

Onslow St Audrey's School

Old Rectory Drive, Hatfield, Hertfordshire AL10 8AB

Inspection dates

21–22 May 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils' progress and attainment are not good across a range of subjects because the quality of teaching is too variable.
- Pupils have not made the progress they should in mathematics because of a legacy of weaker teaching and difficulties in recruiting permanent mathematics teachers.
- Some teachers do not use the school's assessment procedures consistently.
- Some teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high. Not all teachers use questioning or other techniques effectively to challenge pupils, particularly the most able.
- Some teachers do not use information about pupils' prior attainment and progress well enough to ensure that work meets their needs effectively, particularly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- In 2018, only a small proportion of pupils completed the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) because too few pupils studied a language in key stage 4.
- Leaders do not use the Year 7 catch-up funding for literacy and numeracy effectively enough.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher has established a culture of raising aspirations at all levels. School leaders focus on improvement.
- Leaders have a high level of expertise in safeguarding. They make a positive difference to pupils' welfare. Pupils feel safe.
- Governors provide challenging leadership. They have a clear understanding of the school's priorities, which they have helped to shape.
- Pupils respect each other and behave sensibly.
- Leaders' promotion of pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils are very positive about the support they receive.
- Attendance is rapidly improving across the school.
- The sixth form provides a good education. All students who complete the sixth form go on to further education, apprenticeships or employment.
- Leaders ensure that pupils' have a secure understanding of the world around them.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and the outcomes that pupils achieve by ensuring:
 - greater consistency in the quality of teaching across the school, especially in mathematics
 - that all teachers are consistently using the school's internal assessment systems
 - that teachers' expectations are constantly high and that they provide work which challenges pupils sufficiently, particularly the most able
 - that teachers use school information about pupils to plan to meet their needs, particularly those pupils with SEND
 - that pupils are better prepared to access a modern foreign language at key stage 4.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that leaders secure a closer oversight of the use of the Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up funding, to maximise its impact.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The new headteacher is making a positive difference to the school and has made some significant changes to staffing and procedures. He has quickly won the trust of the wider community. Staff appreciate his collaborative approach and say the school is improving under his leadership. The leadership team is a strength of the school. The majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend the school to others.
- Leaders are very aware of the aspects of the school's work that need to improve. The self-evaluation and improvement plan present an accurate view of the school and reflect these priorities. The plan has a clear focus on the importance of effective teaching and support for pupils' attendance, progress and attainment.
- Although outcomes in 2018 required improvement, school leaders have made rapid changes to teaching practice. Working with the Herts and Bucks Teaching School Alliance they support and challenge teachers to improve their practice. Teachers say that leaders and managers 'see the potential in people' and they value the support they receive.
- An investment in new middle leaders, including in English and science, and in new teachers, combined with the retention and development of existing staff, is improving the attitudes of learners.
- Leaders have introduced awards to acknowledge good attendance and increased the number of staff who work to support pupils to attend well. Attendance is now significantly improved.
- Leaders have applied a consistent approach to the management of behaviour. Pupils' behaviour is improving because leaders have introduced a simpler set of rules. Pupils told inspectors that these are easier and clearer to follow. They also appreciate the rewards leaders have put in place to celebrate positive behaviour. As a result, behaviour in and out of the classroom has improved and there has been a strong drop in the number of exclusions this year.
- The promotion of mutual respect and debate are key strengths in the school's promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are proud to participate in class discussions that prepare them well for life in modern Britain.
- The school curriculum offers a range of subjects and allows time to develop numeracy and literacy skills. Middle leaders take responsibility for their curriculum area, updating content and supervising delivery. Leaders have set the clear target that more pupils take a modern foreign language and the number is slowly rising.
- Leaders monitor the support provided for pupils with SEND effectively. Across the school, clear systems and processes are in place to help staff identify these pupils' needs. However, some teachers do not use this information about pupils well enough to ensure that the work set meets their needs effectively.
- New assessment protocols are in place, but leaders are aware that teachers require more training to use them more consistently. Assessments do not always inform

teachers' planning sufficiently for tasks to meet all pupils' needs.

