

Oscott Manor School

Old Oscott Hill, Birmingham, B44 9SP

Inspection dates 7–8 May 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The senior leadership team, subject leaders and the governing body have made rapid improvements to the school.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good with some that is outstanding.
- Leaders and managers rigorously monitor all aspects of the school.
- Good links with the local authority and partnership schools provide robust external support, moderation and evaluation of the school's work.
- The progress of students in English and mathematics is good.
- Students make excellent progress in their social, personal and behavioural development.
- The most able students often make outstanding progress across the school.
- The overall effectiveness of the sixth form (Key Stage 5) is good. Students make good progress and an increasing number are taking GCSE qualifications.
- Work, college and life skills opportunities are increasing and all students leave the school with qualifications.
- The behaviour of students is good; students, staff and parents agree.
- Students feel extremely safe and secure in school and say that staff make sure they are cared for well.
- Strong external partnerships help to develop learning further and provide for students' medical needs.
- The governing body has changed since the last inspection; it is now much more rigorous and challenging in its support of the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Students in Key Stage 5 do not have sufficient opportunities to practise their life skills.
- Students do not have enough opportunities to improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 10 lessons or parts of a lesson, seven of which were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with a group of students, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, and senior members of staff. A telephone conversation took place with a representative of the local authority. Inspectors also heard several students read during their lessons.
- Although there were not enough responses for inspectors to access the online questionnaire (Parent View), they took account of the 26 replies to a recent school questionnaire and the 34 replies to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of information regarding the safeguarding of students, attendance, school improvement and self-evaluation, performance management records, minutes of governors meetings, records relating to the progress of students, pupil premium records and those related to behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

Ronald Hall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Laura Henshaw

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Oscott Manor School is a smaller than average-sized school.
- The school has 10 classes catering for students from 11–19 years of age. All students have a statement of special educational needs.
- The school's designation has changed from profound and multiple learning difficulties to a school for students with autism and behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. However, students in Key Stages 4 and 5 are still mainly those with profound and multiple learning difficulties.
- The majority of students are of White British heritage and the next largest group is Asian or Asian British. The proportion of students with English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of students supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority and those students known to be eligible for free school meals, is well above average.
- The older students experience work related opportunities at Shelforce in Erdington and Gordon Franks Enterprise in Birmingham.
- More students than average start or leave the school at other than the usual times.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement further by providing students with greater opportunities to improve their work.
- Further develop opportunities for the Key Stage 5 students to practise their life skills.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Due to their complex learning difficulties, students enter the school with skills and knowledge well below those expected for their ages. Due to consistently good teaching, students make good progress from their starting points regardless of their background. The most able students in the school often make outstanding progress due to the high expectations staff have of them. Pupil premium funded students make good progress across the whole school.
- There are no significant differences between the various groups of students in the school. The progress rates for those students funded by the pupil premium have risen, resulting in these students leaving the school approximately a term behind their peers last year. School information shows that these gaps are closing rapidly. All students now leave the school with a range of qualifications and move into health and care packages of support, college and/or work placements.
- School information confirms that, due to good and better teaching, achievement for all students in English and mathematics has risen sharply. Students' reading skills are also rapidly improving due to the training staff are receiving to improve their skills. New teachers with specialist training in autism are also having a marked effect on students' progress, as lessons are taught with the students' learning needs fully catered for.
- New tracking and monitoring systems allow the senior leadership team and all staff to carefully track the progress of students. This allows for a rapid response to any underachievement and/or change in an individual student's needs. This information also provides a very accurate view of progress across the school, allowing senior staff to plan effectively for the future and teachers to accurately plan for their students' next steps in learning.
- Progress in reading is good across the school and all staff encourage students to enjoy books, regardless of their ability. Progress for the most able students is at least good and for many outstanding. In a number of lessons observed, inspectors heard students reading with confidence and a clear pride in their success. In an excellent lesson on Macbeth, students read extracts to each other and the staff, and fully understood all that they had read.
- Students make good progress across the school in their personal, social and behavioural skills. The school has used links with the local community, partnership schools and two work-related placement providers effectively to provide the oldest students with a range of opportunities to develop their work and life skills. However, in school they do not as yet have enough opportunities to practise these skills.
- Excellent relationships and the specialist teachers have helped students to improve their own behaviour management skills. In a number of lessons, students were observed sensibly deciding to take a little 'time out' when situations became a little too stressful for them. The calm and considered manner in which all staff work with the students provides them with a clear and positive role model on which to base their own behaviour.
- Students make good progress in the use of signing and symbols to develop their language and communication skills. Staff make sure that students fully understood what is required of them. In turn, students communicate freely with the staff. In a language lesson, a student was observed happily using picture cards to build up sentences in order to talk with the teacher.
- Due to recent initiatives, mathematics has become a strength of the school. This has resulted in

