

Oasis Academy Bank Leaze

Corbet Close, Lawrence Weston, Bristol BS11 0SN

Inspection dates	15–16 June 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The school’s vision of ‘ambitious students with the character and skills to choose their own path’ is lived out in reality.
- The principal and those responsible for governance have created strong teams, which are rapidly improving the quality of teaching, assessment and learning.
- Standards are rising and pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils’ progress accelerates in Year 6 and is outstanding in this year. By the end of their time at Bank Leaze, pupils are well prepared to move into secondary school.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs or disability make particularly strong gains in their learning and make as much, and often more, progress than their peers.
- Teachers expect much of the pupils and use assessment information well to plan lessons that match the needs of each pupil in their class.
- Children in the early years make outstanding progress. Staff plan exciting and stimulating activities for individual children. Consequently, children develop a love of learning, are curious and are becoming independent in their learning.
- The welfare of pupils, many of whom face challenging circumstances in their lives, is very well managed and is very effective at meeting their individual needs.
- Pupils’ behaviour in class and around school is impeccable and they have a high regard for both their classmates and for the adults who work with them.
- Attendance is rising. The school goes that ‘extra mile’ to reach out to parents and to make sure that pupils whose attendance is interrupted quickly catch up so that none are disadvantaged.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The proportion of pupils making more than expected progress in reading and mathematics is not as high as it is in writing because pupils are not challenged to achieve to the very best of their ability.
- Homework is not used well enough to extend and develop pupils’ understanding of the work they have done in class.
- Pupils’ speaking, individual writing and mathematical reasoning skills are not developed well enough across the curriculum.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve further the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to secure consistently rapid rates of progress for pupils by:
 - making sure that homework is used to extend, as well as to consolidate, what has been learned in class
 - increasing the opportunities for pupils to apply and extend their speaking and reasoning skills, their mathematical skills and their extended, free-flow writing, in different topic areas
 - ensuring that all pupils are challenged to achieve to the very best of their ability, especially in reading and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Leaders are deeply committed to improving the life chances of all the pupils in their care. The highly effective principal works tenaciously to improve pupils' educational opportunities. He communicates his high expectations persuasively to staff so that all have a shared sense of direction and feel part of a successful team.
- The principal is strongly supported by his talented senior team of two assistant principals. Together, they engender loyalty among staff, who work with clarity and enthusiasm in aiming to meet the school's high expectations for pupils. Actions taken are ensuring that the school continues to improve.
- Decisions are based on a careful and reflective consideration of progress in all areas of school life. As a result, staff morale is strikingly high and the strong camaraderie at all levels contributes to the excellent relationships within the school. Leaders have created an ethos of inclusion that has enabled all pupils to flourish, particularly those whose life circumstances present severe barriers to their learning.
- Leaders responsible for subjects are increasingly confident about their role in helping to improve standards and the quality of teaching. All are working successfully with the leadership team to drive improvement across the school.
- The use of pupil performance information by leaders and class teachers is strikingly good. They use this to shape learning in class, to fine-tune the curriculum and step in when any pupil shows signs of falling behind. This has been one of the key factors in improving the quality of education at Bank Leaze. The use of such information is particularly refined in the early years and, as a result, the quality of provision and the progress children make in this part of the school is outstanding.
- Leaders check and improve the quality of teaching rigorously. Checks are linked to a wide-ranging staff training and development programme, which supports both teachers and teaching assistants. Leaders are quick to recognise and praise the good work of staff and pupils and are alert to situations where people need more advice and guidance. Because staff benefit from supportive feedback, a climate has been created where everyone is trying hard to make the school even better.
- The school has benefited from strong support from the Oasis Multi-Academy Trust. Moderation of assessments is carried out with other Oasis academy schools to ensure its accuracy. Monitoring of standards in writing and in mathematics is also conducted on a regular basis through scrutiny of pupils' books, teachers' planning as well as observations of learning. In this way, any gaps in provision are identified and put right.
- The performance of teachers and teaching assistants is well managed, with clear links between the effectiveness of teachers and their pay progression.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils' excellent personal development is in part due to a curriculum that strongly contributes to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The excellent promotion of British values such as democracy and the rule of law prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- The school makes good use of visits to museums and other places of interest, as well as visitors to the school, to provide opportunities for pupils to experience life outside their immediate environment. The school makes sure that no pupil is excluded from these visits on financial grounds. Parents and pupils spoke highly of how they value these opportunities.
- Leaders recognise that more still needs to be done to refine aspects of the curriculum to ensure that more pupils make rapid gains in their learning through, for instance, more imaginative use of homework. Opportunities for speaking, writing creatively or applying mathematical skills are not as well developed across the subjects of the curriculum as they might be.
- The school has worked effectively to develop positive relationships with parents and the local community and this work is bearing fruit in improved attendance and much better behaviour across the school. Subject talks, informal information and social events have helped to improve communication between parents, teachers and school leaders. Parents report how appreciative they are of this improved level of communication.
- The school uses its additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils very well. Pupils benefit from a variety of support, including one-to-one support, work in small groups and financial help to take advantage of the many school opportunities provided. These are having a strong impact on the progress disadvantaged pupils are making.