- A new strategy, for the use of the funding to support disadvantaged pupils, is proving effective. Disadvantaged pupils receive increased pastoral support and their attendance is improving. Teachers have received specialist training to help them to match work to the needs of these pupils. Where this practice is applied consistently the progress and attainment of these pupils is improving.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is strong. Its members bring a wide range of valuable skills and experience to their roles. Governors have supported leaders well through the transitional changes at the school. They have a clear vision for the school and talk knowledgeably about the school's key priorities.
- Information from governors' records of meetings shows that they ask questions that are consistently probing and challenging. They are a newly formed, cohesive team who are already supporting leaders in setting the strategic direction of the school.
- Governors are regular visitors to the school. In fulfilling their duties, they take appropriate account of the views of staff and pupils in challenging leaders to raise standards. They understand their responsibility to keep pupils safe and they are vigilant in checking the safeguarding arrangements in place.
- Governors are proud of the school's growing reputation in the local community. They are building a closer relationship with parents.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The required checks to ensure that all adults in the school are suitable to work with children and young people are up to date and accurate. Leaders and governors monitor this record regularly.
- All staff and governors undertake safeguarding training, including 'Prevent' training. They receive regular updates to ensure that they have a current understanding of child protection procedures.
- Leaders responsible for safeguarding have a high level of expertise and a comprehensive understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They keep detailed records and have clear systems in place to help keep pupils safe. Their work has a significant impact on the welfare of pupils and the effectiveness of support for vulnerable pupils. All staff spoken with during the inspection were confident on how to report concerns and understand their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Staff follow up issues quickly and efficiently. Leaders work closely and effectively with wider agencies to meet vulnerable pupils' needs well. They are aware of current external and local issues, such as county lines regarding drugs and gangs.
- Pupils learn how to stay safe from risks, including how to stay safe online. Pupils spoken to during the inspection unequivocally say that they feel safe. All parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire agree.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is too variable. There is a lack of consistency of practice across the school and within subjects.
- Not all teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and set tasks that that are appropriately challenging. This limits both the quality and quantity of pupils' work and the progress that they make, especially in mathematics.
- Some teachers do not apply the school's own assessment procedures effectively. Assessments are not always an accurate reflection of what the pupils are achieving and there are inconsistencies in assessment practice.
- Some teachers do not routinely use information about pupils' prior attainment to plan activities that match their abilities. Tasks are often the same for all pupils, when that is not appropriate. Consequently, some pupils lose interest because they do not find the work challenging, especially the most able. In a modern foreign language lesson, pupils answered questions that checked prior learning and deepened their understanding. This was not common practice.
- In some subjects, teachers do not plan sufficiently to support the progress and attainment of pupils with SEND. Where teachers plan with precision, and teaching assistants are guided to offer specific support, the progress and attainment of pupils with SEND is in line with their peers. The support which some of these pupils receive outside of lessons is improving their literacy and numeracy.
- Specialist training has assisted teachers to plan lessons that match the needs of disadvantaged pupils and help them to achieve as well as their peers. However, not all teachers create or implement these plans consistently.
- Some teachers use their strong subject knowledge to challenge and encourage pupils to think and reason. In English, for example, teachers expect pupils to respond using correct terminology so that they can attain the highest levels. In art, the teacher shared the success criteria with pupils so that they could offer guidance to their peers and help them improve their work. However, this is not always the case across the school.
- Teachers have high expectations of how pupils should behave. Teachers apply the school's behaviour policy consistently well, with the result that disruption to lessons is rare. Most teachers have good relationships with their pupils and encourage them to work well. Pupils told inspectors that teaching has improved and that their teachers help them to learn.
- Leaders have raised the expectations of what teachers should do. They now closely monitor teachers' work and give timely feedback on the effectiveness of what they see. They are aware of where teaching is less effective and are providing support to ensure that this improves. Leaders hold teachers to account for the progress pupils make.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Throughout the inspection, inspectors noted that pupils were sociable, confident and articulate. Pupils are polite and respectful. They wear their uniforms and kit for physical education lessons and the combined cadet force with pride.
