

Cliff Park – Ormiston Academy

Kennedy Avenue, Gorleston, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk NR31 6TA

Inspection dates

20–21 September 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since the school opened, the leadership team, governors and the academy trust have worked together to make rapid improvements to the quality of education provided for pupils.
- Leaders monitor effectively the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They provide suitable training for staff which has ensured that teaching has strengthened and is now good.
- Pupils' achievement has risen in recent years. This is because teachers use the information from regular assessments to plan effective lessons. Pupils make better progress as a result.
- Assessment procedures are rigorous and systematic. Senior leaders swiftly identify pupils who are at risk of underachieving, and take steps to ensure that they make the progress expected of them.
- From their very low starting points, most pupils make rapid progress, particularly in English and mathematics. In 2016, the standards attained by Year 11 pupils in a wide range of subjects were similar to those found nationally.
- The quality of teaching in some subjects is less strong than in English, mathematics and social ethics because good practice has not been shared effectively. Some teachers do not make sufficient checks in lessons to ensure that pupils work hard enough. In these lessons pupils' progress slows, particularly for the most able.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are respectful and courteous towards staff and their peers. They like school and attend regularly.
- Pupils say that the school is a safe and enjoyable place to be. All safeguarding arrangements are securely in place.
- Pastoral staff take good care of pupils. They work effectively with external agencies to ensure that vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils have the same opportunities to succeed as others.
- Differences in the achievement of disadvantaged and other pupils nationally are diminishing. This is because senior leaders routinely monitor the progress of these pupils and provide intensive support for those who need it most.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. The quality of provision and support provided for them by a team of expert staff is very effective.
- The quality of teaching in English, mathematics and social ethics is particularly strong.
- Reading is not promoted well enough. Few pupils enthuse about reading or regularly read for pleasure. Consequently, older pupils read with less fluency than expected for their age.
- At times, pupils do not take enough care with the presentation of their work. Poorly presented work goes unchallenged by staff.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the quality of teaching, learning and assessment where these are less consistent, by:
 - sharing and promoting the good practice found in the school
 - ensuring that, in lessons, teachers check regularly that pupils are working hard and are progressing well
 - expecting all pupils to present their work to the highest quality.
- Raise the profile of reading across the school so that:
 - pupils read more fluently and confidently
 - key stage 4 pupils have more time and resources to read together, read aloud and read by themselves, for pleasure.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal and her senior team are passionate about improving all aspects of the school so that all pupils receive the very best education. Their determination and hard work are demonstrated clearly in their relentless efforts to improve pupils' outcomes over the past few years. They have been successful. Pupils' achievement continues to rise.
- Senior leaders are held fully to account by the Ormiston Academies Trust for improving the quality of education in the school. School leaders are expected to regularly review and report on their findings. They are required to explain to the Trust the actions taken and the impact this is having on improving pupils' progress.
- Senior leaders' expectations of staff are high. All staff are expected to contribute to school improvement. They receive good support to enable them to develop their practice, and improve the welfare of and progress made by pupils in their charge. Staff value the support provided by senior leaders to help them improve, and staff morale is high.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They make good use of this information to inform school improvement plans, deal with weaknesses effectively and target resources appropriately. Inspection findings match leaders' evaluation of the school's overall performance.
- Leaders at all levels check the quality of teaching and focus sharply on the impact it has on the progress pupils make. Routine monitoring is robust and provides an accurate view of the quality of teaching and pupils' learning.
- Subject leaders have grown in confidence and effectiveness. Working alongside senior leaders, they are provided with dedicated time to support their colleagues. As a result, they have helped to secure much better teaching and improved outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders monitor carefully the quality of teachers' work so that recommendations for pay awards are given close consideration by leaders and governors. Weaker practice is tackled early and is not allowed to continue. New and less experienced teachers, and learning support assistants, are provided with good guidance and support to develop their skills and improve pupils' learning.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities receive good support due to a relentless drive to improve provision for them. They make good progress as a result of close monitoring and good understanding of their individual needs. A team of dedicated staff is well led by an experienced and effective coordinator who knows precisely how to get the best from pupils.
- Senior leaders ensure that additional funding to raise the achievement of disadvantaged pupils is used effectively to diminish the differences in the achievement of this group of pupils compared to other pupils nationally. This funding pays for bespoke support, including reading programmes, one-to-one provision from teaching assistants, and specialist support for pupils with social, emotional and mental health issues that helps to remove any barriers to learning faced by pupils. Learning support assistants lead a Year 6 summer school to ensure that new pupils are fully prepared for learning in Year 7.

