

Inspection of a good school: Oxclose Community Academy

Dilston Close, Oxclose Village, Washington, Tyne and Wear NE38 0LN

Inspection dates: 14–15 January 2020

Outcome

Oxclose Community Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Oxclose Community Academy is an inclusive and diverse school. Pupils benefit from a broad, creative and ambitious curriculum.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and they say that they feel safe. They are proud of their school. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils are confident that their teachers will help and support them. Pupils behave well during lessons. They focus well on their learning and show respect for staff. Pupils are keen to answer questions and willing to participate in their learning. Pupils support each other well and therefore get the most from their lessons.

Pupils move sensibly around the large school site. They say that behaviour around the school is mainly good, although sometimes corridors can be very busy. Pupils told us that staff deal with any incidents of poor behaviour or bullying quickly. However, a small number of pupils are silly at times.

Pupils have lots of opportunities to learn beyond the classroom. Pupils are enthusiastic about the drama and musical performances they can get involved in, as well as the wide range of sports clubs and activities on offer.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The headteacher and other leaders have created a caring school where pupils are treated as individuals and encouraged to achieve their very best. As a result, the school continues to provide a good-quality education.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel supported by leaders and each other. There is a culture of teamwork. This benefits pupils as they experience well-planned lessons with resources that develop and support their learning. For example, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have access to resources that break the learning down for them so that they can understand content clearly. This is especially

so in English. Staff know pupils well. There are strong and purposeful relationships in classrooms.

Poor behaviour is not tolerated. High expectations of pupils and their behaviour are the bedrock of everyone's work and efforts. Pupils are polite and courteous and they are welcoming to visitors. They are eager to talk about their school and all of the subjects and events they can participate in.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They use this knowledge well to provide clear explanations for pupils. Teachers are developing their skills so they are clear about what content is the most important for pupils to remember. For example, in modern foreign languages, pupils benefit from opportunities to revisit key content, such as the days of the week and telling the time. This is helping pupils to understand subject content better. Most teachers use assessment well to identify and address gaps in pupils' knowledge. In mathematics, the curriculum has recently been improved.

The plans that are in place for all subjects make it clear what pupils need to learn. This is supporting teachers' planning. Teachers are growing in confidence in deciding what content to teach when so that pupils can learn more challenging ideas.

The number of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is growing. However, the number of pupils studying a modern foreign language in the past has been low. Leaders' efforts to improve the teaching in modern languages is paying off. More pupils are accessing a modern foreign language this year and beyond.

Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND can access a range of extra support both inside and outside the classroom. Pupils with SEND are supported well. Their social, emotional, physical and mental health needs are at the forefront of staff's work.

Pupils' social and emotional needs are catered for very well at the school. The Discover Learning Centre (DLC) is an asset to the pupils who attend, especially some of the most disadvantaged pupils. Pupils successfully access a curriculum that is bespoke to their interests and ambitions. The success stories of individual pupils who have attended this provision were both a pleasure to listen to and heart-warming. Pupils spoke with pride about how this provision has moulded them into young adults and supported them to overcome personal barriers.

The headteacher is a highly credible leader. She is supported unreservedly by governors and trustees. The trust has been successful in recruiting high-quality leaders so that the school grows from strength to strength. Staff feel supported and believe they receive the support and development needed. All staff are happy to work at the school and alongside governors, and are proud of the school and its successes. They are right to be proud of their school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are persistent in their approach to safeguarding. Staff understand the important role they play in safeguarding and keeping pupils safe. Staff are well trained to identify pupils who may be at risk of harm and they know what to do if they have any concerns.

The culture of safeguarding in the school means that pupils feel safe and are looked after well.

The school works with a range of external agencies in order to protect pupils from harm, especially those who may be more vulnerable than others.

There are clear systems and processes in place to ensure that anyone employed at the school is safe to work with pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, especially mathematics and modern foreign languages, the curriculum is not sequenced well enough. As a result, pupils struggle to know more and remember more. Leaders should ensure that the work done so far to improve the quality of education continues across all subjects. Leaders need to focus on ensuring that the sequencing of the curriculum enables pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, to know and remember more. Leaders should also iron out any inconsistencies so that all pupils are expected to think hard about key concepts and ideas.
- Not enough pupils have accessed modern foreign languages in the past. Leaders should continue their drive to further support and encourage pupils to gain the EBacc qualification by strengthening the teaching and curriculum in modern foreign languages.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	138923
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	10121776
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,117
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Linda Williams
Headteacher	Paula Hegarty
Website	www.oxclose.net
Date of previous inspection	23 February 2016

Information about this school

- The school is large than the average-sized school.
- Almost all pupils are White British. Very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium funding is above average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is broadly average.
- The school currently uses the Beacon of Light school for alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.
- We did deep dives in English, mathematics, modern foreign languages and art. We spoke with pupils, met with teachers and subject leaders, visited lessons and looked at a selection of pupils' work. Other subjects were also considered as part of the inspection. These included geography, history and science.

- We spoke with pupils from all year groups. Various meetings took place with senior leaders, subject leaders, and teaching and support staff. A meeting also took place with members of the local governing body and the chief executive officer (CEO) of the trust.
- A range of documents relating to safeguarding and child protection were scrutinised, including the school's single central record and checks on newly appointed staff.
- We reviewed documents relating to pupils' attendance, exclusions and behaviour. We also reviewed documents and plans relating to pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) and careers curriculum.
- We considered the 81 responses to the staff questionnaire and the 36 responses to the pupil questionnaire. We also considered the views expressed by parents and carers in the 37 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including the 23 comments received via the free-text facility.

Inspection team

Darren Stewart, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Catherine Garton

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates:
<http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2020