- School leaders have also ensured that the physical education (PE) and sports premium funding is used well to extend the range of sporting activities on offer to pupils and this has led to an increase in the number of pupils taking part in sport.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The local academy council and the regional academy director are an effective force in providing support and challenge to the school. Members of the board receive good information about the progress pupils are making, the standards they reach and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Because they are so well informed, they are able to ask pertinent questions and challenge the school to further improve when any weaknesses are identified.
 - Members of the academy council and the multi-academy trust have a good understanding of how the performance of teachers is managed and the link between this and teachers' pay progression.
 - The multi-academy trust makes sure that the financial resources of the school are managed well, including the difference any additional funding such as the pupil premium and sports premium is having.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All staff are trained on the most up-to-date statutory duties. Pupils access a wealth of curriculum, pastoral and online guidance that ensures that they know how to keep themselves safe. The work of the designated safeguarding lead is thorough and precise. She works closely with relevant external agencies and parents to ensure that the most vulnerable pupils receive effective and timely support.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The quality of teaching across the school has improved significantly since the last inspection. Teaching is now consistently good, and in the early years and in Year 6 it is outstanding.
- Successful teaching across the school is characterised by:
 - a very positive atmosphere in classrooms, where teachers expect pupils to work hard and aim high
 - skilled observation of the pace of learning so that teachers readily and speedily identify when pupils have not grasped a concept or are falling behind
 - effective use of this assessment information to plan additional support or to modify the next steps in their planning
 - consistently challenging the most able pupils to do their best by giving work that stretches them to think and articulate full answers
 - feedback and marking provided to pupils which is consistently of a high standard
 - good-quality support for individuals and small groups of pupils provided by teaching assistants, who know the pupils well and guide them precisely
 - strong programmes to help pupils who have special educational needs or disability so that their specific needs are well addressed to enable them to make the same, if not better, progress as their classmates.
- Many practical examples of these aspects of teaching were seen during the inspection. One pupil, who was making particularly fast progress in a mathematics lesson, was spotted by the class teacher, who immediately reordered the task in hand to provide more challenge.
- Phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) is taught well throughout the school. As a result, pupils develop a love of reading. Reading records provide a valuable link between home and school, help teachers to keep a check on pupils' reading and also encourage pupils to read a wide range of books.
- The school recognises that it has more to do to encourage pupils to draw inferences from their reading and also to develop their speaking skills to enable them to articulate confidently to a range of audiences.
- English and mathematics are taught well across the school. The school has made strong progress at ensuring that other subjects across the curriculum contribute to pupils' writing and mathematical skills. A number of these opportunities, however, do not encourage pupils to be creative or imaginative in their writing and there are few chances for pupils to apply the reasoning skills they gain in mathematics to the other subjects they study.
