

Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy

Beaconsfield Drive, Blurton, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST3 3JD

Inspection dates

11–12 October 2017

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
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The principal's vision of an inclusive, highly aspirational community where pupils 'will be exceptional learners, experiencing a world class education' pervades all aspects of the school's work. It is a vision convincingly shared by governors, staff and pupils.
- The school develops articulate, self-assured learners who have a real pride in their school and their appearance. They thrive, academically and socially, in a warm and trusting environment.
- Behaviour within the school is exemplary. Pupils are attentive in lessons and respond quickly to teachers' requests. At break and lunchtime, pupils behave in a mature and responsible way.
- Pupils' attendance has improved rapidly in recent years and is now in line with national averages. Pupils tell us they enjoy coming to school and recognise the importance of being good attenders.
- In 2017, pupils at the school did better than pupils nationally in gaining a standard pass (at level 4) and a good pass (at level 5) in English and mathematics.
- Pupils achieve exceptionally well in a range of vocational subjects that include engineering, IT and health and social care. However, pupils do less well in the more academic English Baccalaureate (Ebacc) subjects including science, humanities and modern foreign languages. Although results are improving in these areas, they still lag behind the progress made in English and mathematics.
- Teachers know their pupils well and deliver engaging lessons, with a strong focus on providing pupils with opportunities to discuss ideas by working with partners or in small groups.
- The majority of disadvantaged pupils respond well to teaching at the school and make progress in line with their non-disadvantaged peers. The exception to this are disadvantaged pupils who have high prior attainment. These most-able pupils do not do as well as other non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.
- The sixth form, which opened in 2014, is good. Despite very small numbers, leaders have made exceptional efforts to provide a programme of study that is carefully tailored to the needs of individuals. Students in the sixth form make progress that is in line with students nationally.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the progress made by pupils studying the EBacc subjects of science, history, geography, computer science, French and Spanish are in line with the good progress they make in English and mathematics by:
 - keeping the school's curriculum under review to ensure that EBacc subjects have enough curriculum time from Year 7 to Year 11
 - further developing the programme of support for the EBacc middle leaders, many of whom are new to the school, so that they are well equipped to improve standards of achievement within their department
 - insisting that teachers' expectations are high in Ebacc subjects from Year 7 onwards and they are clear in each lesson about what pupils need to learn.
- Build on your existing effective practice with disadvantaged pupils to make sure that disadvantaged pupils with high prior attainment are supported to achieve the highest grades across the curriculum.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal is an inspirational leader. He has been highly effective in building a culture of high expectations and ensuring that staff and pupils have a strong belief that they can continually improve.
- The principal and senior leaders are very visible around the school, visiting lessons on a daily basis and adopting a very consistent approach to motivating and managing pupils.
- Many senior leaders are new to their roles after several previous leaders were successful in achieving promotions to other schools. However, despite this the principal has been effective in developing them in their leadership roles. They have rapidly built an understanding of their areas of responsibility and are effectively implementing the school improvement priorities.
- There are also a number of middle leaders that are new to the school, particularly in the EBacc subjects. They have rapidly assimilated the values of the school but some still need further support in developing their leadership skills, particularly in ensuring that there is a consistent approach to teaching and assessment across their subject. The principal has made good use of other local schools and schools within the trust to provide bespoke support where necessary.
- Leaders are fully committed to ensuring that all teaching is good. Performance management criteria are applied rigorously, with governor involvement at key thresholds.
- There is an effective programme of professional development, run primarily by staff at the school. Weekly training sessions on key areas of teaching have been successful in developing a distinct school teaching ethos. More targeted training packages, including one-to-one coaching, are in place for staff who need more support to improve their teaching.
- The curriculum is currently undergoing a period of considerable change. The school successfully delivers a range of non-GCSE qualifications that school leaders, including governors, believe motivate pupils and provide them with a grounding in essential life skills. For example, the great majority of pupils in 2016 and 2017 have studied for a qualification in computing skills.
- However, this approach has limited the time and attention given to more academic subjects, including science, humanities and foreign languages. The new curriculum model, currently followed by pupils in Years 9 and 10, increases the time spent on these subjects and requires all pupils to study at least two EBacc subjects.
- The previous curriculum model had a particularly limiting effect on science with only 16 pupils in 2016 studying for at least two relevant science qualifications. All current pupils are now taking at least two science qualifications with some pupils studying three.
- An enrichment programme that includes opportunities to participate in music, drama and sports teams, visits to the theatre, art galleries and museums and opportunities for trips abroad enhances the curriculum. Pupils value the chances they have to extend

their learning outside the classroom and think it is a strength of the school.

