

Endeavour Academy, Oxford

Waynfilet Road, Headington, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX3 8DD

Inspection dates

17–18 May 2017

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| 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 |
| 16 to 19 study programmes | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The principal has successfully created a culture of high expectations. Dedicated staff are fully supportive of the principal's high ambitions for the pupils. The school is rapidly improving.
- Staff are well attuned to the needs of each pupil. This helps pupils to make good progress, both academically and in their personal development.
- Parents are very positive about the changes they have seen in their child since he or she joined the school. They often say that their child is happier and less anxious.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Pupils say that they feel safe and secure. Staff help pupils with challenging behaviours to re-engage in their learning. Attendance is good.
- Teaching is good because staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Staff carefully support pupils to give them the confidence and self-belief to try new experiences and achieve success.
- Those with responsibility for governance fulfil their duties well. They understand the school and hold leaders effectively to account.
- Teachers have not had enough training to deliver alternative communication strategies. This sometimes affects the progress pupils make in developing their communication skills.
- The 16 to 19 provision is good. Students make effective progress across a range of skills that often lead to accredited qualifications. However, careers advice and guidance are not as regular as some students need. Additionally, students' independent living skills are not developed sufficiently.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop pupils' communication skills by providing training for staff to deliver a wider range of alternative communication strategies.
- Ensure that the curriculum in the sixth form has more regular focus on preparing students for independent life and future career opportunities.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since joining the school nearly a year ago, the principal has been instrumental in driving forward rapid improvements. She has high aspirations and is committed to ensuring that pupils develop their self-confidence and plans for the future. Staff fully support the principal's aims. They show great care and dedication in meeting each pupil's needs.
- Parents who spoke to inspectors or responded to Parent View are universal in their praise of the school. Typical comments include: 'The school has been a lifeline to my child. We are lost in admiration for the staff here.' The school's Parent View responses are very positive. Over 80% of parents responded and all would recommend the school to another parent.
- The curriculum is carefully planned. Pupils follow individualised programmes of learning that are tailored to their specific needs. As well as the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, pupils study a comprehensive personal, social, emotional and health education programme. Therapeutic support, such as occupational therapy, is carefully integrated into the weekly curriculum.
- Leaders provide a wide range of extra-curricular experiences which have a positive impact on pupils' development and progress. Activities are planned by staff who provide sensitive support so that pupils are not anxious when trying new activities. Some activities have a strong impact on developing pupils' self-confidence and speaking skills. For example, during the inspection, a film clip was aired on a local television network. It showed pupils from the school talking about a recent musical performance.
- Leaders ensure that additional funding, including the physical education and sport premium for primary schools, is well spent. For example, they spend it on enabling pupils to engage in external sports competitions with other schools. As a result, pupils develop their physical abilities effectively and participate more fully in a range of activities.
- All other funding, including Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up funding and pupil premium funding, is carefully spent. Leaders ensure that eligible pupils have the support they need to make good progress.

Governance of the school

- The people with governance responsibilities fulfil their duties carefully. They, alongside the principal, have developed a clear strategic vision for the school. The local advisory board makes sure that additional government funding is used to good effect.
- Governors and trustees are highly knowledgeable. There is a wide range of expertise within the different boards and this enables them to hold leaders to account effectively and to provide well-considered guidance about the future.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Many of the pupils are vulnerable. Staff work exceptionally hard to ensure that pupils not only are safe, but also feel safe. Pupils who spoke to the inspectors all confirmed that they felt safe at this school.
- Highly effective communication between parents, external agencies and the school ensures that any concerns are rapidly acted upon.
- Staff training is fully up to date and procedures and policies are followed diligently.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is good because staff use their knowledge of pupils' specific needs to help them make good progress. Work is carefully planned. Staff help pupils to take the necessary steps to achieve their own personal and academic targets.
- Teachers provide a good range of learning opportunities. Many are carefully tailored to develop pupils' self-confidence and independence. For example, in cookery, pupils are encouraged to bake their own cakes.
- Staff encourage pupils' artistic skills, which results in greater engagement in their learning. For example, those who enjoy making models are encouraged to create props for whole-school productions.
- Staff conduct a detailed check on each pupil's knowledge, skills and abilities when they join the school. This also includes an assessment of personal development skills. Staff use this information carefully to plan the next steps in learning, which enables pupils to make good progress.
- Staff have not received sufficient training in alternative methods of communication in order to meet the needs of all pupils. Staff use a limited number of communication strategies when assisting those pupils who are non-verbal or who have limited verbal skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Many pupils enter the school lacking in confidence. Staff at Endeavour Academy make it a priority to improve pupils' self-confidence and self-worth. Pupils went through their books and spoke proudly to inspectors about the work they had done in lessons. The specialised support offered by the school enables pupils to discover that they can achieve things they previously thought were impossible.
- The school provides pupils with numerous, carefully supported, opportunities to develop their independence. For example, they learn how to use money in shops and cafés.
- Staff are diligent in ensuring that pupils are taught, sometimes repeatedly, about

staying safe when out and about. For example, pupils are helped to use public transport in a responsible way.

