

# Oasis Academy Connaught

Melvin Square, Knowle West, Bristol BS4 1NH

## Inspection dates

29–30 June 2016

### Overall effectiveness

### Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not acted quickly enough to fully address the legacy of weak teaching. Improvement is evident but inconsistency in teaching across classes and year groups remains.
- Roles and responsibilities of some leaders are not fully embedded and therefore their impact is not being fully maximised. Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching are not robust and do not focus sufficiently on how well groups of pupils learn.
- Teachers do not always plan work at the right level and sometimes move pupils on before they have secured their understanding. Insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to apply their skills in mathematics and writing.
- Too few pupils make the rates of progress that are expected of them in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The most able pupils' learning is not sufficiently catered for. Consequently they do not make enough progress.
- Oasis Community Learning (OCL) has been slow to take action in holding leaders to account for raising pupils' attainment. As a result, improvement is too recent and is not yet sustained.
- Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. Exclusion rates for pupils remain too high and are well above the national average.
- Training records and procedures for monitoring of ongoing risk assessments are not consistently applied on all occasions.
- Published outcomes show that a much smaller proportion of children leave the early years with skills and knowledge in line with the expected standard for their age.

### The school has the following strengths

- Greater challenge by the executive principal and regional academy director is resulting in pupils making better progress this year. The legacy of underachievement and weak teaching is being successfully addressed.
- Pupils' knowledge of phonics has improved in key stage 1. Current work to raise standards in reading is bringing about improvement.
- The consistent approach to managing behaviour in the school is resulting in the vast majority of pupils being ready to learn and demonstrating positive attitudes in lessons.
- Leaders, including the academy council, have been pivotal in galvanising links with, and raising aspirations in, the community.
- Pupils feel safe and most pupils enjoy school.

## Full report

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

- Improve the impact of leadership so that it is consistently good by:
  - ensuring that the executive principal holds all senior leaders to account so their impact is maximised
  - securing clear roles and lines of responsibilities for middle leaders so that they know what is needed to raise pupils' performance in their subjects
  - ensuring that systems for monitoring teaching over time are precise and more directly focused on improving outcomes for all groups of pupils
  - ensuring that safeguarding training records are up to date and the procedures for the monitoring of ongoing risk assessments to promote pupils' welfare are consistently followed.
  
- Improve behaviour, welfare and safety so that it is consistently good by ensuring that:
  - the percentage of pupils who are persistently absent is considerably reduced
  - the number of fixed-term exclusions pupils receive is considerably reduced
  - all pupils demonstrate good learning attitudes in lessons and take care and pride in their work.
  
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
  - all groups of pupils make good progress from their starting points, including disadvantaged pupils and those who are the most able
  - pupils receive work that is set at the right level for them and there is sufficient opportunity for them to apply their writing skills to other subjects
  - pupils receive sufficient opportunities to apply their mathematical skills, solve problems and reason.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders have not yet brought about enough improvement across all aspects of the school. They are tackling the legacy of underachievement. However, progress against the school's action plan is relatively recent. The right priorities are identified but there has been too little impact in a number of areas. Consequently, self-evaluation is overgenerous in its assessment of school performance.
- The executive principal does not consistently hold all leaders to account to ensure that their impact is maximised. Her communication to leaders is not consistently strong. Some leadership roles are not fully understood. Therefore, while the wider leadership team works together with determination, in some cases leaders are not clear of the expectations and standards required of them.
- The current work of the executive principal and external support from the regional academy director is helping the school to recover from a period of considerable underperformance. This work is proving pivotal in raising the achievement of pupils currently on roll.
- The deputy principal's coaching for teachers is building staff confidence. Staff have acted on clear advice, for example about their classroom environments, to support pupils' learning.
- Leaders' checks on the quality of teaching are not sufficiently robust. Leaders' feedback about the progress that groups of pupils are making, particularly the most able, is not clearly communicated to staff. This results in some staff being unclear about the improvements they need to make so that the progress of different groups of pupils in their classes can accelerate further.
- The work of subject leadership teams is helping to bring about improvement. For example, there is better teaching of reading throughout the school. However, the executive principal accurately identifies that skills in subject leadership are not yet sufficiently developed. Until recently, subject leaders have not focused rigorously enough on improving the quality of teaching and learning, and raising attainment in their subjects. They conduct checks on workbooks and planning on a regular basis but they have not had sufficient opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching across all key stages. Consequently, they do not have a full understanding of attainment and progress of all groups of pupils in their individual subjects, and they are not yet undertaking all aspects of their role.
- The additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is managed effectively. Additional adults are deployed to support pupils' learning in lessons and within the nurture base where pupils can benefit from effective support for their individual needs. Funding is prioritised for pupils to develop their language skills. Reading interventions are proving effective. A full-time learning mentor provides helpful support for disadvantaged pupils and families in need. The stability of this role continues to galvanise positive relationships within the school community.
- Senior leaders' monitoring of pupils' welfare and safety requires improvement because procedures and records for ongoing risk assessments are not followed consistently on all occasions.
- The curriculum on offer meets national requirements. However, there are not sufficient opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills across the curriculum and this hinders the progress that some pupils make in their writing, particularly the most able. There are a wide range of clubs on offer for pupils including football, choir and craft.
- The additional sports funding is enabling pupils to take part in a greater number of organised events. Pupils also benefit from additional outdoor and adventurous activities utilising the school's own grounds and facilities, including the development of the forest-school curriculum.
- Equality of opportunity sits at the heart of the school. The Oasis education charter states: 'every person matters, every person valued'. Pupils hold a deep sense of community. Pupils look out for one another when they see their peers are finding aspects of their day hard and they support each other to make positive choices. Pupils say teachers always make time for them. The Oasis values are entwined into whole-school assemblies and curriculum planning. The school's recent approach to promoting fundamental British values and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is enabling pupils to explore a wide range of work on justice, charity, rights, responsibilities and democracy, for example through the voting in of their class presidents.