- The pastoral team works closely together and offers a high level of support. Pupils speak positively about the school's support for their personal well-being and say that 'teachers really care' about them.
- Pupils reported that incidents of bullying are extremely rare and are resolved swiftly. Leaders have established a strong culture of respect and tolerance. Pupils say that they have someone to talk to and whom they feel able to raise any concerns with. The majority of parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agree.
- The breadth and variety of opportunities to help pupils develop socially is extensive and works extremely well. The new house system and the school's 'character reward' scheme promotes engagement. The annual 'First Give' charity project is instrumental in shaping pupils' awareness of the needs of others. After-school clubs in sports, the arts, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and an effective partnership with the combined cadet force enrich provision for all pupils. Both pupils and parents value these opportunities highly.
- Tutor time and personal, social and health education lessons provide good opportunities for learning about broader topical issues, including fundamental British values, risks to safety and staying healthy.
- Personal, social and health education lessons, tutor time and careers events deliver an extensive careers programme that broadens pupils' knowledge of work opportunities. Each individual pupil receives high-quality, impartial advice to help them to make informed and appropriate choices at each key stage.
- Leaders' efforts to improve aspirations have resulted in all students going on to further education, employment or apprenticeships. Teachers offer extensive support with university applications and interviews.
- Good communication and a positive relationship with the provider ensure that pupils who are placed in alternative provision are supported well.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Staff analyse behavioural incidents closely and can pinpoint and address any issues quickly. This has improved the way in which pupils behave in lessons.
- Pupils' attendance has improved this year. Few pupils are frequently absent and the overall attendance figure is above the national average. Parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire say that the headteacher is bringing 'back pride in attending the school'.
- Pupils are self-managing as they move around the school site and there is a controlled pace of movement. Pupils enjoy the indoor and outdoor social spaces, which are freely available to them. They mix happily.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Over the past three years, pupils made less progress than they should at key stage 4 across a range of subjects, including English and mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils attaining at least a grade 4 in both GCSE English and mathematics was low.
- In 2018, a small proportion of pupils completed the English Baccalaureate (EBacc). Progress and attainment in humanities was below the national average. The progress and attainment of the small number of pupils who studied a language at GCSE was above the national average and the number of pupils taking a language is rising.
- The progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils over the past two years has been low. They have not made as much progress as other pupils nationally. This year, leaders have a clearer understanding of the needs of these pupils and support is more effective. Disadvantaged pupils in the current Year 11 are making better progress from their starting points. However, disadvantaged pupils still do not typically make as much progress as they should, particularly at key stage 4.
- Pupils with SEND do not always make sufficient progress from their starting points. This is because teachers do not always plan sufficiently to meet their needs.
- Over time, pupils' progress and attainment in science has been low. Leaders have been making improvements to staffing and the teaching of science so that pupils are making better progress.
- GCSE results over the past three years have been below the national average, but leaders have clear plans in place to improve pupils' attainment. In 2018, in a range of subjects, such as art and design, childcare skills, dance, music and sports studies, pupils' attainment was above the national average.
- A new subject leader is rapidly improving the progress of current pupils in English through implementing changes to teaching and assessment. Inspection evidence, including work seen in pupils' books, indicates that pupils currently in Year 10 are making better progress in English.
- New leaders are now identifying strengths and weaknesses in pupils' performance effectively. They have implemented a more rigorous analysis of pupils' assessment information. Through their regular meetings with faculty leaders, senior leaders check on the progress that the pupils make. Leaders are aware that some staff are not using the assessment information consistently well to plan learning for pupils of all abilities and are taking action to address this.
- Leaders provide pupils with effective advice and guidance to help them choose their next steps. All pupils at the end of Year 11 either join the school's consortium, begin an apprenticeship or go on to study elsewhere.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- The school is a member of the Welwyn and Hatfield Consortium and works in partnership with a football academy, Pro:Direct Academy, Hertfordshire. Through this

