

The Oakwood Academy

Bewcastle Road, Warren Hill, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG5 9PJ

Inspection dates

9–10 July 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Senior leaders and governors have not yet ensured that teaching is consistently good. The quality of teaching is variable across the school.
- Pupils' progress in Years 9 and 10 is variable. Too few pupils in these year groups, including the most able, are making at least the progress they should, particularly in mathematics and science.
- Teachers do not apply consistently the school's marking and feedback policy.
- During the weekly reading sessions, teachers do not undertake sharp enough checks to ensure that Year 9, 10 and 11 pupils are reading suitably challenging books.
- Not all teaching assistants provide effective support to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- Senior leaders have not used the Year 7 catch-up funding well enough to support pupils who are behind in their numeracy skills.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has raised expectations regarding pupils' behaviour and the quality of teaching they receive.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are good. Most pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and behave well.
- Overall attendance is above the national average. Disadvantaged pupils' attendance is improving.
- Pupils' achievement is improving. The progress that pupils in key stage 4 made in 2018 was better than that which pupils have made previously.
- The difference in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally is diminishing.
- Pupils in Years 7 and 8 make strong progress across a wide range of subjects.
- Staff are vigilant of pupils' welfare. They provide effective support for any pupils about whose well-being they have concerns.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils study a wide range of academic subjects, including in key stage 4.
- Pupils receive effective careers advice and guidance to learn about their next steps.
- Trust leaders provide effective support and challenge to the school's leaders, particularly in developing subject leaders' leadership skills.

Full report

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance, by ensuring that:
 - both the checks which leaders undertake on the quality of teaching and the training teachers receive to improve their classroom practice secure consistently good teaching across the school
 - senior leaders regularly review the impact of the support for pupils who arrive at the school with below-average numeracy skills, so these pupils rapidly reach expected standards for their age
 - the training which teaching assistants receive enables them to provide effective support for pupils with SEND
 - all teachers apply consistently the school's marking and feedback policy
 - teachers receive the necessary guidance and support to help them make sure that pupils in Years 9, 10 and 11 develop their reading skills by reading suitably challenging books during their regular reading sessions.
- Further improve the quality of teaching, to raise pupils' achievement, particularly in science and mathematics, in key stage 4, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - set work that is sufficiently challenging, including for the most able
 - ask questions effectively to check pupils' understanding and extend their learning
 - provide effective feedback, particularly to clarify any misconceptions pupils may demonstrate.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Together with the support of his senior leaders, the headteacher has raised the expectations in relation to the quality of teaching. These raised expectations have brought about improvements in teaching and in pupils' achievement since the last inspection. However, senior leaders have yet to ensure that teaching is consistently good across the whole school and pupils across all years make strong progress, particularly in mathematics and science.
- Senior leaders use additional funding well to provide support that enables Year 7 pupils who are behind in their literacy skills to catch up quickly. However, senior leaders have not ensured that pupils who are behind in their numeracy skills receive sufficient support to help them to attain at the expected standards for their age in this aspect of their learning.
- By ensuring that they now correctly identify pupils with SEND, senior leaders have been able to make sure these pupils receive the support they require for their additional learning needs. While teaching assistants have received training, they are not yet sufficiently skilled in providing effective support to pupils with SEND.
- Working closely with senior leaders, subject leaders regularly check on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in their subjects. When they identify teachers whose classroom practice is not enabling pupils to make sufficient progress, they provide support. However, this support has yet to lead to consistency in classroom practice across the school, so that all teaching is good.
- Through their regular, rigorous reviews of pupils' achievement, senior leaders identify those pupils who are not making sufficient progress. This enables them to put in place further support for these pupils. However, senior leaders have not made sure that pupils make consistently strong progress across all subjects, particularly in science and mathematics in Years 9 and 10.
- Staff receive regular training to improve their classroom practice. Such training involves sharing best practice with other teachers, including from other schools. Staff appreciate this and recognise how the training helps them to improve their own teaching. However, this training has yet to ensure that all teachers' classroom practice is good.
- Senior leaders have increased expectations in relation to pupils' behaviour and have ensured that all staff consistently apply the school's behaviour policy. This has led to an improvement in pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning. Pupils' behaviour is good.
- Senior leaders make effective use of additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils. The strategies which senior leaders use to support these pupils are well-considered and planned, including through using national research. Regular reviews of the impact of this support enable senior leaders to adapt any strategies which are not fully effective. These strategies are helping to bring about the improvement in the achievement and attendance of the disadvantaged pupils.
- The broad and balanced curriculum enables pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding across the full range of subjects at key stage 3. In key stage 4, leaders

have rightly widened the range of academic subjects on offer, including in modern foreign languages. Leaders recognise that through pupils studying more academic subjects at GCSE they are likely to be better prepared to move on to more-challenging qualifications at places of further education, including at a sixth form in a local school.

