

Oasis Academy MediaCityUK

King William Street, Salford Quays, Manchester, M50 3UQ

Inspection dates

5–6 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Students' achievement is poor. Too few students make the progress, or attain the grades expected of them, across the great majority of subjects at GCSE.
- Very few students attain the highest grades. The most able students across the school are rarely provided with the challenge necessary to attain these higher grades.
- The high turnover of staff in a significant number of classes is a barrier to good learning.
- There is low-level disruption by students in too many lessons, and this is not always challenged or tackled.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school has deteriorated since the last inspection and the academy's work to keep students safe and secure is inadequate.
- The quality of teaching is poor and too inconsistent across the academy, but especially in Key Stage 3.
- Marking is generally poor. In too many classes, work in books remains unmarked or is marked inaccurately.
- Insufficient attention is being paid to developing students' writing or mathematical skills across the curriculum.
- Leaders and managers are having too little effect on improving outcomes for students and on the work of the academy as a whole. Their ability to bring about the required improvement is weak.
- Leaders and academy councillors have not focussed sharply enough on improving the quality of teaching and consequently it has declined since the last inspection.
- Middle leadership is at an early stage of development and has not made sufficient impact on improving learning.
- Leaders and managers are not held to account sufficiently for the achievement of students and the performance of teachers.

The school has the following strengths

- Students' outcomes in English have improved.
- Some good teaching was observed in a few lessons, notably in physical education, English and music.
- Students with special educational needs generally make better progress than their peers.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 23 lessons across the school. A small number of these observations were carried out with members of the academy’s senior team. Inspectors saw registration periods and observed how students behaved in and out of lessons. Inspectors were unable to observe lessons in Year 11 because these students were either involved in examinations or on study leave. Also, on the second day of the inspection, some Year 9 and Year 10 lessons were affected by a number of students being away on a geography field trip to the Peak District.
- Inspectors held meetings with the interim Principal, a representative of the local authority, representatives of the academy sponsor and academy council, including the Regional Director, senior staff, middle leaders and other academy staff. Informal discussions also took place with staff and students.
- Discussions were held with groups of students across the school about their educational experience and behaviour. Samples of students’ written work were also scrutinised, including in lessons.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documents including the school’s self-evaluation, development planning, student tracking, monitoring of teaching, performance management, staff training, and records of academy council meetings. They also looked at records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire for parents (Parent View) to provide evidence for the inspection. Five non-teaching staff completed staff questionnaires and these were taken into account.

Inspection team

Leszek Iwaskow, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

David Woodhouse

Additional Inspector

Thomas Quinn

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 44 the Education Act 2005 (as amended), Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- Oasis Academy MediaCityUK is part of Oasis Community Learning, a Multi-Academy Trust that sponsors 42 schools nationally.
- The school moved to a new site in Salford Quays in September 2012.
- Originally, the school provided for students between the ages of 11 and 18 but it no longer offers courses for students post-16.
- The Principal resigned five weeks into the autumn term 2013 and currently an interim Principal is managing the school in an acting role. A new Principal will take up post from September 2014.
- The academy's ethos is based on Christian values, it accepts students from all faiths and those with no religious conviction.
- The academy is a smaller than the average-sized secondary academy.
- The proportion of students supported at school action is much higher than that found nationally, but the proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is half the national average.
- Increasing numbers of students are from minority ethnic groups with the proportion of students at an early stage of learning to speak English now close to the national average.
- The proportion of students attracting additional support through the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for those students known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The academy council and the academy sponsor have roles in monitoring and governance of the school. The acting Chair of the Academy Council is also the Regional Director of the Trust.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching throughout the academy, but especially in Key Stage 3, by:
 - ensuring that all teachers, including those in the school temporarily, continue to develop their subject knowledge and teaching skills to ensure that they are able to teach their subjects with confidence and engage students appropriately
 - teachers focusing in lessons on developing students' skills, knowledge and understanding in the subject rather than merely completing tasks
 - ensuring that students' work is marked regularly, is of high quality and informs them how they can improve and checks whether they have acted on previous advice.
- Raise the progress and achievement of all students across all subjects, but especially in mathematics and across Key Stage 3, by:
 - making sure, as a matter of urgency, that staffing is stabilised to prevent further delays in

driving through improvements in order to ensure that provision for students, especially in teaching, is improved

- making sure that teachers plan opportunities to stretch the most able students and also meet the needs of those who require additional help
- providing more opportunities for students to develop their skills in mathematics and writing, in other subjects
- giving higher level, more demanding work to the most able students
- using questioning more effectively to challenge and engage students and encourage them to develop their reasoning and extend their thinking
- ensuring that students develop a pride in the presentation and quality of their work.

■ Improve the behaviour and safety of students by:

- eradicating poor behaviour in lessons to ensure that students' opportunities to learn are not compromised through noisy and persistent disruption
- ensuring that poor behaviour around the school is challenged and dealt with appropriately according to agreed procedures
- ensuring that safeguarding procedures are followed to ensure that students' safety is not compromised.