- Senior leaders also ensure that additional funding in Year 7 is used effectively to enable pupils who start school with low standards are able to catch up with others in English and mathematics.
- A broad and balanced curriculum enables pupils to pursue their interests and ensure that they attain the GCSE and vocational qualifications they need for the next stage of their lives.
- Fundamental British values are well taught and effectively embedded in the everyday life of the school. These aspects are well taught across the curriculum but particularly in social ethics. Learning in the curriculum is supported by a wide range of additional activities in assemblies and tutorials. Pupils spoke confidently with inspectors about the values of democracy, the rule of law, liberty, mutual respect and tolerance.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good. For example, in one assembly on the topic of random acts of kindness, pupils were asked to consider how they could be a part of the wider community outside the school. Pupils develop a mature understanding of making a positive impact in both in and out of school. In a year 11 religious education lesson, pupils dealt sensitively and intelligently with moral and ethical views about abortion.

Governance of the school

- Governance is a notable strength. Local governors and specialist educationalists within the trust combine to provide high-quality strategic leadership. Their routine monitoring leaves no stone unturned in their pursuit of excellence. All staff understand fully the high expectations governors have of them.
- Governors know the school well. They hold senior leaders to account for securing rapid improvement.
- Governors are very ambitious for all pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged and those who need additional support to engage fully and succeed.
- Governors ensure that arrangements to manage the performance of staff, and reward the most effective practitioners, are carried out effectively.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The work of the designated lead for safeguarding is thorough, precise and professional. Staff training is up to date and appropriate. Pupils say they feel safe and are taught how to stay safe through assemblies, listening to external speakers and with events such as a mental health special focus day. The school's procedures for safer staff recruitment are strong.
- Leaders have taken effective steps to protect pupils from radicalisation and extremism, including providing suitable training for staff.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The school's systematic records show that teaching has improved considerably over the last two years and is now good. Inspection evidence supports this view. Pupils learn in a supportive and purposeful atmosphere because relationships are strong between them and their teachers.

- Most teachers use their secure subject knowledge to plan learning well, based on what the pupils already know and can do. They reinforce expectations about conduct and set suitable tasks that allow most pupils to apply their best efforts.
- Teaching, learning and assessment in mathematics are strong. Pupils are taught how to use strategies to work things out for themselves and check their work. Pupils are provided with the mathematical tools they need to ensure mastery of the subject. For example, in a Year 7 class working on brackets, indices, division, multiplication, addition and subtraction, a starter activity captured the attention of pupils well. While pupils worked independently, the teacher was able to check pupils' understanding, extend their learning and intervene where support was needed.
- Teachers use questioning well to explore topics and to get pupils actively engaged in improving their work. This is particularly evident in English, mathematics, history, social ethics and design and technology lessons.
- Pupils enjoy the variety of tasks that capture and maintain their interest and enthusiasm, for example in English and mathematics. In key stage 4, teachers are highly effective in linking learning to the demands of GCSE English examinations. They make good use of exemplar materials to stimulate pupils' interest. Peer marking enables pupils to learn from each other and make good progress.
- The quality of teaching varies in some subjects. For example, in some science lessons instructions are clear, marking strong and pupils' engagement and progress through learning is clearly evident. However, in other science lessons, pupils' misconceptions are not clarified by teachers and time is not used well to promote pupils' learning and accelerate their progress. Written feedback about the quality of pupils' work in some subjects such as science does not always help them to improve.
- Teachers' feedback to pupils, both verbally and in writing, is mostly in line with the school's policy and expectations. Pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work. However, not all teachers make regular checks within each lesson to make sure that pupils are working hard enough, doing their best and attaining what they are capable of achieving.
- Homework is set in line with the school's policy. Pupils told inspectors that this policy could be improved to help them manage their work more efficiently and enable them and their parents to understand homework demands more clearly.
- Pupils' work scrutinised by inspectors confirmed that the expectations of some teachers are not high enough, for example when messy handwriting and untidy diagrams are left unchallenged. At times, not enough work is done, and some is left unfinished.
- In key stage 3, pupils generally read confidently and fluently. Reading in weekly library lessons and in the first part of each English lesson develops their reading skills well. However, in Years 10 and 11 there are no systematic means of improving reading. A recent world book day was successful in promoting interest in reading, but opportunities were missed to follow this up and firmly establish the enjoyment of reading throughout the school. Some examples of good literacy practice were seen, although this was inconsistent.
- The school's own surveys of parents' views carried out during this year, and the responses made by parents to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire, indicate that most parents are very satisfied with the information they are sent about how well their child is progressing. They are also very happy with the care and support provided for pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Generally, pupils are polite and courteous towards visitors and each other. They are confident and self-assured.
- Pupils are proud to attend the school. They wear their uniform with pride.
- In lessons, pupils' attitudes towards their learning are generally positive. They are usually keen and eager to learn. At times, when teaching fails to capture their interest, pupils do not continue to work as hard as they should.
- The school promotes pupils' welfare very well. Pupils report feeling safe and recognise what staff do to keep them safe. They are taught about staying safe. For example, they are shown the risks attached to using social media, and know what to do if they have any concerns. Incidents of bullying are rare and pupils work well with staff to resolve it when it does occur.
- All staff promote equality of opportunity and diversity in the school by challenging stereotypical views and unacceptable language. This fosters good relations among pupils and contributes directly to the respect for others shown by pupils.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Teachers follow the school's agreed procedures to manage behaviour, using rewards and sanctions consistently. The school is a calm and orderly place in which to learn. During the inspection, instances of poor behaviour were rare and the school's records show that this is typical.
- Pupils attend well, are punctual to lessons and bring the correct equipment.
- Pupils and staff told inspectors that behaviour in lessons and around school has improved greatly. They are confident that the rare instances of poor behaviour are dealt with promptly and effectively by teachers.
- A very small minority of parents feel that behaviour is poorly managed and as a result their children are not happy. Inspectors found no evidence, at this time, to support these views. In addition, senior leaders' recent survey of the views of parents found that they were overwhelmingly positive about pupils' behaviour. Exclusions have reduced significantly this year. This sanction is used appropriately to manage the behaviour of the most challenging pupils when all other measures have been exhausted.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Overall outcomes achieved by pupils have improved rapidly in recent years. Pupils' achievement is now good.
- Attainment at the end of key stage 4 over the past two years has been broadly similar to the national average. Based on pupils' well-below average starting points this represents good progress. Results in vocational awards are exceptional.

