

Oak Academy

Duck Lane, Bournemouth, Dorset BH11 9JJ

Inspection dates

1–2 March 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Outcomes in English and mathematics have declined since the previous inspection. Although there are now signs of improvement, the pace of improvement has been slow.
- Teaching does not consistently stimulate the interest of pupils. As a result, pupils have not made the progress expected of them since the time of the previous inspection.
- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly the most-able pupils.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning require improvement. Although pupils follow teachers' instructions, many pupils do not take sufficient interest in their learning.
- Governors do not have a sufficiently accurate and detailed understanding of the performance of groups of pupils. Although this area of their work is improving, it is not yet sharp enough.
- Progress of pupils in the sixth form, although improving, is not yet high enough.

The school has the following strengths

- Leadership is improving because of recent appointments to the senior team. As a result, expectations of staff and pupils are rising and initiatives to improve teaching, behaviour and achievement are starting to bear fruit.
- The care and support that the school provides for its pupils are strengths. The school is committed to helping all pupils, especially those who are vulnerable.
- Attendance is improving as a result of the uncompromising attitude of staff who use all available means to ensure that pupils attend.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership by ensuring that:
 - governors are sufficiently rigorous and challenging in their interrogation of school achievement information to hold school leaders to account
 - leaders and teachers have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve.

- Improve outcomes, particularly in mathematics and English, by ensuring that:
 - teaching interests and engages pupils
 - measures to track pupils' progress are firmly embedded and have clear impact.

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that the most-able pupils are sufficiently challenged.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- The school has been through a turbulent period of change since the previous inspection, as the trust of which it is a part has developed. This has resulted in changes to senior leadership, governance and staffing, which have had an unsteady effect on the school. Leaders have not been sufficiently focused on the progress and attainment of pupils and as a result, outcomes have declined since the previous inspection.
- Leaders acknowledge that there is not a culture of high expectation and aspiration in the school. Some staff do not challenge pupils to achieve their best work and some pupils do not exhibit positive attitudes to learning in class, which results in low-level, off-task behaviour.
- Leaders acknowledge that teaching is not yet good enough. Recent initiatives to improve the quality of teaching and learning have not had time to bed down and show positive impact.
- The school has received little support from the Learning and Achievement Federation (LeAF) trust since the previous inspection. In attempting to meet the needs of other schools in the trust, the school's own needs have been neglected.
- Since the previous inspection, the achievement of disadvantaged pupils has not compared well with that of their peers. Recent action taken by leaders has improved the monitoring of this group of pupils and led to teachers more effectively planning for their needs. As a result, disadvantaged pupils are now making progress that is comparable with that of their peers.
- The senior leadership team has strengthened since the time of the previous inspection. Leaders now have a wide range of expertise, are clear and honest about the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and are keen to move the school forward. There is capacity for improvement because senior leaders are ambitious, keen to drive up expectations and are holding staff to account more effectively.
- The curriculum has many strengths. At Key Stage 3, pupils' understanding of key concepts and ideas is enhanced because the same topics are taught in different ways across different subjects. At Key Stage 4, there is a flexible approach to studying academic and vocational courses. As a result, the school works with pupils to ensure that they study the courses that are right for them.
- Pupils with special educational needs or disability are well supported because of effective leadership in this area. These pupils benefit from the expertise of specialist teachers and teaching assistants, and various resources, such as the support centre, all of which help pupils to succeed.
- The school has prioritised the development of pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding and this is a strength. Around the school are many bright, vibrant displays which inform pupils about the pitfalls of social media, and the dangers of radicalisation. Other displays celebrate pupils' work, champion their successes and promote pupils' involvement in the school. In tutor time, pupils consider issues such as cultural diversity and the British parliamentary system. On a regular basis, the school hosts coffee mornings with parents where subjects as diverse as 'sexting' or the government's Prevent agenda are discussed.
- The sixth form provision is improving, although it is not yet good. Academic achievement has fallen below the national average since the previous inspection. However, recent initiatives to improve the quality of teaching and outcomes in the sixth form are beginning to pay dividends.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governance has improved since the previous inspection because governors have become clearer about their responsibilities, the need for transparency and their obligation to hold school leaders to account. Governors now provide the right balance between support and challenge.
 - Governors' understanding of the attainment and progress of groups of pupils is not yet sharp enough. Although governors are now prioritising the monitoring of achievement, and have raised the general level of challenge to school leaders, there are still some gaps in their understanding of which pupils are underachieving and the actions leaders are taking to boost progress.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's records and checks on staff are thorough and fit for purpose; confirmation of identity, qualifications and clearance to work with children are on record for all staff.
- Key staff are trained to ensure that recruitment is conducted appropriately.
- All staff have received training in child protection and radicalisation. When required, referrals have been made in the appropriate way and the relevant agencies involved.