- Homework is well embedded across the school and makes a strong contribution to consolidating and embedding what has been learned in class. Leaders are, rightly, anxious to develop the use of homework so that it encourages more pupils to extend their learning and apply and use the knowledge and skills they gain in class.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The welfare of pupils, many of whom face severe difficulties in their lives, is central to the work of the school. Regular meetings between key personnel and senior leaders ensure that the progress and well-being of all pupils is constantly updated. This gives senior leaders a precise understanding of where the greatest needs lie and which issues have to be addressed.
- The school is vigilant at reviewing the needs of its vulnerable pupils on a daily basis. It uses a range of information very well to enable staff to focus on pupils with the greatest need, including those at risk of low attendance.
- The special educational needs coordinator is knowledgeable and, along with all school staff, is completely up to date with all the relevant training. Teaching assistants are very well briefed to enable them to work with and support pupils with confidence and impact.
- Pupils greatly enjoy coming to school. It was a joy for inspectors to watch the many positive interactions between pupils in the very well-attended breakfast club. Older pupils joined in the activities of the younger ones, helping each other and chatting in a most sociable way. Pupils then seamlessly helped to put the activities away and settled in the hall with other arriving pupils, to watch an edition of 'Newsround', which the principal presented, interspersed with telling commentary.
- Pupils are very aware of how to keep themselves safe in a wide range of situations, both in and out of school. They fully understand the dangers the internet can pose.
- The positive attitudes pupils have towards their learning has contributed greatly to the improved progress that all are now making. They are eager in lessons, come prepared and show great resilience when work gets difficult.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- There are high standards of behaviour in the school. Pupils' behaviour in classrooms, in the playground, in the dining hall and as they move around the school is impeccable.
- Pupils get on very well with each other and there is a very real sense of community in the school. They were keen to talk to inspectors and older pupils said that behaviour had significantly improved over their time at the school.
- Pupils have a complete understanding of the different types of bullying. They say that incidents of unkind behaviour at the school are 'rare', but if any were to occur, they are confident that adults would 'sort it out'.
- Attendance, which has been below average for some time, is improving and the instances of persistent absence are greatly reduced. The school has been tenacious in its approach to reducing absence but despite its efforts, a very small number of pupils still face severe difficulties in attending school regularly. Inspectors found that in these instances, the reasons for the poor attendance were far beyond the scope of the school to deal with.
- Leaders have, however, been entirely successful in ensuring that the progress of pupils is not held back by erratic attendance and school records show that no individual or groups of pupils are disadvantaged by poor attendance. Pupils who join the school from other settings with previously poor attendance records show a strikingly improved pattern when they have been at Bank Leaze.