- The daily tutorial programme helps prepare pupils for life in modern Britain and supports the social, moral, spiritual and cultural development of pupils. Topical and engaging materials provide opportunities for discussion and formal debate and support the further development of pupils' oracy skills. During the inspection, pupils in all year groups were considering whether one leader can change the world. With skilled direction from teachers, pupils were making thoughtful contributions to the debate.
- The school thoughtfully spends the additional funding it receives to support pupils who have special educational needs and disabilities, disadvantaged pupils and those who join the school with low literacy and numeracy levels. Additional support and intervention activities are provided for these groups.
- The school is given considerable autonomy within the Ormiston Trust to set its own direction, decide its curriculum and develop its own teaching and learning priorities. Trust nominees are active participants in the local governing body. The regional director for the trust visits the school regularly and provides challenge and support to the principal. The trust undertakes a yearly review of key areas and in recent years that has included a focus on the most able and on the performance of pupils in science, making recommendations that have been included in the school's improvement plan.
- The principal and other leaders in the school value the opportunity to meet regularly with colleagues from other trust academies. Heads of department commented on how useful it was to be able to share and learn from the best practice of others. The principal offers support to other academies within the trust.

Governance of the school

- Governors are well informed and have a deep understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have adapted meeting structures to ensure that they are full participants in monitoring the performance of pupils within different subject areas. They support the changes to the curriculum and recognise the need to improve outcomes in the EBacc subjects. They effectively oversee the performance management of staff and participate in the trust's performance management of the principal. They closely monitor spending on disadvantaged pupils and on pupils who have special educational needs and disabilities. They ensure that they receive regular updates on how these pupils are progressing and are confident that the additional funding is spent effectively.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school has robust safeguarding systems in place and staff receive regular training and updates. Vulnerable pupils are well supported, both by staff within the school and by the prompt referral to external agencies where additional support is required.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have good subject knowledge that they use effectively to plan lessons that are engaging and build on pupils' prior understanding.
- Teachers use a number of structured 'sentence starters' to help develop pupils' oracy skills. For example, younger pupils carry a small pack of sentence stems with them and teachers encourage pupils to use them if they want to challenge an idea, or agree with a classmate. The impact of this work is evident in the confident way in which pupils approach class discussions.
- Teachers effectively question pupils to check their understanding and to help them understand new ideas. In the best examples, probing questioning helped pupils to think more deeply about topics. For example, in a Year 10 RE lesson on discrimination pupils made very rapid progress when the teacher's questions challenged their existing perceptions and helped them to reflect on their views.
- Throughout the school, classroom environments are highly conducive to learning. Displays were bright and relevant, with good use made of pupils' work and key vocabulary to support learning.
- Pupils have many opportunities for collaborative work, supporting their social and academic development. They frequently work in pairs or small groups on learning activities. They respond well in these situations, treating peers with respect while confidently giving to each other supportive but accurate feedback.
- As part of their planning, teachers review the written work of the whole class and then share common misconceptions with their pupils. Pupils tell us that when this is done well it helps them better understand and improve their work.
- Where teaching is less effective, pupils are not always clear about what they are learning and why. In some science and humanities lessons, pupils were kept busy completing tasks but they were not challenging enough to ensure that pupils made good progress.
- Teachers follow a common strategy to improve behaviour, using sanctions including the 'ready to learn' room when necessary but with considerable focus on praise for doing well. This contributes to the warm and inclusive learning environment.
- Learning support assistants work very effectively with pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. They skilfully break learning activities into small manageable steps and model the way pupils should answer without doing the work for them. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities have a 'student passport' that helps teachers understand what strategies work best. These strategies are used effectively to support learning.
- Pupils who arrive at the school with low literacy skills join a 'Fresh Start' programme. Pupils work in small groups to widen their vocabulary, improve their spelling and develop their grammar skills. Leaders believe that this programme has been effective in helping these pupils keep up in other lessons, although there is not yet any formal measurement of impact.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils feel safe in the school and know whom to turn to if they are worried or upset. They appreciate the access to a confidential online reporting system if they have concerns.
