

# The Oakwood Academy

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

## Inspection dates

5–6 December 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Inadequate</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Inadequate</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an inadequate school

- Leaders have not ensured that all pupils are achieving as well as they should, and their evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses are not wholly accurate. The school's plans for improvement do not have clear outcomes by which success can be measured.
- Leaders have not ensured that funding for disadvantaged pupils has been used to improve their achievement, ensure that they attend well, or have equal access to extra-curricular activities. The achievement of disadvantaged pupils is declining.
- Governors do not hold leaders to account. They are too reliant on the information provided to them by school leaders and do not challenge leaders on how the funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent.
- Subject leaders have been too slow to improve inconsistencies in teaching and learning in their departments.
- Provisional results for 2017 show pupils' progress was much lower than the national average in many subjects, including English and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inconsistent across and within subjects and year groups.
- Teaching is not consistently well planned to meet pupils' needs. The least-able pupils are not well supported, while the most able are not sufficiently well challenged.
- Teachers do not routinely challenge pupils' misconceptions in class.
- Attitudes to learning are not consistently positive. Where teaching does not meet their needs well, pupils disrupt the learning of others and, on occasion, talk over their teachers.
- The attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is too low when compared to other pupils.

### The school has the following strengths

- Teaching is improving. Staff value the opportunities to develop their teaching and learn from best practice in the trust.
- Pupils in key stage 3 are beginning to make better progress than previously.
- Pupils have good relationships with their peers and adults in the classroom. They are smartly presented and conduct themselves well at lunchtimes and breaktimes.
- Pupils said that they feel safe in the school. There are strong safeguarding procedures in place to protect pupils, particularly the most vulnerable.
- The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. They are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Good information and guidance are given to help pupils move on to further education, training or employment.

## Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

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

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that leaders:
  - carefully account for the allocation of additional funding and ensure that this funding is used to improve rapidly the attendance and achievement of eligible pupils
  - evaluate the impact of funding so they know which actions are making a difference and which are not
  - ensure that their evaluation of all aspects of the school's work is firmly rooted in evidence and used to inform action plans that have clear and measurable success criteria
  - embed strategies recently introduced to improve the quality of teaching, learning, assessment and outcomes for pupils
  - build on the work that has recently been started to hold middle leaders to account more effectively.
- Raise pupils' achievement, particularly that of the disadvantaged pupils and pupils of average ability, by improving the quality of teaching to ensure that all teachers:
  - have high expectations of what all pupils are able to achieve
  - use the information about pupils' starting points to plan activities that interest and motivate pupils and match their need more closely, so that lower-attaining pupils receive the support they need and the most able are consistently well challenged
  - use effective questioning to challenge pupils' misconceptions and move them on to the next stage of their learning.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by making sure that:
  - instances of low-level disruption and pupils' lack of focus in lessons are significantly reduced so that all pupils can make at least good progress
  - pupils' attendance improves and the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent reduces, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Inadequate

- Leaders have not used additional funding well enough to secure better outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders do not evaluate the impact of specific strategies to modify, where necessary, their approach. The progress of current disadvantaged pupils in Years 7 and 8 is showing some signs of improvement. However, the overall progress made by disadvantaged pupils in the school has been too low, for too long.
- Leaders' self-evaluation of the school does not precisely portray the school's strengths and weaknesses. Leaders have an over-generous view of the school's overall effectiveness and the impact of their actions.
- Leaders have recently begun to hold subject leaders to account for the quality of teaching in their departments. However, some subject leaders have been too slow to tackle the weaknesses in teaching in their areas.
- School improvement planning is not having the desired impact across the school at this early stage. Leaders know what needs to be improved. However, the school improvement plan lacks clarity, and actions do not include clear, measurable outcomes. As a result, the plan's impact on pupils' learning and progress has so far been limited.
- Until recently, leaders have not tracked pupils' progress accurately enough. This has meant that leaders have not been able to identify gaps in pupils' learning and intervene effectively, to ensure that all groups of pupils make at least good progress.
- Leaders have not ensured that all staff follow agreed whole-school practices. For example, not all staff make use of the school's policy on assessment and feedback, and leaders have not provided opportunities for examples of effective practice to be shared throughout the school. Where the policy is being used effectively, pupils make better progress.
- Recent changes in leadership have strengthened the school's capacity to make the necessary improvements. Since September 2017, the school has been led by an executive headteacher with a successful track record in school improvement. She is supported well by a restructured, extended leadership team, with new roles and responsibilities. Staff are well motivated and describe senior leaders as 'approachable, with a can-do attitude'.
- Since April 2015, the school has been sponsored by the Redhill Academy Trust. While some developments were slow to take effect, there is evidence that some aspects of the school's work are now improving.
- Staff value the effective professional development they receive, and this is beginning to improve the quality of teaching in some subject areas. Coaching programmes, delivered through the trust, have helped staff to improve their practice. In addition, staff benefit from opportunities to share ideas and learn from each other. Arrangements for the management of staff performance are secure.
- Leaders have introduced new systems to manage the behaviour of pupils and, as a result, staff now apply sanctions more consistently. Pupils' behaviour has improved. However, exclusions are increasing and attendance for some groups of pupils remains stubbornly below the national average. Leaders do not routinely track the attendance

