

Oasis Academy Boulton

Boulton Road, Birmingham, B21 0RE

Inspection dates 3–4 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good		2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good		2
Quality of teaching	Good		2
Achievement of pupils	Good		2
Early years provision	Outstanding		1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children get an excellent start to academy life in the Nursery and Reception classes. Attainment at the end of Reception is well above national averages.
- Since the academy opened, rates of progress have improved for all groups of pupils across the school.
- Teaching is typically good because teachers know their pupils very well and plan work carefully to meet their differing needs.
- The work of teaching assistants is a real strength of the academy. Academy leaders have ensured that they are well trained and have good subject knowledge.
- Pupils' behaviour in and around the academy is excellent. They care about one another and show this in numerous ways. They are eager to learn and highly attentive in lessons. Inspectors saw no low-level disruption or instances of poor behaviour anywhere in the academy.
- The Principal is bringing about rapid improvements in achievement and teaching. She has placed the need to ensure all pupils reach their full potential at the heart of the academy's work.
- Governors know the academy well. They provide effective support and challenge to leaders to ensure that they monitor the academy's progress towards its key priorities carefully.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding for all pupils to make accelerated progress in reading and mathematics. Teachers sometimes follow schemes of work too rigidly, and do not always challenge pupils or identify gaps in their knowledge as much or as quickly as they should.
- Although pupils are kept completely safe, the policy relating to safeguarding requires updating to fully reflect the good practice that exists within the academy.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.
- The academy does not clearly indicate where and when pupils are taught how to avoid situations that might endanger them.
- Not all middle leaders have a detailed understanding of how their work contributes to wider academy priorities.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was part of a focused inspection of academies in the Oasis multi-academy trust.
- This was the first inspection since the school became an academy in September 2013.
- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 16 lessons or parts of lessons. Two of these were observed jointly with the Principal.
- Meetings were held with the Principal, the Deputy Principal, middle leaders, a group of teachers, academy councillors, a representative of the multi-academy trust and different groups of pupils.
- Inspectors held informal discussions with parents.
- Inspectors took account of 37 responses to Ofsted's on-line questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the academy's own questionnaires for pupils and parents, and 34 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of academy documents and other information, including the academy's improvement plan, self-assessment information, pupil progress information, records of attendance, behaviour and safety, and records of teachers' performance management and academy council meetings.
- Inspectors also looked at pupils' work in a range of subjects and listened to pupils read.

Inspection team

Mel Ford, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Mitchell Moore

Her Majesty's Inspector

Lynda Townsend

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Oasis Academy Boulton is a slightly smaller than average primary school. It converted to academy status in April 2013. When its previous school, Matthew Boulton Community Primary School, was last inspected in February 2012, it was judged to be inadequate and to require special measures.
- Governance of the academy is undertaken through a two-tier model, with an academy council overseeing the academy's work at a local level and the academy trust performing the same role at regional and national level.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have a special educational need is slightly above the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by pupil premium funding is well above the national average. The pupil premium is extra funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- Almost all pupils are from minority ethnic groups, the largest of which is for pupils of Pakistani origin. For well over half of the pupils, English is an additional language, and this proportion is significantly above the national average.
- The academy meets the government's floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Children in the early years can attend the Nursery on either a part-time or full-time basis; the majority attend full time. Most children move on from the Nursery to enter the academy's Reception class where they attend full time.
- The academy runs a daily breakfast club for all pupils, which was included in this inspection.
- There have been significant changes to staffing since the academy opened.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, so that a greater proportion is outstanding, by ensuring that teachers develop the confidence to move beyond prescribed schemes of work in order to extend challenge and broaden pupils' experience even further.
- Improve the proportion of pupils who achieve more than expected progress, particularly in reading and mathematics, by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects
 - ensuring teachers identify gaps in individual pupils' knowledge and understanding as early as possible.
- Strengthen leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - all middle leaders understand how the work they do to improve teaching and learning within their areas of responsibility contributes to whole-academy improvement
 - the safeguarding policy is updated in line with current best practice
 - the curriculum makes clear precisely where and when pupils will be taught how to avoid dangerous situations.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Leadership and management are good. Since the academy opened, leaders' consistently high expectations have secured significant improvement in the quality of teaching. The Principal and her deputy have worked closely with the academy trust to provide a very clear direction for continuous improvement. This has had a marked impact on improving outcomes for pupils and ensures pupils behave exceptionally well and are very keen to learn.
- Leaders have established effective systems for checking the quality of teaching and for holding teachers to account for the progress their pupils make. Teachers understand what is expected of them and report that leaders provide good support to help them meet their targets through carefully selected training opportunities and coaching. This is supported by the records held by the academy. The academy's training programme provides good opportunities for staff to share and extend the best practice already established in the academy, for instance in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The Principal and other leaders are rigorous in checking how well pupils achieve. Robust systems are in place to ensure that pupils' progress is monitored very regularly. This means that any pupil not making expected progress is identified rapidly and extra support put in place.
- Most subject leaders are quite new to the academy and to their roles. Nonetheless, they have responded very well to the challenge of improving teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility. They take a full part in checking that all pupils are making the progress they should and that teaching is meeting their needs. Not all, however, are able to articulate how their roles and responsibilities contribute to long-term academy priorities.
- The academy uses pupil premium funding effectively to provide one-to-one support for eligible pupils in literacy and numeracy. It is also used to ensure that disadvantaged pupils can access the academy's full range of extra-curricular activities, including music tuition and swimming lessons.
- Leaders have employed the primary physical education and sport premium very well to ensure that all pupils have access to additional sporting activities. The academy has used some of this funding to provide coaching for pupils to help them understand how to keep fit and healthy, and to provide training for teachers and teaching assistants. Records show that this has increased pupil's participation in sporting activities.
- Leaders have been successful in ensuring a culture of equality and inclusion across the academy. This they promote through the academy's good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development programme, which encourages pupils from the Nursery upwards to value and respect each other. 'Thought for the day' is a popular element of the programme and pupils try hard to put into practice what they have learned from these discussions each morning before formal classes begin.
- The curriculum generally meets the needs of pupils well. The academy's strong focus on reading, writing and mathematics is appropriate and there are many opportunities for pupils to develop their writing across the curriculum and to extend reading skills. Opportunities to apply and practise mathematics skills are less well developed. There is good coverage of other subjects and well-planned use of 'topics' to ensure work is progressively more challenging as pupils move up through the different year groups. Although pupils know how to identify most risks and keep themselves safe, the time allocated for teaching pupils about potential risks is not clearly identified in curriculum plans.
- The academy works well with parents and this is reflected in the positive responses to Parent View and to the academy's own questionnaire. Academy-based activities for parents and their children to do together, such as cooking, have proved popular. The academy has also provided training and resources for parents to help them support their children by developing their reading skills at home.