- The culture in the school is open and supportive, so that pupils are safe and feel safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not yet good because some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. As a result, some pupils, particularly the most able, are not challenged to think at a deeper level and to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning require improvement because pupils are often not sufficiently engaged in the learning. This is because teachers sometimes fail to plan activities that capture the creative, imaginative qualities of the subject or theme and 'hook' the pupils. As a result, pupils sometimes become bored, which leads to loss of concentration and off-task behaviour. Where it is apparent that the teacher has a passion for the subject, this enthusiasm is contagious and pupils cannot help but be enthralled; they enjoy the challenge of thinking deeply.
- The progress of some pupils is hindered because teachers do not plan effectively to meet their needs. Where this is the case, the pace of learning is slow because too much time is spent recapping and checking prior knowledge when pupils are ready to move on and learn something new.
- Leaders understand the work that needs to be done to improve teaching and they have started on this journey. Initiatives designed to improve aspects of teachers' planning and the monitoring of pupils' progress have been introduced. For example, all staff now use a teacher monitoring folder, which records the progress that pupils are making over time and draws attention to the differing needs of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. However, it is too early to evaluate the impact of this initiative at this stage.
- Pupils enjoy positive relationships with staff characterised by mutual respect, trust and openness. This is supported in pupils' work where effective feedback that follows the school's policy is provided regularly by teachers and responded to by pupils. Where this is the case, a genuine dialogue between pupils and teachers helps pupils to improve their work.
- Pupils are supported in their reading and development of literacy across the curriculum, particularly those pupils who have fallen behind their peers and need to catch up. These pupils benefit from dedicated funding that helps them to improve their reading. Incorrect spelling is highlighted in subjects other than English and displays around the school champion pupils' writing by drawing attention to its strengths.
- Pupils are well supported by other adults, such as teaching assistants, who provide the right level of challenge. They work unobtrusively with individual pupils so that they do not feel singled out and are able to make effective progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school rightly prides itself on the care and support that it provides for pupils. Every pupil is valued and treated as an individual, and the school has developed various resources to provide this care. When pupils experience problems with their friends or peers, they are brought together in 'the Raise room' where staff are able to mediate and offer guidance to prevent issues escalating. Pupils who are vulnerable and may have social or communication issues receive help from the Pupil Support Centre.
- The school environment is open, warm and friendly. Corridor displays celebrate the achievements of pupils. Staff and pupils treat each other and visitors with respect.
- The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and after-school sessions to support pupils' learning and wider experience of school life. For instance, the school participates in the Rock Challenge, which is a series of performing arts events to promote healthy living that is very popular with pupils.
- A large proportion of the parents who responded to the online survey, Parent View, indicated that their child was well looked after and felt safe in school.
- There is very little bullying in the school and where it does occur, it is dealt with effectively by members of staff.

- The social, moral, spiritual and cultural education that pupils receive ensures that they are aware of how to keep themselves safe, particularly in relation to the internet and social media.
- The school is committed to working with parents, especially those who are not actively engaged with the school, so that the care provided at school is reinforced by the care provided at home, for example, through the regular coffee mornings that take place for parents.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- The attitudes to learning of some pupils in class are not good because teaching does not sufficiently interest them and this leads to too frequent off-task behaviour. In these cases, there is calling out, talking while the teacher is talking, and chatting with other members of the class inappropriately.
- Pupils in Key Stages 3 and 4 reported that behaviour is not always good in certain classes. Also, a quarter of parents who completed the inspection survey and a third of staff who completed the staff survey did not agree that behaviour is good.
- School leaders have rightly taken decisive steps to address higher level poor behaviour, which is now declining. Currently, however, exclusions are higher than the national average.
- Pupils' behaviour outside classrooms around the school site is positive. Pupils make effective use of the social spaces available to them, gather and talk quietly in small groups and queue patiently for food in the canteen. They move calmly around the building at lesson changeover times.
- Attendance is improving over time. This is because the school is working hard with parents to ensure that pupils arrive on time in the morning and are ready to learn. Rewards for attendance, such as free hot chocolate and sending postcards to the pupil's home, are being used effectively to motivate pupils. The school is also working closely with an education welfare officer and has introduced mentoring support and flexible timetables for pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Even allowing for pupils' low starting points, attainment has been below average for the last three years, although Year 11 attainment in 2015 did show improvement and the progress of current pupils suggests that improvement is set to continue.
- The progress made by pupils in English and mathematics has been below average since the previous inspection. Additionally, in 2015, Year 11 disadvantaged pupils performed less well in comparison with their non-disadvantaged peers.
- The progress of learners in the sixth form following academic courses has been below average since the previous inspection and has shown little sign of improvement. The progress made by those following vocational courses has been higher than average and these learners continue to do well.
- In other subjects, such as science, pupils have consistently been making the progress expected of them, and improvements are evident in other subjects, such as modern foreign languages, where the progress that pupils make has been steadily rising.
- Currently, pupils are making more progress because of recent improvements to teaching, more ambitious target-setting and a sharper, more meticulous approach to the tracking of individual pupils' progress.
- Gaps are closing between the achievement of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils. Leaders are successfully working with staff to identify and prioritise disadvantaged pupils in classes. They monitor the spending of the pupil premium funding more effectively and carefully evaluate its impact.
- Pupils with special educational needs or disability make progress that is comparable with that of other pupils. This is because their needs are accurately understood by the coordinator and they receive appropriate support, such as the dedicated help of teaching assistants. Furthermore, the foundation curriculum in Key Stage 3 encourages pupils to make good progress as they move through the school. The most-able pupils are not supported to the same degree, however. Some teachers do not plan sufficiently challenging lessons to push these pupils to achieve their potential.

