

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mr Ian Simpson
Principal
Oasis Academy Lister Park
North Avenue
Bradford
BD8 7ND

Dear Mr Simpson

Special measures monitoring inspection of Oasis Academy Lister Park

Following my visit with Steven Beverley, Ofsted Inspector, and John Paddick, Ofsted Inspector, to your academy on 14 and 15 October 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions which have been taken since the academy's previous monitoring inspection.

The inspection was the second monitoring inspection since the academy became subject to special measures following the inspection which took place in February 2015. The full list of the areas for improvement which were identified during that inspection is set out in the annex to this letter. The monitoring inspection report is attached.

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

Leaders and managers are taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.

Having considered all the evidence, I strongly recommend that the academy does not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.

This letter and monitoring inspection report will be published on the Ofsted website.
I am copying this letter and the monitoring inspection report to the Secretary of State and the Chair of the Interim Executive Board.

Yours sincerely

Marianne Young
Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in February 2015

- Ensure the quality of teaching is always good or better, in order to raise attainment and increase rates of progress, especially in English and mathematics by:
 - taking swift action to eradicate inadequate teaching
 - implementing the planned training for all teachers and the tailored professional development for those teachers whose teaching is typically not of a good or better standard
 - ensuring teachers use all the information available to them to plan lessons that challenge students, including the most-able
 - ensuring that lesson activities interest and engage students so that they are keen to learn and make good progress
 - ensuring the mathematics curriculum includes regular opportunities for students to apply their knowledge to complex mathematical problems
 - checking that marking supports improvements in students' spelling, punctuation and grammar.

- Improve behaviour and safety by:
 - ensuring students develop positive attitudes to learning, participate in lessons and work hard
 - ensuring there are effective systems in place to improve punctuality to lessons and students' behaviour at social times
 - ensuring strategies to improve attendance are pursued relentlessly so that attendance rises to be at least in line with the national average.

- Improve the leadership, management and governance of the academy so that it secures rapid improvements in the quality of teaching and outcomes for students by:
 - ensuring all leaders, especially governors and those who lead and manage subjects, have the skills to carry out their roles effectively
 - prioritising work to support and develop the quality of teaching
 - improving the level of specialist subject knowledge and the quality of leadership in mathematics
 - ensuring the pupil premium is used specifically to raise the achievement of eligible students.

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

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

Report on the second monitoring inspection on 14 and 15 October 2015

Evidence

Senior leaders accompanied inspectors as they observed parts of lessons in a range of subjects. Inspectors scrutinised documents and spoke with pupils at social times. Inspectors held meetings with the Principal, senior leaders, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board (IEB) and the regional area director for Oasis Community Learning.

Context

Twelve staff left the academy at the end of the summer term. Fourteen staff, including those appointed to the key posts of head of mathematics, head of numeracy, lead practitioner in mathematics and the special educational needs coordinator all took up their posts on 1 September 2015. Three members of staff have been seconded to the academy leadership team. The governing body has been replaced by an IEB and it held its first meeting on 28 August 2015. The director of teaching for the north-west Oasis academies has been seconded, one day a week for a year, to provide additional support.

Outcomes for pupils

The 2015 results for pupils at the end of Year 11 showed minimal improvements compared with the results in 2014 in the proportion of pupils gaining five good GCSE passes, including in English and mathematics. There was a similar, very slight increase in the proportion of pupils making expected and more than expected progress in English and mathematics. Nevertheless, pupil underachievement is still very evident, with fewer than half of the pupils making at least expected progress in mathematics. All measures of pupil performance remain well below the national picture. There are gaps between boys and girls in the standards they reach and the progress they make. However, the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers is very small.

Academy leaders provided data to show that pupils in many other subjects are not making the progress expected of them. There is a similar picture for pupils in the sixth form, especially but not exclusively in mathematics. Inspection evidence confirmed this to be the case because of the lack of challenge provided in lessons for pupils of different abilities.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inspectors saw a mixed quality of teaching during the inspection. For many of the observations, inspectors were accompanied by members of the senior leadership team, who are well aware that the overall quality of teaching is not good enough. As

a result, any underachievement by pupils is not being overcome quickly enough. Inspectors saw evidence of teachers using the '6 to start, 5 to finish' system in several lessons. This has been introduced this term and reminds teachers of key things that leaders want them to do.