- A very strong personal, social and health education programme is in place and delivered through daily form periods, assemblies and a weekly tutorial lesson. The school does not shy away from tackling difficult issues, including the dangers of radicalisation.
- Pupil leaders play an important role in the life of the school. In this inspection, they actively sought an opportunity to speak to inspectors and were enthusiastic and articulate advocates for their school. They speak in assemblies and at parents' events about the opportunities available for enrichment. They work with teaching staff to support clubs and activities and act as subject ambassadors.
- Pupils are ambitious and speak positively about the good careers advice and guidance they receive. This includes taught sessions in the personal, social, health and economic (PHSE) education curriculum and support from an external careers adviser. Year 11 pupils were very aware of the range of courses and institutions that were available to them for post-16 study. During the inspection, Year 9 pupils participated enthusiastically in an enterprise day, learning about university education and the long-term options for their future.
- Year 7 pupils eat lunch together and are encouraged to develop their talking skills by having a formal discussion or debate for part of their lunch period. Pupils enthusiastically and confidently debated whether watching the news was a good thing and were able to make good use of their pack of sentence starters to ensure that they spoke in full, clear sentences.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils show respect for each other and for their teachers. The school's mantra of 'manners maketh the man' was a highly visible part of the school's culture and embraced by staff and pupils.
- The school building is clearly respected by the pupils and well looked after. Pupils move around sensibly and form orderly queues at mealtimes with minimal supervision. There is no graffiti and very little litter, even after a wet break when everyone has been indoors.
- Pupils are respectful of visitors and happy to engage in conversation. They are very proud of their school and keen to talk about its success.
- Attendance has improved rapidly since the last inspection as a result of a school-wide response. The importance of good attendance is shared frequently with pupils and good attendance is celebrated and rewarded. On the first day of absence, targeted

pupils receive a phone call or a visit home. Pupils who are more persistently absent are allocated a mentor to work with them to improve their attendance.

- Exclusions have shown a steady decline, partly as a result of the 'ready to learn' behaviour centre which provides short-term places for pupils who engage in low-level disruption. Pupils believe that this has made a big difference to behaviour in the school.
- Punctuality is excellent. Leaders have focused on improving punctuality over the last year and now very few pupils are ever late to the school in the morning and pupils are punctual to all lessons during the day.
- The school carefully monitors pupils who attend alternative provision for all, or part of their week. Pastoral leaders check to ensure that they are attending regularly and are making progress. Staff are quick to intervene if there are concerns.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- GCSE attainment in English and mathematics is above the national average this year. English has been a strong and successful department for many years but rapid improvements have been made over the last year in mathematics. A new head of department and an enthusiastic teaching team have developed a highly effective common approach to teaching and learning, giving pupils frequent opportunities to review and reflect on previous learning.
- Improving literacy is a thread that runs through the whole curriculum. The focus was evident not only in lessons but in form times, in the Year 7 family lunch and in the daily reading slot known as 'drop everything and read'. School records show that pupils are reading with increasing confidence and therefore they have greater success in a wide range of subjects.
- Almost all pupils make good progress at the school although there is some variation between groups depending on their starting points. Pupils who arrive with low prior attainment do exceptionally well while most-able pupils make progress that is in line with other pupils nationally. Leaders are aware of this and promote a range of teaching and learning strategies to support better progress for this group, so they make the very good progress made by other pupils in the school.
- The decisions made on the curriculum model in previous years meant that in 2016 and 2017 few pupils gained the EBacc qualification. This will improve in coming years as an increasing number of pupils have access to the combination of English, mathematics, double science, a humanity subject and a foreign language that make up the EBacc.
- In 2016, pupils made less progress in the EBacc subjects than in any other area of the curriculum. Attainment in all these subjects improved in 2017, with increasing proportions of pupils gaining A* to C grades. However, progress is still below that of other subjects in the school.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make progress that is similar to other pupils in the school. This is because of the well-targeted support from learning support assistants, the effective school focus on developing literacy skills and a curriculum that engages and motivates them.
- In 2016, disadvantaged pupils at the school made progress in line with their non-

