

Ormiston Chadwick Academy

Liverpool Road, Widnes, Cheshire WA8 7HU

Inspection dates

13–14 December 2016

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The principal, executive principal, interim executive board and sponsor have created a culture of very high expectations among staff and pupils, which has led to rapid and sustained progress.
- In 2016, outcomes were significantly above average for all groups of pupils, placing the school in the top 10% of all schools nationally for pupils' progress.
- Leaders have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Monitoring at all levels is rigorous and effective in identifying and supporting pupils at risk of underachieving.
- Teachers' excellent subject knowledge and use of assessment information are major contributors to the rapid improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making more rapid progress than other pupils nationally. This is because leaders and teachers use additional pupil premium funding very effectively.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make excellent progress from their starting points.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding are robust. Pupils feel very safe.
- The curriculum is tailored to the needs of pupils and delivers very strong outcomes. Together with a wide range of extra-curricular activities, it promotes pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development highly effectively.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare are outstanding. Pupils have access to a coherent programme of activities to build their knowledge, skills and competencies to make suitable career choices.
- Behaviour is good. Highly effective systems put in place by leaders encourage pupils to behave well. Pupils demonstrate excellent attitudes to learning.
- Governors are experienced and knowledgeable. They provide very effective support and challenge to hold school leaders to account. Governors have played an instrumental role in bringing about improvements in the school.
- There is a programme to improve pupils' literacy skills but not all teachers apply this consistently. As a result, in a small number of subjects, pupils' literacy skills are not always developed as well as possible.
- Attendance has improved rapidly. However, the attendance of a few pupils is still not good enough.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Sustain and improve further current rapid rates of progress by:
 - ensuring that pupils' literacy skills are given even more emphasis so that pupils can apply their reading, writing and communication skills in a wide range of subjects
 - continuing the rapid improvement in attendance of all pupils by promoting the importance of excellent attendance to the minority of pupils whose attendance is not good enough.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The principal's exceptional leadership has swiftly created a culture of high expectations. Consequently, the quality of teaching and behaviour has improved rapidly. As a result, pupils make outstanding progress during their time at Ormiston Chadwick Academy.
- Parents are extremely supportive of the school. The overwhelming majority of parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend the school to others.
- Staff morale is very high and teachers feel well supported. All staff are totally committed to improving outcomes for young people. Teachers engage very well in training to improve their skills by working with colleagues in their own and other schools. Staff identified as having leadership potential are trained effectively and as a result are well prepared to take on such roles across the school.
- School leaders monitor the quality of teaching highly effectively. Senior leaders ensure that there are no significant weaknesses in teaching. Staff receive very useful feedback on their work and they use this guidance to continuously improve their teaching.
- Middle leaders are held fully accountable by senior staff and governors for securing continuous improvement in pupils' progress across subjects and year groups. As a result, all groups of pupils make rapid progress across all year groups and in most subjects.
- Systematic analysis of examination results and scrutiny of assessment information enable leaders to identify pupils who need additional help. Consequently, pupils who are at risk of falling behind catch up well with their peers.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and adapted to meet individuals' needs. Leaders make sure that courses are very well matched to pupils' interests and abilities. The curriculum is evaluated regularly by leaders to ensure that it meets the needs of pupils. There is a varied range of appropriate courses available for pupils with different starting points.
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities, events and opportunities enable the development of pupils as individuals. Pupils are excited to sign up for activities, such as horse riding, swimming, football and dance. Participation in all events is high.
- Opportunities for encouraging pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their understanding of British values are very well planned. Assemblies and tutorials include a range of topics such as democracy, the importance of good attendance and respect for others. Pupils learn about other cultures and beliefs, for example through visits to a local mosque.
- The school uses additional government funding exceptionally well so that disadvantaged pupils, including the most able, achieve better than other pupils nationally.
- Similarly, the school uses Year 7 catch-up funding very well. As a result, pupils who enter the school with low attainment in literacy and numeracy quickly make up lost ground.

- Strong provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities contributes to their achieving very well. This is because the special educational needs and disabilities leader provides highly effective leadership and support to her colleagues.
- The performance management of staff is rigorous and linked to whole-school priorities, training and outcomes for pupils.
- Those who are new to teaching receive excellent support through mentoring from more experienced colleagues and wider training opportunities. For example, they have access to a subject enhancement programme through the Prince's Trust. The school has not experienced difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff.