of particular groups of pupils, and this affects the ability of leaders to make any improvements.

- Leaders use Year 7 catch-up funding effectively to support those pupils who enter the school with literacy levels below those typical for their age. These pupils make notable progress in catching up with their peers. Year 7 pupils who require numeracy support do not have sufficient opportunities to develop these skills across the curriculum.
- Staff offer pupils a wide variety of extra-curricular activities that many pupils take advantage of, for example sports and the arts. However, leaders do not track the involvement of pupils and, therefore, they are not able to analyse whether there are barriers to some pupils, for example disadvantaged pupils, taking part.
- Leaders have developed a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils. Leaders have recently amended the curriculum for pupils who are making their GCSE choices. Pupils can now choose the most appropriate 'pathway' to meet their individual need. More pupils will also have the opportunity to study a modern foreign language at GCSE.
- Pupils have extensive opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding, due to a well-planned curriculum. Through assemblies, tutor time and the house system, pupils are encouraged to consider relevant issues, such as democracy, responsibility and independence. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain and have a confident understanding of British values.

## **Governance of the school**

- The local governing board (LGB) has been over-reliant on information provided by senior leaders and has failed to make sure that school leaders have provided the LGB with all the relevant and detailed information that it needs. This means that the LGB is not able to hold leaders to account for the school's use of additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils, so that disadvantaged pupils achieve and attend school as well as others.
- Governors do not have a wholly accurate picture of standards and progress in the school. They have not challenged leaders sufficiently to ensure that the leaders precisely evaluate the school's strengths and weaknesses and plan strategically to bring about sustained improvements in pupils' outcomes.
- The school's website is not monitored by governors and does not comply with current government guidance.
- The LGB makes sure that its safeguarding responsibilities are met. All governors have received safeguarding training recently, and the governor with responsibility for safeguarding meets regularly with school leaders to review the school's safeguarding procedures and practices.
- Governors are committed to the school and are supportive of the school's leaders. They take advantage of regular training offered to LGBs within the trust and are planning to undertake a skills audit of LGB members to identify areas of weakness and recruit new members accordingly.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. School leaders maintain accurate and appropriate records. They ensure that there is a thorough approach to safer recruitment and that all appropriate procedures are in place for checking the background information of staff when they are appointed.
- The designated safeguarding leaders and the pastoral team are effective in protecting vulnerable pupils in the school. Leaders make timely referrals when concerns arise and involve appropriate external agencies to obtain the support that vulnerable pupils need. Leaders communicate regularly with other members of the safeguarding team and are tenacious in following up concerns.
- Staff are aware of their role in ensuring pupils' safety and welfare. They access regular safeguarding training and, because of this, have a good knowledge of the risks that pupils may face and of how to identify them.
- The curriculum supports the culture and ethos of safeguarding. Pupils are able to identify possible risks, including those online, and know how to protect themselves.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inconsistent across and within subjects and year groups. As a result, teaching does not allow all pupils to make enough progress by the end of Year 11.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of are not high enough. Work set by teachers is not always well planned to challenge pupils effectively and allow pupils to make good progress. When pupils are provided with work that does not engage or enthuse them, low-level disruption can occur. Pupils then miss opportunities to consolidate or deepen their understanding and, therefore, their learning is slower.
- Teachers have access to a wide range of assessment information about individual pupils. However, the way that teachers use this information is not always effective. The most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged, and pupils with low prior attainment are not effectively supported. These pupils underachieve as a consequence.
- Teachers do not apply the school's assessment policy consistently, and the quality and impact of teachers' feedback varies considerably. When pupils are encouraged by teachers to respond to feedback, pupils make stronger progress.
- Not all teachers insist on the highest standards in presentation and, therefore, some pupils' work is untidy and unfinished.
- Teachers' questioning of pupils is not always effective, and teachers sometimes move on to the next task before pupils fully understand what has been taught, which results in slower learning. Where teachers use questioning more successfully, they skilfully challenge pupils' misconceptions. An excellent example of this was seen by inspectors in a mathematics lesson, where the teacher used effective questioning to ensure that the pupils understood, before moving on to the next stage.
- Most teachers have strong subject knowledge and create a positive learning environment in their classrooms. There is a high degree of respect between pupils and

between adults and pupils. Pupils are able to seek help when they need it and ask questions to clarify their understanding.