- Wide-ranging, extra-curricular activities complement the curriculum well. There are many clubs available to pupils, through which they can explore their creative and sporting interests. Enrichment activities, such as inter-school sports competitions and off-site visits, including overseas residential trips, enable pupils to develop their learning beyond the classroom, including their understanding of the local, national and global community.
- Pupils develop well their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Through assemblies and the school's personal, social, health and economic education, pupils learn about diversity, including different beliefs, cultures and ways of living. Opportunities to take on positions of responsibility help pupils to understand the importance of contributing to the school community and treating each other with respect.
- School leaders at all levels engage well with leaders across the trust to help them develop their leadership and management skills. This has been particularly beneficial in helping subject leaders to lead their subject areas. The support which trust officers have provided for the school's leaders and teachers has been effective in bringing about improvements to the quality of the school's provision since the last inspection.

Governance of the school

- Working closely with the trust's chief executive officer, the board of trustees has ensured that it has a comprehensive understanding of the school's effectiveness.
- Since the previous inspection, trustees have reviewed the school's local governance. They have created an Interim Advisory Body (IAB), which acts as the school's local governing body. Some trustees sit on the IAB, and ensure that all trustees receive regular reports on the senior leaders' work to improve the school's effectiveness.
- Members of the IAB have appropriate knowledge, skills and experience to be able to hold the school's leaders to account. They regularly visit the school to check on the accuracy of the information provided by senior leaders.
- Members of the IAB regularly challenge school leaders about the impact of their work to improve the school's effectiveness. This challenge has yet to bring about improvement in all areas of the school's provision. For example, governors have yet to ensure that senior leaders use the Year 7 catch-up funding effectively to support pupils who are behind in their numeracy skills.
- All those responsible for the school's governance understand how the quality of the school's provision has improved, and where it must improve further.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- School records show safeguarding leaders take timely, effective action when they have a concern about pupils' welfare. They contact parents and carers and external

agencies, when appropriate, to share their concerns. They are tenacious in ensuring that external agencies provide the support pupils need.

- Staff know keeping pupils safe is everyone's responsibility. They receive regular training on safeguarding, and know the different types of abuse and the signs to look for. Staff quickly pass on to safeguarding leaders any concerns they may have about pupils' well-being.
- Safeguarding leaders are aware of issues in the local community which may affect pupils' welfare. They ensure that pupils receive the information they need to help keep themselves safe, should any such issues occur.
- Pupils say they have staff to speak with if they have a concern. They are confident these staff will take effective action to help resolve their concern.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- There has been an improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. However, there remains variability in the quality of classroom practice across the school. As a result, in some subjects, including in mathematics and science, pupils do not make consistently strong progress in developing their knowledge, understanding and skills, particularly in Years 9 and 10.
- Pupils' workbooks show that teachers do not always set work that is sufficiently challenging, including for the most able pupils. When this is the case pupils do not receive work to enable them to develop their understanding fully.
- There is an inconsistency with which teachers apply the school's marking and feedback policy. There is variability in the feedback which teachers provide to pupils to clarify misconceptions and extend their learning. When teachers do provide feedback, pupils respond well to improve their work and deepen their understanding.
- Not all teaching assistants provide pupils with SEND with effective support. When this is the case these pupils do not make as much progress as they should.
- Some teachers do not use questioning well enough to explore and deepen pupils' understanding.
- In Years 7 and 8, there is a precise focus on developing pupils' reading skills. Teachers ensure that pupils read books at the right level to help them to develop their reading skills effectively. However, leaders do not provide teachers of older pupils with the necessary guidance so they can make sure these pupils read books to provide them with sufficient challenge.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. When they use this well, teachers provide detailed explanations to enable pupils to become secure in their knowledge and understanding of the subject, including their understanding of subject-specific language.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, to which most pupils respond well. On those occasions when pupils do not behave appropriately, most teachers implement the school's behaviour policy consistently. This ensures there are very few occasions when other pupils' learning is disrupted.

- When learning is most effective teachers ask searching questions to check pupils' understanding and extend their learning. For example, in a Year 8 physical education lesson the teacher asked pupils carefully considered questions to enable them to reflect upon their skills in playing quick cricket. Pupils played enthusiastically and used the feedback from their teacher to improve their skills.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and want to achieve well. Most pupils take pride in their work and in their school.
- Pupils learn how to be safe, including when online and when in the community.
- Pupils learn about the importance of healthy living. They learn about healthy eating, exercise and healthy relationships.
- Pupils learn about the dangers of making unhealthy choices, including smoking.
- Pupils understand the importance of treating people with respect, including for those who have beliefs or values different to their own.
- Pupils know what bullying is, and that such behaviour is not appropriate. Most pupils with whom inspectors spoke said that bullying occurs rarely and when it does teachers deal with it effectively. The school records confirm this is the case.
- Across all years, pupils receive effective, independent careers advice and guidance. They learn about the wide range of training routes available to them when they leave the school, including further education, university and apprenticeships. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 have individual interviews with an adviser, during which they discuss their career plans.
- Pupils in Year 10 undertake work experience. Senior leaders ensure that these placements match pupils' career aspirations or interests. Staff visit pupils while they are at their placements, to check on their welfare and the suitability of the placement.
- Senior leaders check on the attendance, behaviour, welfare and progress of the very few pupils who attend alternative provision for all or part of their education. They undertake regular visits to the placements as part of these checks.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well around the school site, including when moving between lessons and during social time.
- Most pupils behave well in lessons.
- The incidence of pupils receiving sanctions for poor behaviour, including exclusion from school, is reducing. This is due to the support which leaders provide for pupils to help

them to manage their behaviour more effectively.