Governance

- Governors bring a variety of expertise to their roles through their own wealth of experience in education, commerce and industry. They have a clear, ambitious vision and visit the school regularly to see its work for themselves.
- Governors have a very good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They have a detailed understanding of what the assessment information on pupils' performance reveals. They offer highly effective support and challenge to leaders.
- Governors are rigorous in their approach to the performance management of the principal. They are equally rigorous in reviewing the professional development and progression of staff.
- A close eye is kept on the school's budget. Governors ensure that the school is held fully to account for the effective use of funding, including Year 7 catch-up and pupil premium funding.
- Governors fulfil their statutory duties well, including the arrangements for safeguarding pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Clear and appropriate measures are in place to ensure that staff suitability is appropriately checked, and careful records are kept. Staff and governors are regularly informed and well trained, including in aspects such as protecting pupils from the dangers of extremism.
- Pupils feel very well looked after and parents agree with this view. External agencies are involved appropriately alongside school staff and parents. Governors routinely check the school's safeguarding procedures. In addition, the sponsor carries out regular safeguarding reviews.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding. Teachers have very high expectations and deliver well-planned learning so that pupils are challenged and develop their skills rapidly. As a result, pupils make rapid progress from their starting points across the curriculum. This is particularly the case for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The vast majority of teachers use questioning highly effectively to target pupils of different abilities, and to probe and deepen pupils' understanding.
- Teachers' very good subject knowledge enables them to explain ideas to pupils clearly. Pupils listen exceptionally well and enjoy the opportunities to discuss and debate issues. In mathematics, for example, Year 7 pupils enthusiastically applied their knowledge to work out a challenge that the teacher posed by expressing the date as square roots. They wrestled with the concept and developed their mathematical skills well.
- Teachers and leaders across the school collaborate purposefully and share effective practice to help them make accurate assessments of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers know pupils very well as individuals and track the progress they make in their subjects meticulously.
- High-quality feedback from teachers to pupils about their work is very effective. Parents receive timely and useful reports that outline their child's performance. Pupils receive homework to consolidate their learning. They appreciate the help available after school that enables them to keep up and make very good progress.
- Pupils enjoy reading books. The most able pupils read appropriate texts very fluently. However, in a few subjects, the teaching of literacy skills is not sufficiently well developed. School leaders have put together a programme to support the development of pupils' literacy skills. However, this is at an early stage of development and is not always applied consistently.
- Additional adults in the classroom work very well with pupils to support and develop their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel very safe in school and younger pupils said that there are no areas of the school where they feel unsafe.
- The school's excellent programme of personal, social, health and economic education includes topics related to pupils' welfare and the care of others. The school actively encourages pupils to appreciate diversity and respect the views of people with different faiths.
- Pupils value and benefit from high levels of participation in an extensive range of extra-curricular activities that are available outside lessons.

- Leaders have developed an innovative 'Year 6 into Year 7' transition programme that includes a summer school, visit to an outdoor centre, subject teachers' visits to primary schools and close communication with parents. The detailed attention given to their individual needs on transfer to the school helps pupils to overcome any apprehension about joining the school.
- Leaders very closely monitor pupils who attend other providers for some of their learning to ensure that their needs are met. They regularly share information about pupils' progress, attendance and attitudes to learning with parents. As a result, these pupils make good progress.
- School leaders go 'above and beyond' to ensure that all pupils have access to impartial careers advice. Additional support is put in place for those most at risk of not successfully moving on to education, training or employment. Pupils benefit from the opportunity to participate in work-related learning and work experience. As a result, more pupils at the end of Year 11 move into sixth form, college or employment with further training than do so nationally. The school actively supports the most able pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities in reaching their chosen career aspirations.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Most parents feel that pupils are well behaved and that the school deals with any bullying effectively.
- The behaviour policy is clearly understood by pupils. The vast majority of pupils who spoke to inspectors said that the behaviour policy has had a strong impact on improving behaviour. This is also confirmed by the school's information on managing behaviour which shows that incidents of misbehaviour are rapidly reducing.
- The school is calm during and between lessons, at break and lunchtime.
- Pupils enjoy school. They arrive to lessons on time and bring the correct equipment with them. They wear their uniform smartly and show pride in their school. They show high levels of respect and work well with each other and their teachers. Their strong commitment to learning contributes well to their outstanding progress.
- Pupils understand bullying in all its forms and know what to do if someone is being bullied. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online and recognise the potential risks of using social media. The pupils who spoke to inspectors said that bullying, in all its forms, is rare and when it does occur it is dealt with quickly.
- Pupils have pride in their school environment and keep it free from litter and graffiti.
- The attendance and behaviour of pupils who attend the alternative provision are checked carefully by senior leaders to ensure that pupils are safe.

