The school caters for a range of students whose needs include complex learning difficulties, moderate learning difficulties, severe learning difficulties and profound and multiple learning difficulties.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for pupil premium funding, in this case pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority, is much higher than in most schools.
- All of the students have statements of special educational needs.
- Because of their specific needs, an extremely small number of students are educated elsewhere by independent providers.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by making sure that students have more opportunities to learn and practise the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics within other lessons.
- Improve the consistency, frequency and effectiveness with which staff use various forms of communication, including technology, signs and symbols.
- Ensure that leaders and managers address any areas of relative weakness even more systematically and completely.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- All groups of students achieve well. Progress over the last three years compares favourably with that of similar students elsewhere. Achievement is improving. Progress this year has been particularly good because teaching is effective and the curriculum is so very broad and practical.
- Students with the most challenging or complex needs, including the very few educated elsewhere, make good progress because their needs are identified, addressed and supported effectively.
- Students achieve a breadth of experience, knowledge and skills and are well prepared for later life and learning. However the range of nationally recognised qualifications with which students leave Year 11 and Year 14 are not always extensive. Leaders are well aware of this and currently reviewing all of these.
- Students who are able to, read widely and often. They develop accurate phonic (the sounds letters make) skills which they use well, especially through additional lessons in Key Stage 3. They also develop understanding and expression in reading, because staff emphasise these skills and provide suitable practical activities to reinforce them. For example, students with complex and moderate difficulties in the sixth form developed expression and understanding exceedingly well, as they verbally performed a story they had read.
- Individual needs are met well. Barriers to learning are identified and, where possible, overcome. There is equality of opportunity for all students to achieve well, all are valued and discrimination is combated. For example, students with profound and multiple difficulties benefit greatly from the varied, highly practical and tactile approach of a specialist scheme, whereas some more able students attend mathematics lessons in the mainstream secondary school nearby.
- Students known to be eligible for pupil premium funding attain similar levels and progress at similar rates to other students because staff know them well and use funding wisely to support their learning and well-being.
- The Multi Academy Trust arrangements help achievement because staff in the Primary and Secondary schools share good practice and meet students' individual needs, whatever their age or ability.

The quality of teaching is good

- Students, parents, carers and staff are positive about teaching. This is effective, creative and sensitive. It successfully helps all groups of students achieve well.
- Teaching staff, including teaching assistants, prepare lessons well and provide very practical, engaging activities which are adapted well to meet students' various needs. For example, students in Key Stage 4 developed their communication and literacy skills well, in an interesting geography lesson about islands. Students with complex learning difficulties chose four pictures and words of things they would like on their island. Students with more profound learning difficulties listened to the sounds and watched waves of the sea as they worked with sand and water and experienced the sensation of these items on their skin.
- Occasionally, opportunities for students to learn and develop basic skills in other lessons are

missed. For example, staff did not encourage or request that students, who were learning to write their names, should write these on their paintings in an art lesson.