- Recent results and the school's assessment information clearly show the impact of actions to improve teaching and the rigorous management of the school's work. The progress made by pupils in English and mathematics by the end of key stage 4 is exceptional. This is achieved through good teaching, thorough monitoring and intensive interventions to support those at risk of underachieving.
- Pupils' overall progress is also very good. By focusing on improving pupils' progress in other subjects as well as English and mathematics, leaders have quickly ensured that pupils now achieve well in a wide range of academic and vocational subjects.
- Leaders and teachers are able to accurately predict how well pupils will perform in examinations because assessment procedures are systematic and rigorous. Assessment information is moderated by specialists from other academies within the trust to validate their accuracy.
- The rapid improvements made in English and mathematics are not evident in science. Although improving quickly, pupils' attainment and progress is not as pronounced in science mainly because not teaching is consistently good. Senior leaders are fully aware of this and have prioritised science in their plans for further improvement
- Strong monitoring and interventions to support all pupils is ensuring that differences in the overall achievement of disadvantaged pupils, compared to others with similar starting points, are diminishing. The school's records show that over the last year, disadvantaged pupils in all year groups made very good progress in a wide range of subjects. However, they do not attain as well as other pupils nationally. Senior leaders acknowledge that more needs to be done to accelerate the progress made by disadvantaged pupils.
- The most able disadvantaged pupils are also capable of achieving more than they currently do. This is because not all teachers provide sufficiently challenging work that really stretches them to achieve the highest grades.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate, a government performance measure covering five core GCSE subjects, in the last two years has remained low. Action is being taken to improve this. Senior leaders have altered the curriculum in key stage 3 to ensure that more pupils are fully prepared for the rigours of this award in key stage 4.

School details

Unique reference number	140364
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10018483

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	909
Appropriate authority	The Ormiston Academies Trust
Chair	Dr Paul Hann
Principal	Ms Tamsin Poulter
Telephone number	01493 661504
Website	www.cliffparkoa.co.uk
Email address	principal@cliffparkoa.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is an average-sized secondary school.
- Most pupils are White British. Very few are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs, or who are supported by an education, health and care plan, is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above average.

- The school uses the educational facilities provided by Horatio House as alternative provision for a small number of pupils in key stage 4.
- The school meets the floor standards set by government as the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in 2016.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 29 lessons, three jointly with a senior leader. In addition, several short visits were made to a range of lessons on a joint learning walk with the principal.
- Two assemblies and a range of tutor time sessions were observed.
- Meetings were held with the principal, vice and assistant principals, and other leaders. Inspectors met four groups of pupils.
- Inspectors met the chair and a member of the local governing body and the two representatives of the academy trust.
- Inspectors listened to a sample of pupils read.
- Inspectors considered 14 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire (Parent view) and the 23 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspection team observed the school’s work; scrutinised data about pupils’ achievements, behaviour and attendance; looked at the school’s self-evaluation and improvement plans; reviewed minutes of meetings of the governing body and scrutinised pupils’ work in lessons and in samples of their work.

Inspection team

John Wilson, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Jacqueline Thornalley	Ofsted Inspector
Lesley Daniel	Ofsted Inspector
John Mitcheson	Her Majesty’s Inspector

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