- The academy has begun to pilot its approach to assessment in the light of government changes.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governance of the academy is good. Members of the local academy council know the academy well because its systematic use of a cycle of regular meetings, supported by clear agendas, ensures that they are able to ask the right questions. They provide an appropriate level of challenge to leaders, based on key priority indicators for the academy that have been agreed at national level, to monitor teaching, pupils' achievement, attendance and behaviour. Councillors know how the pupil premium is spent and how effective it has been in improving progress for disadvantaged pupils.
- Councillors and the academy trust are well aware of the quality of teaching in the academy and use this knowledge to inform decisions about teachers' pay progression through the 'pay committee'. This body comprises the regional director of the academy trust, the Principal and the Chair of the Academy Council, who make sure that only those teachers who meet their targets progress up the pay scale.
- Regular challenge and review meetings take place with the regional director, who has delegated responsibility for overseeing the work of the academy from the academy trust. These meetings inform the type and timing of reviews carried out by the trust's improvement team, as well as identifying targeted support where required. Together with leaders, they ensure safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Attitudes to learning are excellent in all year groups, including in the early years. Pupils value their opportunities to learn and are proud of themselves and each other when they succeed. Consequently, they make good progress in lessons.
- Pupils treat staff and each other with respect and clearly care for one another. For instance, during one session of the breakfast club, a Year 4 child was sitting with a classmate reading a book that was clearly very easy for her. She told inspectors she had chosen it because it helped her show her friend, who was an early English language learner, how to use an index to find information ready for a lesson later on. This attitude was the norm among pupils.
- The introduction of a pupil leadership team and peer mediators is greatly appreciated by pupils. Those elected to the team say that their opinions are valued and they take their responsibilities to model good behaviour very seriously.
- Behaviour is of an equally high standard outside the classroom and at all times of the day. Inspectors saw no poor behaviour during the inspection. This is reflected in the low level of exclusions and the very few incidents of poor behaviour logged in academy records.
- Pupils are proud of their academy and eager to talk about how their teachers help and support them to do their best. Many pupils approached inspectors to share their work with them because they were proud of what they had achieved. Pupils know that the academy is equally proud of their achievements.