- Where learning is most effective, teachers use a range of strategies to ensure that pupils are engaged and interested in their work and plan work that builds on pupils' starting points. Teachers do this more successfully in key stage 3.
- Teachers set homework regularly, particularly for pupils in Year 10 and Year 11. Pupils said that, while they find homework challenging at times, it is helpful for their learning.
- Some teachers are taking the opportunity to share good practice with other teachers in the same and in other departments. For example, English teachers are working closely with history teachers on how to link pupils' learning more closely to the assessment requirements in examination questions.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils learn how to keep safe online. They demonstrate good knowledge and understanding about the dangers of 'sexting'.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is good. Pupils appreciate different cultures, beliefs and lifestyles and welcome pupils from all backgrounds to their school.
- Pupils learn about British values through the school's 'DRIVE' initiative, delivered through assemblies, tutor time and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) lessons in Years 9, 10 and 11. The vast majority of pupils treat each other, and adults, with respect.
- Pupils receive good guidance to support their physical and mental health, including how to manage stress.
- Pupils said that they feel confident that staff will deal effectively with any reports they make of bullying or harassment, although bullying is not common. The number of racist or homophobic incidents has significantly decreased. When such incidents do happen, the pupils responsible are dealt with appropriately by teachers and, as a result, these incidents are rarely repeated.
- The majority of pupils who responded to the survey said that they have someone in school to whom they can turn, if they have any concerns. All pupils who responded to the survey said that they feel safe in school. A majority of parents and carers who responded to the survey also agree that their child is safe at the school.
- Pupils take on responsibilities and develop their skills as young citizens, particularly through the school's house system. The recently introduced 'Pledge' programme is encouraging pupils to get involved in wider aspects of school life, including extra-curricular activities and opportunities for pupil leadership.
- Pupils receive helpful careers advice and guidance and, as a result, the overwhelming majority of older pupils make informed choices about suitable education, employment

or training once they have left the school. School leavers who need the most advice are targeted for additional support.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Where teaching does not interest them or does not meet their learning needs, pupils lose focus and engage in low-level disruption. A number of pupils who responded to the survey or who spoke with inspectors reported that their lessons are disrupted by poor behaviour.
- The attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is in the bottom 10% of all schools nationally. Current data shows that the attendance of both of these groups of pupils remains lower than that of other pupils and below the national average. Too many disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are persistently absent, and their numbers have grown over the past two years.
- The overall attendance of pupils in school has improved to be close to the national average.
- Exclusion rates for pupils have fallen significantly to below the national average. However, the most recent school information shows that the number of exclusions this year is rising. More disadvantaged pupils are excluded than non-disadvantaged pupils.
- Pupils' punctuality has improved significantly, according to school information. This is because leaders have put more robust methods in place to monitor pupil lateness.
- Over time, behaviour has improved. Most staff who responded to the survey or who spoke to inspectors are positive about the behaviour of pupils.
- Pupils' conduct is good around the school and they are respectful of their environment. They wear their uniform proudly and are polite to each other and to adults.
- Pupils in the alternative off-site provision attend and behave well. There are good links between the school and the provider to check on pupils' safety and learning.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Inadequate

- Pupils make inadequate progress during their time at the school and, because of this, they underachieve. This is especially the case for disadvantaged pupils.
- Over a number of years, disadvantaged pupils' progress has been inadequate. In 2016, the overall progress of disadvantaged pupils was significantly below the national average. Progress for disadvantaged pupils with low prior-attainment was in the lowest 10% of all schools nationally, including in English and mathematics.
- Provisional information for 2017 indicates that disadvantaged pupils' progress was even lower than in 2016, and the achievement gap between these pupils and other pupils widened further in a range of subjects. The school's own performance information indicates that current Year 11 disadvantaged pupils are underachieving.

