

# Inspection of an outstanding school: Oasis Academy Watermead

Barrie Crescent, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S5 8RJ

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Inspection dates:

19 and 20 September 2023

## Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The principal of this school is Nichola Smith. This school is part of Oasis Community Learning, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the interim chief executive officer, John Barneby and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Caroline Taylor. There is also an executive principal, James Pape, who is responsible for this school and one other.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to be part of the 'Watermead' family. They enjoy attending the school and being part of its inclusive community. Pupils recognise that leaders, with support from the trust, are making the school a better place to be. Leaders are aspirational for their pupils and pupils achieve well.

The school sets high expectations for pupils' behaviour in and around the school. Pupils move around the school in a calm and orderly manner. They are polite and courteous to each other and to others visiting the school. Pupils say bullying does not happen. They acknowledge there are sometimes fallings out, but staff sort these out quickly.

Pupils feel safe in school. They feel staff care for them deeply and are always there for them if they have a problem. Parents agree with this view.

Pupils know the importance of the 3Cs: character, competence and community. These spread throughout school life. Pupils say these values help them to make the right choices in their work and conduct around the school.

Pupils have access to a broad range of wider opportunities in the school, such as sports clubs and chess. They take on leadership roles such as councillors, well-being champions and ambassadors in different subjects. These responsibilities prepare pupils to be active citizens in the community.

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

Leaders and trust leaders are united in their approach to providing a high-quality education for their pupils. Leaders, with the support of the trust, have devised a purposeful and ambitious curriculum. The curriculum is appropriate for the context of the school and the pupils' needs. The school has identified the essential knowledge, skills and vocabulary it wants pupils to learn. This commences from Nursery through to Year 6.

The school ensures that all teachers are well trained to deliver the curriculum. Teachers have plentiful opportunities to discuss the curriculum with a range of specialists. As a result of this, teachers' subject knowledge is strong.

The school has developed a lesson structure to help pupils remember their learning. Teachers apply the structure consistently. Pupils receive regular opportunities to revisit prior knowledge at the start of every lesson. This helps them to remember, know and do more. Pupils complete quizzes at regular points throughout the lessons to show their understanding. Although teachers access this information, they do not adapt their teaching accordingly. This means some pupils do not undertake activities that deepen their knowledge. Other pupils do not receive the support they require to help them to learn.

The school prioritises reading and is ambitious that every pupil will learn to read, regardless of their background. The school encourages a love of reading by building up access to a wide selection of books, including an online library. Children are taught phonics as soon as they start school. In the early years, children are fully engaged in their learning, recognising letters and repeating the sounds they represent. Teachers regularly check what pupils know and can do and use this to identify pupils who need further practice. These pupils receive daily additional support so that they do not fall behind. However, in key stage 1, checks of pupils' phonic knowledge lack accuracy. For some pupils, the books they are given to read do not match the sounds they already know. This means pupils are not able to develop their reading fluency. In key stage 2, pupils access a reading curriculum that develops their oracy and their vocabulary. Pupils engage in a range of activities in a mature and purposeful way. Learning time is not wasted.

The school is ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). There are clear processes in place to identify their needs. These pupils receive the support they require quickly. Learning activities are skilfully adapted so that pupils with SEND can access the intended learning. These pupils achieve well.

Pupils access a carefully planned personal development programme. Character development sits at the heart of this programme. The curriculum helps pupils to understand how to stay safe, including when online. Pupils do not have a thorough understanding of different religions and faiths. This means pupils are not fully prepared for the society in which they live.

Leaders are considerate of staff well-being. They have created an open and honest culture. Staff appreciate this. Leaders involve staff fully in making decisions about the

future direction of the school. The trust has very clear mechanisms in place to hold leaders to account.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The assessment of pupils' phonic knowledge in key stage 1 lacks accuracy. Some pupils at the early stages of reading are not given books that are carefully matched to the sounds that they already know. This prevents these pupils from becoming fluent and confident readers. Leaders need to ensure that staff are well trained to accurately assess the pupils' phonics ability in order to select well-matched books.
- Teachers do not use assessment information to adapt their teaching to respond to the needs of pupils. This means that, on occasions, some pupils are not completing appropriate work. The school should improve how assessment information is used to inform teaching and enhance learning for all pupils.
- Pupils do not have a thorough understanding of different religions, faiths and cultures. Consequently, pupils do not understand religious differences. Leaders need to review the curriculum to ensure it provides enough opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge so they are fully prepared for life in modern Britain.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in July 2017.

## **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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

## **Further information**

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

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	140219
<b>Local authority</b>	Sheffield
<b>Inspection number</b>	10297395
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	426
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Oasis Community Learning
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Caroline Taylor
<b>Executive Principal</b>	James Pape
<b>Principal</b>	Nichola Smith
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.oasisacademywatermead.org">www.oasisacademywatermead.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12 July 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This school is part of Oasis Community Learning.
- There have been significant changes to the leadership team since the last inspection.
- The number of pupils on roll has increased considerably since the previous inspection.
- The school runs its own breakfast club.
- The school has recently been supported by a number of specialists from the trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.

- During the inspection, the inspector met with the executive principal and principal and members of the senior leadership team.
- The inspector met with the interim chief executive officer, the national director for primary education and a member of the Trustees Board.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. She considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys. The inspector spoke with parents before school to gather their views and opinions about the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector explored the staff's views about their workload and well-being.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour around school and in lessons. She spoke with pupils to gather their views about behaviour and safeguarding in their school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. She met with subject leaders, visited lessons and spoke with teachers. The inspector spoke with pupils and looked at examples of their work.

### **Inspection team**

Bev Dolman, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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