- Overall attendance for all pupils in the academic year 2015/16 rapidly improved to above the national average. However, current attendance has fallen slightly to below the national average and persistent absence is above the national average. School leaders acknowledge that, despite improvements last year, current attendance is still not good enough. They are vigilant and step in quickly to resolve attendance issues when they occur.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- In 2016, outcomes were significantly above average and for all pupils with different starting points including the most able.
- Current pupils make outstanding progress from their different starting points across the curriculum and across all year groups. This is because teachers have very high expectations and plan learning exceptionally well to suit the needs and abilities of pupils. Furthermore, teachers check very carefully how well pupils are doing and intervene swiftly and effectively if they fall behind. Pupils' books reflect the exceptionally strong progress they make across many subjects.
- Pupils join the school with levels of attainment that are lower than the national average. The school has a strong understanding of current levels of attainment and progress. The school's predictions for forthcoming public examinations demonstrate that pupils currently in Year 11 are on target to make equally outstanding progress as pupils last year. School leaders have made every attempt to ensure the accuracy of these predictions, by consulting with other local schools and those further afield.
- In 2016, the achievement of disadvantaged pupils from different starting points, including the most able, was well above the national average. For current disadvantaged pupils in the school, differences between their progress and that of other pupils nationally are continuing to diminish. The improved outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are evidence that the pupil premium funding is being used highly effectively.
- From their starting points, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make very strong progress. Teachers and leaders closely monitor these pupils and put in place effective support where it is most needed.
- Pupils who enter the school with below age-related expectations in English and mathematics catch up to other pupils, due to well-targeted spending of the funds available to support these pupils.
- Pupils who attend alternative provision make good progress because they have access to a broad and balanced curriculum and because of the close liaison between school staff and providers. The school checks and monitors the quality of provision and receives daily attendance information.

School details

Unique reference number	140864
Local authority	Halton
Inspection number	10022795

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	643
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board/Ormiston Academies Trust
Chair	Mike Gibbons
Principal	Tuesday Humby
Telephone number	0151 424 5038
Website	www.ormistonchadwickacademy.co.uk
Email address	info@ocacademy.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.
- Ormiston Chadwick Academy is a smaller than average school with a comprehensive intake.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is higher than average. Some pupils are eligible for the Year 7 catch-up premium.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is lower than average, as is the proportion who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average. The proportion who have an education, health and care plan is lower than average.
- A small number of pupils in key stage 4 attend registered alternative provision centres, including Harmonize Academy, New Horizons and Halton Tuition Centre.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for progress and attainment.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons in a wide range of subjects taught across the school to different age groups. In addition, inspectors made a number of other short visits to lessons, form times and other activities.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors met with pupils both formally and informally to listen to their views.
- Meetings were held with the principal, executive principal, senior leaders, middle leaders, newly and recently qualified teachers, four groups of pupils, the chair of the interim executive board and one other governor, the education adviser and the regional director from Ormiston Academies Trust.
- Inspectors analysed the school's own parent survey results, 117 responses to Parent View, the online questionnaire provided to parents by Ofsted, 5 responses to pupil questionnaires and 35 responses to staff questionnaires.
- The inspection team scrutinised documents which included the school's self-evaluation, action planning documents, minutes of governors' meetings, the school's own assessment information, safeguarding records, and school policies and procedures.
- Inspectors observed pupils at breaks, lunchtimes, in registration periods, assemblies, in lessons and at the end of the school day.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in lessons and an extensive sample of key stage 3 and 4 books were looked at jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors visited the school's internal exclusion room.
- Inspectors scrutinised the various forms of communication the school uses, including the website and information sent to and from parents and other stakeholders.
- Inspectors held a telephone conversation with staff in the alternative provision used by the school.

Inspection team

Ahmed Marikar, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Alyson Middlemass	Ofsted Inspector
Toni Roethling	Ofsted Inspector
Kath Harris	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
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Manchester
M1 2WD

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