collaborative approach, the school can offer greater breadth in the curriculum and more opportunities for students. The sixth form leaders carefully monitor students' progress.

- Leaders are successful in guiding students onto appropriate courses. This contributes to high retention rates across Years 12 and 13. Careers advice ensures that students are prepared well for life after school. Students have opportunities to enhance their understanding of the world of work. Almost all post-16 students undertake work experience relevant to their aspirations.
- Most teachers know their subject content and examination specifications well. They plan lessons that ensure that students deepen their knowledge and apply this knowledge to various forms of examination response. For example, in business studies skilled questioning enabled students to draw on previous learning and deliver detailed responses. The football academy is a real strength of the school. In a sixth-form session, there were high levels of enjoyment and challenge and progress was strong. In mathematics, the level of challenge was not as high.
- Some students join Year 12 without a grade 4 in either GCSE English or mathematics. Leaders provide additional support for these students to help them to improve. In 2018, students made at least one grade of progress in these qualifications.
- In 2018, the number of examination entries was low. Students made progress above the national average in AS level and Applied General courses. At A level, progress and average grades were in line with the national average.
- The percentage of students achieving three high A-level grades was below the national average. Teachers are taking action to increase the number of students who achieve the higher grades by providing greater challenge in lessons for the most able students.
- Form tutors and teachers offer a good level of support to the sixth-form students. Leaders have greatly improved students' attendance this year through having higher expectations and more rigorous monitoring.
- Students take pride in their school and in their work and are committed to doing well. They conduct themselves in a mature and responsible way. Year 12 students told inspectors that they appreciate what the school does for them and find the school calm, inclusive and supportive. They would all choose the school again.
- Enrichment and leadership opportunities for sixth form students have increased this year. They participate in house events alongside the rest of the school and accept house leadership positions. Students are encouraged to help with clubs and to volunteer as mentors for younger pupils, leading by example to support them both academically and personally to be successful in school and in the outside world.
- Students all have education and employment options at the end of Year 13 and the school has clearly helped them considerably in their decision-making and ability to access their goals. All students move on to either appropriate higher education courses, some to Russell Group universities and a few to Oxford or Cambridge, employment or apprenticeships.

*School details

Unique reference number	137792
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10088675

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
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	740
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	69
Appropriate authority	Hertfordshire County Council
Chair	Susan Poole
Headteacher	David Bullock
Telephone number	01707 264 228
Website	onslow.herts.sch.uk/
Email address	head@onslow.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 February 2017

Information about this school

- Onslow St Audrey's School is a smaller than average-sized secondary school.
- The sixth form works in partnership with Welwyn and Hatfield Consortium and the football academy works in partnership with Pro:Direct Academy, Hertfordshire.
- The school receives support from the Herts and Bucks Teaching School Alliance.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is higher than the national average.

- The proportion of pupils who have a statement of SEND or an education, health and care plan is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above the national average.
- Alternative provision is provided at The Park Education Support Centre, Potters Bar.
- The current headteacher took up post in September 2018.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited parts of 52 lessons. Some observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders to gain their views on the quality of teaching and pupils' current progress.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, newly qualified teachers, the local governing body, including the chair, and the alternative education provider. Telephone calls were made to the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work. They looked at safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures, self-evaluation and improvement planning, minutes of governors' meetings, records of pupils' attendance and behaviour, monitoring of teaching records and other information provided by senior leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils from all year groups individually and in groups.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' books in lessons. They also scrutinised pupils' work during learning walks to observe the progress made by those with SEN and/or disabilities.
- Inspectors considered 47 parental responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and 69 responses to Ofsted's survey of the views of staff. The Ofsted survey of the views of pupils was not used.

Inspection team

Kathryn Herlock, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Karen Kerridge	Ofsted Inspector
Sean Powell	Ofsted Inspector
Nicholas Simmonds	Ofsted Inspector

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