Safety

- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Although the academy's safeguarding policy needs to be updated, practice itself is secure. Pupils feel safe and are safe. Younger children talked confidently to inspectors about being taught to cross roads safely and older pupils talked about e-safety. However, the school's programmes of study do not clearly identify precisely when pupils should be taught about dangerous situations.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes bullying, including cyber bullying. They say that it very rarely happens because they care about each other. They know precisely what to do if they have concerns and are confident that it will be dealt with quickly.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers in all year groups, including in the early years, check pupils' understanding throughout the lesson by effective use of questioning. They encourage pupils to expand their answers by asking them 'why' and 'how', so that they have to think hard and use key words to explain their ideas.
- In all classrooms, teachers' expectations of pupils' attitudes to learning are high; they are communicated clearly and consistently. Pupils respond very well and always try their best.
- Teachers assess pupils' work regularly and accurately. They use this information well to plan lessons that meet pupils' needs and abilities. However, this effective use of assessment data is relatively recent and some pupils, particularly those higher up the academy, have gaps in their knowledge and understanding from a previous period which teachers had not identified at the time. This has slightly reduced the rates of progress they have made as they moved through the academy.
- Marking is good. Teachers provide clear advice about what pupils have done well and what they could improve, and this is usually linked to their learning targets. Teachers expect pupils to respond to their comments and check that they have done so. As a result, most pupils make good progress.
- The most-able pupils are now making better progress because they are challenged appropriately by work that builds effectively on what they already know and understand. This supports them in achieving the next step in their learning.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special needs receive good support. Training provided by the special needs coordinator has ensured that all teachers and teaching assistants know how to support these pupils in class, as well as when to provide extra help outside class. Teachers monitor pupils' progress carefully so that they know what is working well.
- Teaching assistants are a real strength in the academy. Academy leaders have ensured that they are well trained and have good subject knowledge, and inspectors noted their impact on improving pupils' progress. Teachers and teaching assistants work in close partnerships and are given time to plan together. Inspectors noted a particularly effective partnership in a Year 5 literacy lesson, where teachers and assistants worked closely together to model the thought process to be used when analysing a text. As a result, some pupils who had been struggling to understand what to do were able to start work quickly.
- The teaching of reading has been a focus of the academy and this has strengthened the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letter make) in the early years and Years 1 and 2. Pupils now achieve results that are well above national averages in the Year 1 phonics screening check and in the Year 2 re-takes. Reading higher up the academy has also been improved. Rates of progress are now at the national average, although pupils' attainment remains a little below. The academy's own records indicate that this year achievement overall is likely to at least meet national averages.
- The teaching of writing occurs on a daily basis and is effective across the school. This is having a very positive impact on pupils' standards in writing.
- Teachers employ a consistent approach to teaching mathematics throughout the academy which ensures good coverage of the skills and concepts required. They plan their work carefully so that it is progressively challenging from Year 1 to Year 6. However, because there are too few opportunities for pupils to practise and extend the skills they have learned in other subjects, not enough pupils are yet achieving more than expected progress.

The achievement of pupils is good

- The work in pupils' books and the academy's records show that progress is improving across all year groups. Many children enter the Nursery with weaker communication and language skills and lower levels of personal, social and emotional development than is typically seen at their age. In 2014, by the time they moved to Year 1, the proportion of children who had achieved a good level of development

comfortably exceeded the national average.

- Pupils continue to make progress as they move up the academy. In 2014, standards at the end of Year 2 were in line with those found nationally and broadly in line with averages at the end of Year 6, other than for reading. In 2014, pupils were lagging behind their peers nationally for expected progress in reading, but academy records for this year suggest that the gap is likely to close in 2015. However, there remains ground to make up to ensure that the proportion of pupils who make more than expected progress in reading and mathematics moves closer to national averages.
- In writing, pupils make better progress than pupils nationally. Standards were above average in Year 6 in 2014.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their starting points. This is because they are well supported in classrooms and receive additional help that is carefully targeted to meet their needs.
- The gap between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and others in the academy is smaller than that found nationally. In 2014, these pupils did better than other pupils nationally in writing and mathematics by one fifth of a term. In reading, they were half a term behind other pupils nationally. Pupils were in line with others in the academy in writing and mathematics, but not in reading where they were one and a half terms behind. The academy's own information about progress this year shows that this gap is now reducing.
- The most-able pupils are now achieving well, with more making accelerated progress than has previously been the case. Based on current rates of progress, the academy is predicting that, by the time they leave Year 6, many more pupils are likely to have made more than expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics than last year. Leaders are confident that the vast majority will achieve a Level 5 in all three subjects.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- The excellent provision in the early years ensures that children are completely safe and prepared exceptionally well for the move to Year 1. The environment is well structured and rich in support for children's literacy. For example, constructions in the outside area are carefully labelled so that children can talk about their activities with confidence.
- Behaviour is very good. There is a happy and purposeful atmosphere throughout the setting. Staff have high expectations of good manners and courtesy, which they model for the children. As a result, the children play and learn together very well. Adults develop children's social and cultural understanding, including an awareness of British values of respect and tolerance, well. For example, children quickly learn to take the time to talk, to share and to listen carefully to each other.
- Teaching is outstanding. Adults teach phonics daily, using a combination of approaches to meet the needs of the children. They provide numerous opportunities for children to practise and apply their phonic knowledge throughout the day. As a result, the great majority of children attain a good knowledge of letters and sounds.
- Teachers monitor children's progress rigorously. Their accurate assessments, carried out in partnership with parents, inform their planning and they prepare for the next steps in children's learning well. Teachers use children's 'learning journeys' carefully to record their achievements clearly. They regularly share this information with parents so that they feel well informed about their child's progress.
- The early years leader is meticulous in ensuring that all children make the progress they should. She ensures that staff are held to account for each child, identifies strengths and areas for development, and leads training to ensure that these are addressed. As a result, all children make at least good progress.

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	139242
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	449847

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	229
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Keith Dennis
Principal	Jessie Elbaz
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
Telephone number	0121 464 4228
Fax number	0121 464 7291
Email address	enquiry@oasisboulton.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. 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 and 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 2015