Outcomes for pupils are good

- The standards that pupils reach and the progress they make have both improved since the last inspection.
- The proportion of Year 6 pupils that made the progress expected of them in reading, writing and mathematics in 2015 was similar to that seen nationally. The proportion making more than expected progress was also at the national average in reading and mathematics but was above average in writing.
- Overall, the standards pupils reach by the time they leave Bank Leaze are similar to those expected of all pupils nationally. This represents good progress given their lower starting points.
- School assessment information, the work in pupils' books and observations of their work in lessons, show

that this trend in improvement is continuing and confirms the school's view that a higher proportion of pupils are working at the standards expected of their age.

- Currently, pupils in the school are making outstanding progress in the early years and in Year 6 and they are making good progress in Years 1 to 5.
- The school is quick to identify pupils who need any additional support. This individualist approach ensures that all groups of pupils make at least good progress from their starting points. Additional support provided for pupils who have special educational needs or disability means that their progress is carefully tracked and programmes put in place to help them make progress. All staff are aware of the needs of these pupils, and this helps them academically and socially.
- The effective use of the additional pupil premium funding means that disadvantaged pupils make at least as much progress as their classmates. The school has been entirely successful at eliminating and, in some cases reversing, the gap between disadvantaged pupils and others.
- The most able pupils make good progress in reading, writing and in mathematics. Work is carefully planned to stretch their thinking and encourage them to grapple with more complex concepts and problems.
- The school provides well for those pupils who need to catch up, for example those joining the school mid-way through the year, particularly those who have previously struggled with their learning in other schools. They quickly make the same good progress as their classmates.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education. They are used to working hard and the standards that they reach by the end of Year 6 mean that they are well equipped to face the challenges that await them in secondary school.
- School leaders are aware of the need to help pupils make even faster progress in reading and in mathematics.

Early years provision

is outstanding

- Children in the early years are making very rapid progress from their typically low starting points so that the vast majority are very well prepared for Year 1. The proportion of children who reach a good level of development across the areas of learning is now above average.
- Children receive highly effective provision from the well-qualified leaders and other adults who work with them. Assessment information is used expertly to plan activities for individual children, which fosters curiosity, creativity, cooperation and a love of learning.
- Teachers and other adults plan highly imaginative activities, which help the children to develop socially and academically. The stunning outdoor space is used well by the children. There are numerous opportunities for children to develop their understanding of numbers and to begin to develop writing skills. Opportunities to develop imagination and physical skills and to play together are rich in this early years setting.
- The children are developing their early phonics skills well and use them to read and write unfamiliar words.
- Additional adults consistently observe and record what children have said and done as supporting evidence for their progress and as a means to identify next steps in their learning. Evidence to support children's progress is presented well in their learning journals. Parents are encouraged to contribute to their children's learning journals. These are helpful documents which celebrate children's successes, help parents and the school work closely together, and point towards next steps for the children.
- Children behave very well and cooperate effortlessly with each other. They know how to take turns, listen well to each other, and they focus well on the task in hand. They love taking part in discussions and offering their opinions.
- Adults work well with children who require additional support, including disadvantaged children and those who have special educational needs or disability. They make the same rapid progress as others in the early years.
- Arrangements to ensure that children are safe and that their needs are met are completely robust. As a result, children feel happy and safe and this helps them thrive.
- The early years is extremely well led. There is a very clear view about the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and highly effective organisation and planning for the curriculum, that closely meets the needs of all children. A very flexible approach to the curriculum and a constant questioning as to how things can be further improved characterise the leadership of this area.

School details

Unique reference number	138409
Local authority	City of Bristol
Inspection number	10012375

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Amy Bellinger
Principal	David Wayland
Telephone number	0127 5894580
Website	www.oasisacademybankleaze.org
Email address	info@oasisbankleaze.org
Date of previous inspection	8–9 July 2014

Information about this school

- Oasis Academy Bank Leaze is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to give extra support to pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by Year 6.
- The school is part of Oasis Community Learning Multi-Academy Trust and is governed by a national board, a regional academy director and a local academy council.
- A breakfast club, managed by the academy board, is operated by the school.
- The school's website complies with statutory requirements.
- The school serves an area of very high social mobility, with levels of deprivation that are much higher than average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning and behaviour in all classrooms and assessed the school's promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Inspectors observed pupils in the playground and during lunchtimes.
- Pupils' books were looked at, as were the learning journals of children in the early years.
- Inspectors held meetings with the principal, assistant principals and subject leaders.
- An inspector met with the chair of the academy board and the regional director of Oasis Academy Trust.
- Two groups of pupils discussed their opinions about the school and their learning with inspectors. Inspectors also spoke informally with pupils in the playground, at lunchtime and at the end of the school day.
- The inspectors took account of 17 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, as well as the views of parents spoken to before school.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including: minutes from meetings of the academy board; information on pupils' outcomes; the school's evaluation of its own performance and its development plan. Behaviour and attendance records and information relating to safeguarding were also scrutinised.

Inspection team

Michael Merchant, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Matthew Cottrell

Ofsted Inspector

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