16 to 19 study programmes

require improvement

- The progress and attainment of learners following academic courses have declined since the previous inspection and stayed below average for the last three years. Until recently, there has been little sign of improvement.
- Teaching, although improving, is not yet good. Teachers do not consistently create sufficient opportunities for learners to deepen their thinking and conceptual understanding, or to engage and take an active part in their learning. As a result, some learners do not acquire the self-assurance needed to take full advantage of their sixth-form experience.
- The recently appointed leader of the sixth form is providing strong and purposeful leadership. She has begun to introduce a culture of higher aspiration throughout the sixth form. As a result, more learners are now taking academic courses, showing greater commitment to their studies and making better progress. Nevertheless, these changes have yet to reach fruition and fully impact upon achievement.
- Measures are now in place to tackle the underachievement of individual learners as soon as it comes to light. Performance data are more readily available for staff to gauge the progress learners are making, issues are regularly discussed with learners, parents are more involved and referrals are made to the leader of the sixth form to follow up. As a result, fewer learners are falling behind and failing to meet their targets.
- Learners who did not achieve A* to C grades in English and mathematics GCSEs in Year 11 are well provided for in the sixth form, which is helping them to improve their grades.
- Learners following vocational courses achieve well. In 2015, learners made progress that was at least in line with that made by learners nationally. In the case of the childcare diploma, learners made more progress than learners nationally. Current learners are also making effective progress in vocational courses and are on target to achieve the grades expected of them.
- The attendance of learners in the sixth form has noticeably improved. Again, the leader of the sixth form has set high expectations of learners. They are expected to attend very regularly, to use study time effectively and to work hard.
- Learners receive appropriate guidance about their next steps in education, training and employment after school. The guidance is impartial and suited to the individual needs of each learner, so that all go on to further education, training or employment.

School details

Unique reference number	139037
Local authority	Bournemouth
Inspection number	10000443

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	842
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	246
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Eddie Craven
Executive principal	Ms Gill Blanshard
Telephone number	01202 774600
Website	http://oak.leaf.bournemouth.sch.uk
Email address	Not available
Date of previous inspection	14–15 March 2012

Information about this school

- Oak Academy is an average-sized secondary school.
- The previous school converted to become an academy in December 2012 and is part of the Learning and Achievement Federation trust, along with a partner primary school and a studio school that specialises in the performing arts.
- The executive principal has been in post since May 2015. A vice-principal has been acting head of school since February 2016. Three other members of the senior leadership team took up their posts in January 2016.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs or disability who receive support is above average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs or disability who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is in line with the national average.
- No pupils currently attend alternative provision.
- The school did not meet the government's current floor standards in 2014, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Key Stage 4.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors undertook observations of learning in 34 lessons, many of which were jointly conducted with leaders.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and other senior leaders, middle leaders, groups of pupils, and members of the local governing body and the trust governing body.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including information on pupils' outcomes, the school's self-evaluation, and records relating to the monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment, attendance, behaviour, and the safeguarding of pupils and young people.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in lessons and observed their conduct at break- and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors took account of 28 responses to the online Parent View survey and 35 staff questionnaire returns.

Inspection team

Stephen Smith, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Margaret Faulk	Ofsted Inspector
Tom Winskill	Her Majesty's Inspector
John Laver	Ofsted Inspector
Ben Houghton	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. 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.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

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, further education and skills, 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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2016