disadvantaged peers. The school is rightly proud of the support it provides for disadvantaged pupils, including intervention programmes if they fall behind and a well-established culture that everyone at the school should be an exceptional learner. A small group of most-able disadvantaged pupils did not do as well, particularly in mathematics and some EBacc subjects and they remain a key focus of the school's work.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Leaders in the sixth form share the same commitment to excellence seen elsewhere in the school.
- Students received their first results in August 2016. Progress outcomes in that year were broadly in line with national levels for academic and vocational pathways. However, there was considerable variation in the performance of different subjects with students taking history and English A levels performing less well than students in other subjects.
- The school exceeded the minimum standard set by the government in academic, applied and technical pathways. The average grade at A level was a D- and the average grade in applied general courses was distinction.
- The same high-quality impartial careers guidance available for younger pupils is also evident in the sixth form. Students receive good advice and guidance from an external careers adviser and have had personalised help in writing their university applications from a specialist employed by the Ormiston Trust.
- Teachers support students well in developing independent study skills. Students are encouraged to prepare thoroughly for learning by reading about new topics in advance of their lessons. Teachers continue to encourage structured class discussions although in very small groups this can be more challenging.
- The small group of students in the sixth form without a grade C in English or mathematics receive additional taught lessons to help them catch up. Most have shown an improvement in their grades in their resit examinations.
- Students are fully prepared for their next steps through a wide-reaching PSHE programme and a number of external opportunities, including university visits, trips and work experience. Students are confident, articulate and a credit to the school.
- Attendance is high and students are punctual to the school and to lessons.
- The small sixth form size limits the number of courses that are available to students. Leaders work hard to match students' wishes with available courses to build suitable study programmes. However, in the long term, small classes of only one or two students are unlikely to be financially sustainable. Leaders have an accurate understanding of this and are committed to taking appropriate and decisive action.

School details

Unique reference number	136145
Local authority	Stoke-on-Trent
Inspection number	10037153

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 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,098
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	57
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Caroline Law
Principal	Mark Stanyer
Telephone number	01782 882 200
Website	www.ormistonsirstanleymatthewsacademy.co.uk
Email address	info@ossma.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	15–16 May 2013

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 Sir Stanley Matthews Academy is an average-sized secondary school.
- The school opened a sixth form in September 2014.
- Pupils enter the school with levels of prior attainment that are broadly in line with the

national average.

- An above-average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium.
- The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils receiving support for special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- About 90% of pupils are of White British heritage. A very small proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11, in 2016.
- Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy is sponsored by Ormiston Academies Trust.
- The principal is a national leader of education (NLE) and currently supports schools within the trust and locally.
- The school makes use of off-site alternative provision for a small number of pupils. The providers are Sporting Stars, Merit, Unity, and Stoke-on-Trent College.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons in all curriculum areas and undertook a number of learning walks, most, jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspector held meetings with senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body and a representative of the Trust.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in lessons and observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, before school and at lunchtime. They also observed pupils' learning and behaviour during assembly and in the morning tutor sessions.
- Inspectors took into account the 20 views of parents on the online questionnaire Parent View.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils informally around the school and in discussion groups.
- Inspectors reviewed information on the school's website.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including information about the attainment and progress of all pupils, records relating to behaviour and safeguarding, and the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans.

Inspection team

Deborah James, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Caroline Badyal	Ofsted Inspector
Michelle Newman	Ofsted Inspector
Graeme Rudland	Ofsted Inspector

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