- Pupils' attendance is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent is below the national average. This is mainly due to the support which senior leaders provide to encourage pupils to attend regularly.
- The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is improving, and is close to that of all pupils nationally.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils who left the school at the end of Year 11 in 2018 made broadly average progress in most of their subjects, including in English. This marked a significant improvement when compared with the underachievement of Year 11 pupils at the end of the previous academic year. However, pupils did not achieve highly enough in geography. Similarly, in mathematics while many pupils achieved well this was not the case for pupils of average ability.
- The school's performance information indicates that pupils currently in Year 11 are making broadly average progress. The proportion of pupils on track to attain a pass in English and mathematics is above that achieved nationally in the last academic year.
- The progress of pupils in Years 9 and 10 is variable. While pupils are making strong progress in some subjects, for example, in English, there are inconsistencies in the progress they make in other subjects. For example, too few pupils, including the most able, are on track to make the progress they should in science and mathematics.
- Pupils with SEND are making strong progress in Years 7, 8 and 9. However, this is not the case for this group of pupils in Year 10.
- A high proportion of pupils in Year 7 who receive additional support in literacy are successful in catching up where previously they have fallen behind. However, too few pupils receive effective support to become secure in numeracy and make the necessary progress to enable them to attain at the age-related expectation.
- Pupils in Years 7 and 8, including the most able, make strong progress across the full range of subjects. High proportions of pupils in these year groups are making good progress from their different starting points.
- The difference between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally is now beginning to diminish. Disadvantaged pupils are achieving more highly than previously.
- For the past two academic years all pupils who have left the school at the end of Year 11 have moved successfully on to places of further education or work-based training, including apprenticeships.

School details

Unique reference number	141363
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	10087393

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	686
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Steve Hopkins
Headteacher	Mike Hardy
Telephone number	0115 9539323
Website	http://www.oakwoodacademy.org.uk
Email address	admin@oakwoodacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	5–6 December 2017

Information about this school

- Oakwood Academy is a smaller-than-average-size secondary school.
- The school is a member of the Redhill Academy Trust. It joined the trust in April 2015. The trust is responsible for the school's governance. The school has a local governing body, the IAB. The trust holds all the legal responsibilities for the school.
- The trust has an executive team that consists of the chief executive officer (CEO) and three further leaders. An executive head has oversight of the leadership and effectiveness of Oakwood Academy, as well as two further schools within the trust.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is average.
- The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups is below average.
- The school works with two alternative providers to provide pupils with education off site. These are: Stone Soup, Nottingham; and CP Riverside School, Nottingham.

- The headteacher took up his substantive post in January 2018. The deputy headteacher also took up her post at this time.
- During the inspection, there were no Year 10 or 11 pupils at the school for inspectors to meet or to observe in lessons.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 31 lessons across the whole school. Some of these observations took place jointly with senior leaders, including the headteacher. Inspectors also observed form periods.
- During their visits to lessons, inspectors looked at pupils' workbooks and spoke with pupils.
- Inspectors also looked at pupils' workbooks as a separate activity.
- An inspector listened to some pupils read.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour before school, between lessons, and during breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors met formally and informally with pupils from across key stage 3.
- Inspectors held a range of meetings, including with: the executive headteacher; the headteacher; senior leaders; the leader responsible for safeguarding; subject leaders; the coordinator of the provision for pupils with SEND; pastoral leaders; the leader responsible for careers advice and guidance; the leader who has responsibility for children in the care of the local authority; and a selection of staff.
- The lead inspector met with three members of the IAB, two of whom also sit on the trust's board of trustees. He also met with the trust's CEO.
- An inspector spoke with representatives of the two alternative providers the school uses.
- Inspectors took into account the 16 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including the nine responses to the free-text service.
- Inspectors took into account the 60 responses to the online staff survey and the 25 responses to the pupil survey.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation relating to the school's provision, including documents regarding: self-evaluation and improvement planning; achievement; attendance and behaviour; governance; and safeguarding.
- The lead inspector checked the school's single central register and the school's system for recruiting staff.

Inspection team

Simon Hollingsworth, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Claire Shepherd	Ofsted Inspector
Peter Monk	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Davies	Her Majesty's Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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