- In 2016, the overall progress of pupils in Year 11 was significantly below the national average. The provisional information for 2017 suggests that the progress of pupils in Year 11 was also well below the national average.
- In 2017, just under half of the pupils in Year 11 were of average ability. Provisional information indicates that these pupils, including the disadvantaged pupils, made inadequate progress. The disadvantaged pupils of average ability achieved more than one grade less than other pupils from the same starting point.
- The school's own performance information indicates that the progress of current Year 11 pupils is still significantly below the national average. The quality of teaching is not yet strong enough to secure the improvements in pupils' outcomes that are urgently required.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities do not make the progress that they should. Compared to 2017 provisional outcomes, the gap in progress between pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and other pupils is predicted to widen for pupils currently in Year 10 and Year 11.
- Pupils' progress in English, science and geography has been too low over time. Progress in mathematics also declined in 2017 to being significantly below average, according to provisional information.
- Pupils' attainment in a range of subjects in 2017 was significantly below national average according to provisional information, particularly in business, chemistry, computing, health and social care, and information technology.
- Boys make less progress than girls, and girls' progress is significantly below average. The school's information indicates that the gap in achievement between boys and girls will widen in 2018.
- Leaders judge that the progress of current Year 10 pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, is better than in previous years. However, inspectors were unable to find evidence to support this view. The books that inspectors looked at show considerable inconsistency in Year 10 pupils' progress towards their target grades.
- Pupils perform well in Spanish, achieving half a grade higher than in their other subjects, according to the 2017 provisional results.
- According to the school's performance information, pupils in Year 7 and Year 8 are making better progress and the gaps between disadvantaged and other pupils are beginning to close. The books that inspectors looked at confirm this to be the case.
- Targeted support in literacy and reading is accelerating the progress of Year 7 and Year 8 disadvantaged pupils. These pupils have made more progress towards their reading ages than other pupils.
- All pupils are encouraged to read regularly in lessons and pupils who spoke with inspectors value these opportunities.
- The very few pupils who attend alternative provision make appropriate progress.
- Pupils who are looked after make good progress. Over time, these pupils secure placements in further education or work with training.

## School details

Unique reference number	141363
Local authority	Nottingham
Inspection number	10041552

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	687
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Steve Hopkins
Headteacher	Andrea Healey
Telephone number	01159 539323
Website	<a href="http://www.oakwoodacademy.org.uk">www.oakwoodacademy.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@oakwoodacademy.org.uk">admin@oakwoodacademy.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information on its website in relation to its curriculum and to information about its provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, including the local offer and the school's accessibility plan for disabled pupils.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is a smaller-than-average secondary school.
- The school has been sponsored by the Redhill Academy Trust since April 2015. The trust is responsible for the school's governance. The school has a local governing board. The trust holds all the legal responsibilities for the school.
- The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups is below average.

- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs, or with an education, health and care plan is below average.
- A few pupils attend full-time alternative provision at other schools within the trust.
- The school met the government's floor standards in 2016 and 2017, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of key stage 4.
- The headteacher was absent during the two days of inspection.
- The school is currently being led by an executive headteacher who is employed by the trust.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 46 lessons, across a wide range of subjects and in key stages 3 and 4. Some lessons were jointly observed with senior leaders. Inspectors also observed tutor time and one assembly.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in lessons across all year groups and a sample of pupils' books.
- Inspectors held a range of meetings, including with: the executive headteacher; the deputy headteacher who has oversight of achievement and the use of the pupil premium; safeguarding leaders; two members of the local governing board; two representatives of the multi-academy trust, including the chief executive officer; senior leaders responsible for behaviour and attendance, teaching and learning, and the curriculum; the coordinator for the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities; the careers leader; the whole-school literacy and numeracy leaders; the PSHE education coordinator; subject leaders and pastoral leaders.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, before school and during breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading, including pupils from Year 7 and Year 8.
- Inspectors spoke formally with pupils from key stage 3 and key stage 4, as well as a group of disadvantaged pupils. Inspectors also spoke with other pupils informally.
- An inspector spoke with a representative of an alternative provider, which pupils from the school attend.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents relating to the school's provision, including: self-evaluation and improvement planning; governance; behaviour and attendance; achievement; and safeguarding. The lead inspector also checked the school's single central register and the school's system for recruiting staff.
- Inspectors evaluated 47 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, including 28 free text response. An inspector also spoke with parents before school.
- Inspectors analysed the 38 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff and the 37 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for pupils.

## Inspection team

Rachel Tordoff, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Russell Barr	Ofsted Inspector
Bernadette Green	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Wilson	Ofsted Inspector

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