■ Improve the effectiveness of leadership, governance and management at all levels by:

- developing systems to ensure that all aspects of the academy's work are rigorously monitored and evaluated to provide a secure basis for coherent planning which is firmly focused on making improvements
- taking swift action to eradicate weak teaching
- developing middle leaders' skills so that they have the knowledge and expertise to be able to offer advice to their colleagues on how to improve their classroom practice
- making sure performance management links teachers' pay progression more closely to improvements in the classroom and to improved outcomes for students
- ensuring that the impact of funding, including the pupil premium, is spent wisely and is seen to be improving standards and provision in the academy
- ensuring that there are procedures in place to provide independent checks about the impact of the actions being taken by leaders in the school to improve the academy
- ensuring that statutory reporting and information requirements for the website are put in place.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Ofsted will make recommendations to the authority responsible for the academy.

Inspectors strongly recommend that the academy does not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Students enter the school with standards in reading, writing and mathematics which are significantly below average in most year groups. Too few students make the progress, or attain the grades expected of them across a range of subjects, notably mathematics, English literature, history, geography, modern foreign languages and art and design.
- Fifty-one percent of students attained GCSE grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, in 2013. This remains significantly below the national average, although this figure was boosted by students being particularly successful when entered for the English IGCSE. However, attainment in mathematics, which has a history of poor results, continues to remain low. Attainment in languages and humanities is significantly below average for almost all groups of students.
- Current academy data suggests that there may be a slight improvement in Year 11 in 2014, although overall attainment will still be below the national average and outcomes in mathematics and the English Baccalaureate subjects in particular continue to be a cause for concern.
- Very few students attain the highest grades. A legacy of poor teaching over a period of time has left too many students poorly equipped to tackle higher-level work with confidence. The most able students are rarely provided with the challenge necessary to attain these higher grades. Few students make more than expected progress across the whole range of subjects.
- Students known to be eligible for free school meals attain about a half grade lower in English and nearly one grade lower in mathematics than other students in the school. The overall gap has closed in English but the gap in mathematics has increased. There is no discernable pattern to the outcomes for boys, girls or those students with English as an additional language, although there may be some variation across individual subjects.
- In general, most disabled students and those with special educational needs make better progress than their peers because the work set is better suited to their needs. The most able students are rarely being stretched and as a result most do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Too many students, especially the most able and those in Key Stage 3, do not achieve as well as they should. Therefore, the promotion of equality of opportunity is inadequate overall.
- On the whole, students do not get a good start to their learning when they enter the school because ongoing staffing turbulence disrupts learning for many students across a range of subjects at Key Stage 3. The high turnover of staff, the use of non-specialist teachers and the setting of inappropriate work is not promoting good learning in far too many lessons. As a result, the greater majority of students make very limited progress.
- Extra support is provided for those students who join the school with skills and abilities that are below those expected for their age in literacy and numeracy. Many have low reading ages. All these students in Years 7 and 8 participate in functional skills lessons. Although there is a clear strategy, little accurate analysis is available to show how these students are progressing.
- Although a strategy is in place to improve students' literacy skills, this is being applied too inconsistently across the school and is currently failing to drive up standards.
- Students are entered early for mathematics at GCSE. Results for these early entries have been disappointing this academic year with only 46% attaining the A* to C grade.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Although some teaching is good, notably in physical education (PE), English and music, across the school it is generally weak, especially at Key Stage 3. Too many students, especially the most able, are not making the progress they should in too many subjects. As a result, the quality of teaching is inadequate.
- The heavy reliance on supply teachers and non-specialist staff in a number of subject areas does

not promote good learning. Where this is the case, students are often occupied with low-level tasks or worksheets and being 'minded' rather than taught. Students commented that in lessons where temporary or supply teachers were present there was often significant disruption due to poorer behaviour.

- Although a system of staff development and teacher-to-teacher support has been established, this is currently having very limited impact at grass roots level and ineffective teaching permeates far too many lessons across the school. Questioning does not always elicit thinking and discussion, and the lack of challenge in many of the tasks set does not support learning for the most able students in particular. All students, of whatever ability, are frequently asked to complete the same task.
- Teachers often lacked the confidence to challenge poor behaviour and students would nonchalantly ignore instructions, shout out, casually chat and put little thought into what they were doing. As a result, work would often be unfinished, of poor quality and poorly presented.
- The whole-school policy to develop quality extended writing across the school is not happening with any degree of consistency. Outside English, there are too few opportunities for students to write at length and develop their thinking and writing skills, especially at Key Stage 3. Poor teaching in mathematics means that students' overall grasp of basic mathematical skills, remains insecure.
- The poor quality of marking across the school remains a major concern. This has been an issue for some time but too little is being done about it. Too many books remain unmarked or have cursory ticks. Students complained that their work is sometimes lost or not returned for several weeks and they have to work on loose paper. Very few books had comments that directed students towards improving their work.
- Presentation in books is poor in far too many classes. Writing can be illegible, pages can be sprinkled with graffiti, and little thought is given to spelling, punctuation and grammar. This is ongoing and is not being sufficiently challenged, as there is little evidence to suggest that presentation is improving.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate

- The behaviour of students is inadequate. Behaviour in lessons and around the school has deteriorated since the last inspection. Concerns about worsening behaviour were raised last summer during an external review of the school's work. During this inspection, inspectors observed poor attitudes to learning and, at times, disrespectful and aggressive behaviour around the school.
- Students themselves expressed concerns about behaviour in lessons and around the school. They were concerned that poor behaviour in too many lessons was disrupting their learning. They generally feel safe around the school but not always when there are no adults supervising.
- Bullying remains an issue and students did acknowledge that it does occur, including name-calling, racist abuse and homophobic bullying. They expressed mixed views about whether it was always dealt with suitably quickly by adults in the school. The perceived frequency of bullying still remains an area of concern for youngsters in the school.
- Movement around the school is boisterous and there is often pushing and shoving on stairs and in corridors. Pupils do not always respect their environment and drop litter, without any consideration, especially in the dining area at break and lunchtime.
- Procedures to deal with poor and disruptive behaviour are lax and not always adhered to consistently. Inspectors expressed concerns about students' safety when some students were sent out of lessons and their whereabouts were not always known.
- Attendance remains below the national average, although it has slowly improved in recent years due to a more rigorous policy linked to early intervention and reward.
- Fixed-term exclusions remain above the national average. Boys, and students known to be eligible for free school meals are often affected, although the exclusion of girls is also above the national average.

- Statutory safeguarding requirements are in place as well as E-safety procedures and risk assessments. Regular fire drills are undertaken. All staff and council members have received relevant safeguarding training.
- The academy's work to keep students safe and secure is inadequate. Not all administrative procedures are rigorous. For example, the child protection policy is comprehensive but does not name the designated responsible adult or council member, incident logs record the event but not how and if the incident was resolved.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Insufficient progress has been made since the last inspection and leaders and managers are not making sufficient difference to bring about necessary improvement to raise outcomes for students.
- A legacy of poor teaching and the inability to engage students in meaningful learning continues to disrupt outcomes for far too many students at the academy. Leaders and managers have not been able to tackle this effectively. As a result, standards continue to remain well below average in most subjects. In particular, results in mathematics continue to be disappointing and have been a major concern for a number of years.
- The academy's evaluation of its performance is weak and focuses on academic outcomes at the end of Key Stage 4 and insufficiently on the outcomes for different student and age groups. Senior leaders have also been overly optimistic and over-estimated the academy's performance.
- The interim Principal has tackled the areas of weakest practice and several staff have left or are absent long-term. The need to employ a large number of temporary and supply staff has added to the disruption to learning for many students.
- There has been a restructuring of responsibilities but line management and accountability processes are not rigorous enough. For example, marking and on-going assessment of students' work has been, and remains, an issue in many subjects across the school. There is no indication that widespread poor practice is being challenged because it continues to persist.
- Middle leadership, especially of subjects, is at an early stage of development and has not made sufficient impact on improving learning.
- There has been insufficient focus on improving the quality of teaching. Although a programme of training is in place, this is generic and does not fully meet the needs of the many non-specialist teachers who are taking lessons, especially in Key Stage 3.
- The lack of rigorous monitoring of all aspects of academy life means that neither senior nor subject leaders can accurately evaluate and plan or take the right actions to bring about improvement.
- Currently, teachers' appraisal and pay progression is not rigorous enough. Teachers are not set clear targets for their performance, which are based on students' achievement and on quantifiable evidence of impact in their area of responsibility.
- The school receives significant amounts of money through pupil premium funding. Expenditure is recorded but there is no clear evidence that this is being spent effectively, since many of these students continue to underachieve. Analysis focuses briefly on outcomes at Key Stage 4 but does not go into sufficient depth and measure progress against the other year groups in the academy.
- Leaders and managers have not ensured that statutory reporting and information requirements for the website are in place, for example, there is no special educational needs or child protection and safeguarding policy evident on the site. Information about pupil premium funding was not on the academy's website at the start of the inspection. Financial support is being provided to enable the academy to function until student numbers increase.
- Relationships with the local authority are positive. The adviser visits the school on a regular basis to discuss progress and data. Support is also brokered through the teaching school network and the academy buys into some of the training offered, such as that for special educational needs and aspiring middle leaders. There is very little evidence that external support provided to the academy is having an impact on improving learning or outcomes for students.

■ **The governance of the academy :**

- Within the governance structure of the academy, leaders and managers have not been held to account well enough for the achievement of students and the performance of teachers. Too much emphasis has been placed on the outcomes at Key Stage 4 rather than the progress of different year groups, especially at Key Stage 3, and on the impact of teaching over time. Senior leaders have not been challenged well enough to explain the lack of impact of the pupil premium funding, weaknesses in the appraisal of teachers, or lack of administrative rigour in following policies.

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	135661
Local authority	Salford
Inspection number	431657

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	460
Appropriate authority	The Academy Council
Chair	Mike Whitaker
Headteacher	Patrick Rice
Date of previous school inspection	27 September 2012
Telephone number	0161 886 6500
Fax number	NA
Email address	info@oasismediacityuk.org

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