students making the most progress in this subject. Students successfully carry out a range of activities, from daily shopping tasks to more complex work on three-dimensional shapes, where they apply their mathematical skills in everyday situations. In all the lessons observed, students were quick to state how much they enjoyed learning mathematics.

- Students' books over a range of subjects show that their progress over time is good and for some even better. The work set is challenging; students clearly take a pride in their work and try to do the best they can. However, although staff provide good verbal and, where appropriate, written feedback to students on how to improve their work, students do not have enough opportunity to then improve their work further.

The quality of teaching is good

- Due to the careful monitoring of teaching and the use of external support and moderation, teaching has improved since the last inspection. Any historic poor teaching has been eliminated and new, more specialised teachers have been brought in. This has resulted in the needs of the students being met more effectively, thus raising achievement. For the oldest students particularly, these new teachers have created a wider range of learning opportunities.
- Teachers have been well trained and supported in further developing their skills. As a result, students feel lessons are more fun and interesting. Teachers and the other adults who support learning constantly monitor the progress students make in lessons. They use this information to change and adapt their teaching so that all students make at least good progress. Whole-school information is also effectively used to plan future learning.
- Staff use good questioning and discussion skills to develop their students' understanding and skills. Resources are carefully selected to match each individual student's needs and abilities. This makes sure that, from the less able to the most able, all students can and do achieve their very best. In lessons, inspectors observed the other adults who support learning carefully advising, assisting and encouraging students in their learning.
- The positive relationships between students and all adults help in creating the positive learning attitudes seen across the whole school. Teachers challenge students in lessons, but also give them the confidence and perseverance to maintain their concentration. In a number of lessons, inspectors observed teachers sympathetically but firmly encouraging students back on track if and when they lost concentration, and so little learning time was lost.
- Teaching in Key Stage 5 is good and provides students with a wide range of qualifications. Teachers have developed a range of life skills lessons; one of the most popular is the new poly tunnel horticultural classes. Students not only learn how to grow a range of plants, but also the shopping skills required to purchase the required seeds, equipment and resources needed. This is further extended through the enterprise project they have created to sell their produce.
- Teachers provide students with good verbal and where appropriate written feedback on their work, both during lessons and after students have completed their work. This ensures that students have a good understanding of how to improve their work. Students happily told inspectors that teachers make sure they knew how to improve their work but they do not always have enough time to do so.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of students is good throughout the school. This is due to the students' positive attitudes to learning and the effective management by staff. Students feel that behaviour in school is good, and parents and staff also support this view. Although students are increasingly entering the school with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, school information shows that the number of instances of behavioural issues is falling. Permanent and fixed-term exclusions are also falling.
- Students want to be in school and several stated they were not happy about having to miss school, even for such things as medical appointments. Attendance has risen and is above that for similar special schools. This is due to better teaching and the hard work the school does with its families in stressing the importance of learning. They work hard to help families support their child and so develop a positive attitude towards school.
- Due to the positive relationships fostered by staff, students support each other in lessons and work together happily. They share in the achievements of others and take pride in their own successes. Students take a pride in the simple routines which give them responsibilities within their learning. Inspectors observed students selecting resources and tidying them away, giving out equipment to others and recording their successes accurately.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. Students have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe both in and out of school. Their understanding of e-safety is good and students explained both how and why this is important. Students state they feel very safe in school as staff are always there for them. This was clearly demonstrated when a medical incident occurred, to which all staff and leaders reacted appropriately and effectively.
- All students spoken to indicated that there is no bullying in school. They were confident that any incidents would be quickly and effectively dealt with by the staff. All staff are trained in behaviour management and safe ways to restrain students, as and when necessary. Due to the excellent relationships adults have with the students, physical intervention is very much a last resort and so the number of these incidents is falling rapidly.
- Students around the school use tools and implements safely. They conduct themselves around the school in a safe and sensible manner at all times. They are fully considerate of each other and understand when others struggle with their behaviour. In the poly tunnel they use a wide range of tools with confidence and in a sensible manner. School documentation shows that in work and enterprise projects students conduct themselves well.
- The students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is due to the school providing a wide range of opportunities for students to experience different cultures and religions. A range of visitors and visits have provided practical experiences, such as a range of meals and religious ceremonies. Students discussed these events with happy memories and linked them to their own lives.
- Behaviour and safety are not outstanding as a small number of students do lose concentration and very occasionally create minor disruption to both their progress and that of others.