- Various means of communication are used well to include and enable students. For example, staff and students in Key Stage 3 used symbols, signs and technology as they practised for an assembly presentation. The benefits of this are reduced however, as the full range is not used consistently or effectively in all classes.
- Interesting and engaging activities, visitors and frequent visits out all help students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students learn about a range of countries, cultures and faiths and show interest in, and respect for these. Records show that one student with profound learning and physical difficulties responded happily to the rhythms of African drums whilst a student with moderate learning difficulties talked very positively about history and showed good knowledge of William the Conqueror and castles.
- Teaching staff assess students' attainment frequently and thoroughly. They know students well and adapt activities and resources effectively to meet individual needs and abilities. Pupil premium funding is used appropriately to ensure that those in receipt are integrated, supported and enabled to participate in all that the school offers, including outings and residential trips.
- The Multi Academy Trust arrangements have helped teaching, because staff have learned from the good practice, experiences and insights of colleagues in the primary school and have developed smooth, calm transition of pupils from primary to secondary school. Assessments are standardised and consistent across the two schools.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The vast majority of students attend well and behave extremely well in and out of class.
- Students are encouraged and supported very well. Assisted by excellent relationships with staff and well organised classrooms, students quickly gain confidence and, where possible, independence, for example, getting resources they need and making choices about how they will do a task.
- Students in the sixth form benefit from undertaking a wide range of very practical tasks such as cooking their own lunches weekly and making their own snacks and drinks. Students are encouraged to be as independent as possible. Several students made toasted snacks independently, whereas another student with more complex needs was guided, prompted and supported to make coffee and tea.
- Students are very kind, considerate and supportive of each other. For example, during the inspection, students currently in Year 7 warmly welcomed visiting students from Year 6 and helped them settle, gain confidence and complete activities.
- Students, staff, parents and carers are very positive about the safety of students. Systems to safeguard students, including those educated elsewhere, are detailed, thorough and robust.
- Students have a good understanding of different types of bullying including name calling, verbal and physical bullying. They say that bullying does not occur at school but if there is any, they know what to do and are confident that staff will help them address and resolve any issues that arise.

- There are significant improvements in the behaviour of students with the most challenging emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. Staff have high expectations and act quickly to address any difficulties. Many students successfully learn strategies to manage their own behaviour and respond calmly and positively to things they find difficult. For example, some students choose to go into the small 'low-arousal' rooms if they need to and one politely informed a visitor that 'he was alright on his own, thank you'.
- The Multi Academy Trust is beneficial to students behaviour and safety because staff are trained together and develop consistent skills and approaches. Expectations for, and the management of behaviour are consistent across the schools. Students, most of whom have attended the primary school, know exactly what is expected and what the rewards and sanctions are.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders have successfully developed the school since the previous inspection. They have developed teaching, assessments and the unity of the two schools through the 'Multi-Academy Trust' which has been beneficial for all.
- The head teacher has a particularly strong and ambitious vision for the future which he has successfully shared with other staff and governors. Aspirational plans for an eco-pod for assessment, life-skills and respite are underway and suitable structures are in place to raise funds for this.
- Leaders monitor all aspects of the school carefully and frequently and have a clear and accurate understanding of its strengths and relative weaknesses. Although they use this understanding well they do not ensure that all aspects are developed thoroughly or completely. For example, leaders have used their very accurate understanding of teaching to improve this but have not ensured that all details are fully implemented in all lessons. Consequently, teaching and achievement are good and are not yet outstanding.
- The majority of staff who responded to the inspection questionnaire were very positive. All of them felt that students are safe. One, expressing the views of most, said, 'I believe Oak Wood Schools are going from strength to strength. We witness on a daily basis how happy our students are and what excellent progress they are making.'
- A small minority of staff expressed dissatisfaction about a few aspects of the school. These included the consistency with which policies are implemented, aspects of behaviour and the way teaching is improved. Inspectors found that the school is changing and improving, that there are some inconsistencies across the school and some aspects of leadership and teaching which need developing. They found behaviour and safety, including the development of students with the most challenging behaviour, to be outstanding.

The governance of the school:

- Governors are experienced and trained well. All their statutory duties, including those for safeguarding, are met. Systems are very thorough and robust. Governors know the school well, including the quality of teaching and how well pupils are achieving compared with other schools, through regular visits and detailed reports. They support and challenge leaders and are fully involved in school improvement, building on strengths and tackling any underperformance. They manage finances well and know how pupil premium funding is used and the impact it has on student achievement and well-being. Governors take responsibility for how the school rewards staff, managing the performance and salary of the headteacher and other staff.

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	139469
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	422423

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

Type of school	Academy Special
School category	Non-maintained
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	110
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	26
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bob Gilbert
Headteacher	Kevin Latham
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	024 767 40901
Fax number	024 767 40901
Email address	admin7046@oakwoodschoools.co.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 2013