- Staff ensure that pupils know about the dangers associated with using the internet. Pupils who were spoken to during the inspection said that they knew not to give any personal information to strangers.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire said that behaviour was well managed by staff. Members of staff act well as a team to support each other so that any incidents are quickly resolved in a calm and efficient way.
- Staff are effective in managing pupils' attitudes to learning. They know each pupil extremely well and so know when it is appropriate to encourage more work or allow for some time out.
- Pupils are encouraged to think about the consequences of their actions. Staff ensure that those who display challenging behaviour, including those who have been restrained, are encouraged to reflect on their behaviours. In the majority of cases, the number of incidents of restraint reduces significantly the longer a pupil is at the school.
- Attendance is good. Pupils like coming to school and some made it clear that they want to attend even when they are ill.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils often join the school with low starting points. School progress information and individual case studies show that pupils achieve well over time. This is because staff are aware of where each pupil is at in their learning. They use this knowledge to plan appropriate learning programmes for each pupil. Some pupils successfully achieve ASDAN and AQA qualifications.
- Pupils make good progress in their personal development. Parents report how delighted they are that their children had become happier and less anxious since joining the school.
- Staff carefully reinforce and build pupils' positive learning behaviours over time. For example, they help pupils to sit and concentrate for longer periods in lessons.
- Most pupils who have limited communication skills when joining the school gradually learn to improve their skills. During the inspection, they were seen to express clearly their wishes, such as lunchtime requirements, to others. However, not all pupils make the progress they could in learning how to communicate.
- Those pupils with an understanding of letters and the sounds they make progress well in developing their reading skills. They enjoy using the new school library as a place to share books with staff. Many pupils often have favourite books which they find calming to revisit if they feel anxious.
- Pupils who are able to write make good progress. Books show that pupils quickly develop the skills to trace over letters and then start to form letters independently.

Some pupils have made strong progress in writing and can write long descriptive paragraphs.

- In mathematics, staff carefully develop pupils' skills in number. In particular, staff place a strong emphasis on ensuring that pupils understand real-life scenarios, such as the money needed to buy food. Several pupils show a good understanding of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.
- Staff encourage pupils to develop an appreciation of music. Many pupils find that listening to music reduced their anxieties. Pupils' skills at creating music and exploring sounds are well developed in the music therapy sessions.
- The sensory rooms and occupational therapy sessions enable pupils to develop their physical skills and respond to different stimuli in a safe environment. Activity sessions off-site, such as horse riding, build pupils' skills and confidence in balance.
- Disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to other pupils with similar starting points. This is because the pupil premium is well used to support these pupils.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Students in the 16 to 19 provision make good progress from their starting points and many achieve a range of accredited courses. Teaching is effective because staff carefully plan each student's next step in learning. Teachers carefully develop skills in English and mathematics, particularly those needed in real life.
- Students engage in effective work experience placements. When asked, students said that they are developing good cookery skills by working in a local community café. Other students benefit from developing their organisational skills during work experience, such as when running the on-site enterprise scheme. These placements enhance students' personal development and make an effective contribution to their understanding of the skills needed in the workplace.
- Careers advice and guidance help some students to make informed choices about their future lives. However, students' needs and interests vary over time and the careers advice available is not as regular as all students need.
- Leaders have recently made sure that more time is spent on developing students' independent living skills. They recognise that these skills have not been regularly developed in the past. Students now follow a programme that improves everyday skills in using money, going shopping and cleaning clothes. Parents are very supportive of this programme.
- The school has good transition arrangements in place to enable students and their families to make informed decisions about each student's future care settings. As a result, more students are now moving on to courses related to preparing for adulthood and entering the workplace.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 140217 |
| Local authority | Oxfordshire |
| Inspection number | 10032828 |

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

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| Type of school | Special |
| School category | Academy special sponsor-led |
| Age range of pupils | 8 to 19 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 26 |
| Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes | 5 |
| Appropriate authority | Academy trust |
| Chair | Cecilia Guntripp |
| Principal | Angela O'Rourke |
| Telephone number | 01865 767 766 |
| Website | www.endeavour-academy.org |
| Email address | endeavour.office@macintyreacademies.org |
| 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.
- Endeavour Academy opened in 2014. The principal joined the school in June 2016. The school is part of the MacIntyre Academies Trust. There is one other school in the trust, Discovery Academy, which is based in Nuneaton in Warwickshire.
- The school provides education for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder compounded by extreme and challenging behaviour. Some pupils have additional medical needs.

Most have difficulties in communicating. Typically, pupils enter the school with attainment that is significantly lower than expected for their age.

- All pupils have an education, health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs.
- The school admits only those pupils who cannot have their needs met in mixed-needs special schools. All of the pupils come from Oxfordshire.
- The school provides a range of therapies, including occupational therapy, speech and language therapy and music therapy.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for secondary-aged pupils.
- There are four classes. One of these is for those students who are in the 16 to 19 age group. These students are studying for a range of qualifications, including AQA and ASDAN.
- The proportion of pupils who receive pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- Governance is provided by the local advisory board and the trustees of the MacIntyre Academies Trust board.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes across the school. All of the observations were conducted with a member of the senior leadership team.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, staff and members of the local advisory board, including the newly appointed chief executive officer of the trust. A telephone conversation was held with the chair of the MacIntyre Academies Trust board.
- Meetings took place with a number of parents. Inspectors also took account of the 21 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.
- The views of 30 members of staff who had responded to the staff questionnaire were considered.
- Meetings and informal discussions were held with several pupils. The three responses to the pupil questionnaire were also considered.
- A range of documents were scrutinised, including the school's information about pupils' achievement, records concerning pupils' attendance and behaviour and the school's systems for recruiting and vetting staff.

Inspection team

Liz Bowes, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jo McSherrie

Ofsted Inspector

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