Teachers are provided with a wealth of information about pupils' capabilities, but many do not use it well enough when lessons are planned. Too often tasks and activities are pitched incorrectly for pupils in the class, being either too easy or too difficult for them. Very often, inspectors saw that teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. This was evident in a mathematics lesson in the sixth form where all pupils were doing the same work and it was not adjusted to meet their particular needs. Some quality marking was observed, for example, in some English books. However, much of the marking is limited to ticks without providing helpful comments so that pupils can learn from their mistakes. Some work in pupils' books is very neat and tidy, but too often teachers accept poorly presented work and do not insist that diagrams, for example, are drawn carefully using a pencil and ruler. Inspectors saw very mixed practice by teaching assistants. Their effectiveness is marred at times by either the teacher not making effective use of them in lessons or teaching assistants themselves not always having a clear understanding of their role within the classroom.

Where work is pitched at the right level, pupils are challenged through detailed questioning to work out answers, then their understanding is assured and their progress is rapid. Too often, this is not the case.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

The systems now in place, including phone calls to parents and home visits, are making a difference to pupils' attendance throughout the academy and to their punctuality in the morning. Attendance is higher and fewer pupils are late to lessons than was the case during the section 5 inspection. Inspectors saw and pupils confirmed that a number of staff are on duty before the start of morning lessons and during the day. Senior staff are also visible to pupils, who are greeted and spoken to by staff regularly.

Pupils' attitudes to their learning have improved but inspectors saw, and senior leaders confirm, that some pupils do not behave properly in lessons. Inspectors saw that a few pupils are removed from lessons and sent to other classrooms. However, not all of these pupils are given work to do. Consequently they miss important learning. There is at present limited tracking done when pupils are removed from lessons because of software issues, which restricts leaders' ability to identify patterns and repeat offenders.

New arrangements to monitor the use of the sixth-form study area are in place. However, some sixth-form pupils told inspectors that they would welcome having

more work to do during their study times. This is because some of the work they are given to do, is, at times, limited.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Strengths in securing improvement

- The drive and determination shown by the Principal, senior leaders and members of the IEB.
- Inspection evidence that attendance and the behaviour of many pupils have improved.

Weaknesses in securing improvement

- Early good intentions by some members of staff are yet to be evaluated to check whether they have secured promised improvements.
- The inexperience of many heads of department.
- The impact of the current training programmes and support for all teachers.

The Principal has a very clear understanding of the challenges posed by the current situation. He has prioritised what needs to be done in order to move forward. He is strongly supported and challenged by members of the IEB. Senior leaders' main priority has been to rapidly improve and sustain high-quality teaching. Compared with the situation seen during the section 5 inspection, staff absence has reduced and pupils' behaviour in lessons has improved. Senior leaders are getting a realistic view of the quality of teaching throughout the academy. Lesson observations, looking at pupils' books and meetings with teachers are scheduled regularly. Additional intensive support is provided for those teachers who need it. Evidence provided during the inspection suggests that, as a result, some teachers have chosen to work elsewhere but others are responding effectively to the support provided for them. Teachers have been set challenging targets as part of their performance management reviews. It is too early to evaluate the impact of these, together with the current training programme, in ensuring that more teachers than before are teaching high-quality lessons.

New appointments have been made in the mathematics department. The head of department has started to gain an understanding of the key issues faced in order to raise standards and eliminate underachievement. It is, however, too early to evaluate this work. Similarly, several other heads of department are at an early stage of development and their skills and abilities to carry out their roles are not yet apparent.

The governing body has been replaced by an IEB whose members are experienced educationalists. They meet regularly to check for themselves that promised improvements are being made, and are sustained and having the intended impact

on improving pupil outcomes. They are well aware of the need to spend pupil premium money properly, and a meeting with the member of staff who has responsibility and a thorough understanding of this is imminent.

External support

The regional area director for Oasis Community Learning is being instrumental in arranging additional support for the academy. The subject leaders for English and mathematics and the head of sixth form are involved in regular training in order to improve their leadership skills. This work is being led by a very experienced member from another Oasis academy. Regular whole-academy checks take place. The most recent was done in conjunction with inspectors from the Bradford Partnership. There is an openness at the academy which means that leaders welcome additional support and challenge from a number of sources. However, it is early days and so the impact is not yet evident.