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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
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17 November 2025

Nichola Smith
Executive Principal
Oasis Academy Don Valley
Leeds Road
Sheffield
South Yorkshire
S9 3TY

Dear Mrs Smith

Urgent inspection of Oasis Academy Don Valley

Following my visit to the school on 30 September 2025, with Kathryn McDonald, Georgina Chinaka and John Linkins, His Majesty's Inspectors, I write on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave me and the time you took to discuss behaviour and processes related to safeguarding in the school.

The inspection was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for urgent inspections. The inspection was carried out because His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills was concerned about behaviour and safeguarding at the school.

We do not give graded judgements on urgent inspections. However, if we find some evidence that overall standards may be declining, but where no serious concerns have been identified, then the next inspection will normally be a graded inspection, which will be carried out under section 5 of the Act and will be brought forward. If we have serious concerns, we will deem the urgent inspection as a graded inspection immediately.

Evidence

This inspection was unannounced. The inspection team considered evidence that included observations of pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning in lessons; observations of pupils' behaviour throughout the day, including discussions with pupils; documentary evidence; discussions with leaders (including leaders from the multi-academy trust) and school staff.

Having evaluated the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

Leaders and those responsible for governance have taken effective action to maintain the standards of behaviour and safeguarding identified at the school's previous inspection.

Behaviour and attitudes

The school has experienced significant changes to senior leadership and staffing since the previous inspection in November 2023. Although there is now stable leadership across the school, this has not consistently been the case during this period. Leaders acknowledge that standards across a range of areas at the school have fluctuated during this transitional period. New leaders have taken swift action to address many of these matters, with the development of improved systems and processes. This is having a positive impact, most noticeably on the behaviour and attitudes of pupils. Leaders are aware that several new policies and processes need time to embed and become consistently implemented for the impact of these to be fully realised.

The inspection team found that leaders are taking appropriate actions to maintain standards of behaviour at the school. Pupils told inspectors that behaviour is generally calm in lessons and in social spaces. Pupils and staff told us that day-to-day behaviour has improved from last year and that the calm atmosphere seen during our unannounced visit is typical of their daily experience.

Most pupils told inspectors that bullying and the use of derogatory language rarely happens at the school. The school's records support this view. However, a small number of pupils stated that such behaviour was more common, and that they sometimes lacked confidence that their concerns would be addressed by some members of staff. They said that they might not always report instances of bullying or derogatory language for this reason. Some pupils reported that there is some inconsistency with how staff follow the behaviour policy. They felt that a small number of staff do not consistently address or challenge poor behaviour.

Inspectors observed a settled and orderly start to the day. Pupils respond to the expectations of staff and follow clearly established routines. Inspectors visited lessons that were purposeful. On occasions, a small number of pupils were less engaged with their learning. The calm atmosphere in lessons has greatly improved the overall learning climate. Staff say that they can now teach more effectively as lessons are not disrupted.

Inspectors observed that most pupils manage their behaviour well in unstructured time. Most pupils are well mannered. They hold doors open for visitors and greet them politely. However, some inappropriate behaviour was occasionally observed, such as playfighting, misuse of corridor passes and littering. Some pupils were seen loitering on corridors during lesson transitions. Pupils usually comply when challenged by staff. However, on some occasions, these behaviours were not consistently challenged.

The school's new behaviour policy has led to a significant reduction in sanctions, such as lesson removals. Pupil suspensions have also reduced significantly. Pupils speak positively about the rewards they receive for good behaviour. Staff are positive about the changes they have seen in pupils' behaviour. They feel supported by new leaders to effectively manage pupils' behaviour.

The school has introduced three internal provisions (the 'Gateway', 'Bridge' and 'Ambition') to support pupils with the highest needs, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) including social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH). Although all children have personalised plans in place to meet their complex needs, it is too early to see the impact of these plans and the reintegration pathways of those pupils back into mainstream. The school's systems for triaging pupils' needs across a range of indicators (such as attendance, behaviour and SEND) have only recently been introduced. Leaders recognise that this work needs to be developed further, so that informative data is quickly interpreted and acted on by staff to help provide more personalised support to pupils.

The inspection team visited an internal isolation area within the school's 'Ambition' provision. Pupils were observed to be compliant with behavioural expectations, although some pupils were not fully engaged in the work they were doing in this space. Inspectors spoke with pupils who had previously been suspended. These pupils talked positively about the school. They felt that they had been given appropriate support following their suspension to reintegrate into school.

Leaders have introduced clear processes and policies to improve attendance. There is evidence that this is having a positive impact. For example, the number of pupils who are severely absent is reducing. The school has improved communication systems with parents and carers, and the number of pupil rewards for positive attendance is increasing. However, the school does not currently act as quickly or proactively as possible to address underlying reasons for pupils' poor attendance. The school is continuing to build leadership capacity to further improve pupils' attendance.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding was judged to be effective at the previous inspection. The evidence gathered on this inspection shows that safeguarding standards have been maintained. Leaders and staff are aware of the local risks to children. Staff receive frequent safeguarding training and consistently explain how they would follow procedures to deal with any concerns about pupils' safety. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe at school. They identified adults who they felt they could trust. Pupils could discuss how they keep themselves safe online and outside school.

The school has clear oversight of the most vulnerable pupils at the school. Recent record-keeping shows a clear summary of safeguarding concerns that have been raised about pupils and how these are being addressed. However, occasionally, records kept do not clearly show the outcomes of interventions or how leaders are assured of their impact.

Oasis Community Learning has appropriate oversight of the school. There are clear lines of delegation and accountability. Trust leaders have a strong understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The trust has prioritised the school with additional leadership, resourcing, support and scrutiny. Trust leaders acknowledge that having stabilised the leadership of the school, further time is now needed to fully embed and enact new initiatives and policies.

Additional support

Leaders from Oasis Community Learning work closely with school leaders. They regularly meet with school leaders and visit the school. This ensures that leaders at all levels have an accurate understanding of the school and that improvement strategies are pertinent and have impact. The trust has a planned programme of support for the school to develop leadership and instructional coaching. The school has worked with local community leaders and established a parents' forum to ensure that parents' views are heard and acted upon. The school has engaged with the local authority to ensure that staff have received thorough training in safeguarding. The school collaborates with external agencies and the local police force to educate pupils about behaviour and local dangers, such as knife crime.

Priorities for further improvement

- New behaviour policies and practices are not consistently embedded across the school. As a result, some instances of poor behaviour from some pupils are not consistently challenged by all staff. This limits the extent to which a positive culture of behaviour can be fully established. The school should ensure that new behaviour policies and expectations are fully embedded and consistently applied by all staff.
- New provisions to support pupils with complex needs, such as SEMH, have recently been introduced. These provisions are still being refined by leaders. Currently, a small number of pupils with SEMH needs would benefit from more precise support from teachers. The school should ensure that these provisions are further refined and that all teachers are supported to meet the requirements of pupils with complex needs.
- The school's safeguarding culture is effective. However, some safeguarding records do not clearly identify the outcomes of interventions put in place by the school. This means that, sometimes, leaders' evaluations of the effectiveness of interventions are not fully recorded. The school should ensure that safeguarding records are fully robust and that outcomes of interventions are clearly recorded. These should be quality assured by leaders.
- Quality assurance systems across the school with regards to the focus of this visit are in their infancy. New systems and processes that provide leaders with informative data on various aspects of school are not embedded. The school should ensure that methods of quality assurance are fully embedded and that leaders are trained to use data to inform future strategies.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, and the chief executive officer of Oasis Community Learning , the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Sheffield. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Chris Carr
His Majesty's Inspector