The leadership and management are good

- The senior leadership team and governors have worked hard with the local authority to improve the school. They have used links with local schools to provide expertise, external moderation and evaluation to check their progress. The quality of teaching has been improved to consistently good. This is due to the appointment of new staff, continual training, rigorous monitoring and performance management procedures.
- Through a shared and clear culture for improvement, the headteacher and staff have high expectations of all students and each other. This has resulted in a very positive approach to equal opportunities, as the needs and requirements of all the students and staff are fully met. Since the last inspection, achievement has risen steadily for all students and is at least good.
- Since the last inspection, the school has introduced rigorous monitoring and tracking systems. This provides the senior leadership team with an accurate picture of students' progress. In turn, this enables staff to plan effectively for future development. All monitoring processes are closely linked to the performance of staff and their pay and professional development.
- Improved teaching through effective monitoring by leaders and managers means that the Teachers' Standards are being met. All leaders and managers make sure that teachers use school information to help plan the learning and progress of their students. The specialist skills of teachers have been utilised effectively to extend the range of subjects available to the students. This is especially so for the oldest students who now experience a wide range of opportunities.
- Leadership and management of Key Stage 5 are good and have introduced a range of work, college and life skills opportunities for the students. An increasing number of students are taking GCSE courses as well as vocational qualifications. The school has developed links with a range of external providers in order to provide opportunities for students to practise their life skills. They are also looking into ways of providing similar opportunities within the school itself.
- Through its careful and considered monitoring of all aspects of the school, the senior leadership team has an accurate view of the school. This has resulted in the creation of a detailed and well-considered school improvement plan. It is this plan which has driven the improvements in the school. The school's links with the local authority and its partnership schools are good. The local authority has provided effective support.
- The pupil premium funding has been used effectively to make sure that students entitled to this funding can access all aspects of school life. It has been used to provide one-to-one support for students, purchase specialist equipment and/or resources. This funding has helped to secure the good progress these students make across the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance has improved considerably since the last inspection. Several new members have joined the governing body. Further training has made sure they have the skills to fully support and challenge the school effectively. The governing body carries out its statutory duties effectively. It oversees all safeguarding procedures rigorously to make sure that everyone in the school is safe and secure, and that the school complies with current requirements. Members of the governing body have a good understanding of all the information regarding the progress of the students and how it compares to similar schools nationally. They carefully monitor the use of the pupil premium funding and the results it produces. The governing body effectively monitors the performance of all staff and ensure this is closely linked this to their pay and professional development.

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	441324

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
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	74
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	30
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Hilary Jefferies
Headteacher	Joy Hardwick
Date of previous school inspection	17 October 2012
Telephone number	0121 360 8222
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