### ■ The governance of the school

- OCL has been slow to respond to the considerable weaknesses in school performance identified at the previous inspection. They have allowed standards to decline and have been accepting of teaching that is not good enough.
  - However, the current intensive support, provided by the regional academy director, is helping the school to recover quickly from this period of underperformance. He has provided a firm and very regular presence in the school. The impact of his work to hold leaders to account has been considerable over the last term. Consequently, since his appointment, there is clear evidence of OCL firmly holding the school to account for raising pupils' achievement.
  - Local councillors visit regularly and ask searching and challenging questions of leaders to ensure that the school continues to improve at pace. They have a growing understanding of the school's performance. For example, council minutes show detailed scrutiny of progress data, and evidence of the council holding the executive principal to account for raising pupils' outcomes in Year 6 and in the early years. Meetings with subject teams are also providing the councillors with greater information about the school's overall performance. The academy council does not yet gather enough information about the performance of groups of pupils, including the most able. Monitoring in this respect needs to be strengthened.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff are vigilant and aware of their responsibilities to keep pupils safe from risk or potential harm. They are persistent about following up referrals with external agencies to assure themselves that everything is being done in a timely manner. Teaching staff have been trained to protect pupils from radicalisation and extremism through the government's 'Prevent' duty. This programme is yet to be extended to other staff in the school. Some aspects of the recording of training, and the ongoing monitoring of risk assessments of pupils, need to be sharpened. Statutory safeguarding requirements are met.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teaching remains too inconsistent across classes and year groups. Consequently, some pupils do not learn well enough. There has been improvement in teaching as a result of staff changes and training. However, uneven progress across classes remains.
- Raised expectations in lessons and more targeted questioning is helping to provide harder and age-appropriate work more often for pupils. This is helping to tackle the legacy of weaker teaching that pupils received when they were further down the school. External support through OCL identifies that this aspect has improved this year.
- Pupil and staff relationships are positive and caring. The atmosphere in lessons is generally calm and productive. Most pupils have positive learning attitudes and this is helping them become more confident in developing their skills. Some off-task behaviour is evident in lessons when the work set for pupils is not at the right level.
- Not all teaching captures pupils' interest because it is not well matched to their needs. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to engage and consolidate their learning or deepen their thinking. More challenging concepts are not consistently well taught and pupils do not get enough time to practise skills. Conversely, when teaching is exciting and planned well, pupils are motivated and enjoy their learning. For example, during a science lesson about the digestive system, a practical experiment gripped pupils' attention and, consequently, pupils moved forward in their learning quickly.
- Recent improvements made to teachers' planning and assessment practices are beginning to ensure that the needs of different groups of pupils are being met more consistently. Teachers' assessment across each unit of work ensures the identification of gaps in pupils' learning. This is helping teachers plan work that addresses pupils' weaknesses. For example, in 'I can do mathematics' sessions, pupils focus on developing their fluency in mental mathematics skills. This is resulting in lower-attaining pupils catching up and more pupils making expected progress in mathematics overall.
- Work is not always set at the right level for the most able pupils. Sometimes, pupils have to sit and work through work that is too easy for them before tackling more challenging work. This hinders the progress they make.

- In intervention lessons, well thought out additional support is led effectively by individual teachers and other adults. Their consistent approaches and high expectations support pupils who are falling behind in their learning. The reading recovery intervention is working well. As a result, more pupils catch up and are closer to meeting the expected standard for their age.
- The marking policy is helping to give pupils a clear indication of what they are doing well and the next steps they have to take to improve their work. However, pupils do not have enough opportunity to respond or go back and check their work. In a limited number of books, pupils' feedback to teachers is disrespectful. In such cases, workbooks are untidy and show a lack of care.
- Classroom displays are used well by pupils to support their learning. For example, pupils use the working walls in classrooms to check methods of calculation in mathematics and find ways to spell unknown words.
- Pupils receive homework which focuses on basic skills and wider projects. Pupils say they particularly enjoy the wider projects they receive. Overall, parents who contributed to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agree that they are happy with the amount of homework their children receive.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. Leaders' monitoring to ensure that procedures are followed is not always robust and this limits the promotion of pupils' welfare and development.
- Pupils' attendance levels overall are just below average but rising. There is no gap between the attendance of disadvantaged and other pupils. However, a small proportion of disadvantaged pupils are persistently absent. Their absence levels are considerably higher than this group of pupils nationally. This is not sufficiently monitored and tracked by leaders in the school.
- Pupils benefit from many opportunities within the Oasis Connaught family to learn together. For example, the oldest and youngest pupils reading together encourages older pupils to nurture younger pupils and build caring relationships.
- Adults provide kind and nurturing support. Most pupils have a sense of self-pride. Pupils know how to keep safe and talk confidently about e-safety.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' exclusion rates remain too high and are well above the national average
- Pupils do not take enough pride in their work. Sometimes workbooks are untidy, especially when the work on offer does not capture the pupils' imagination or interest.
- Most pupils who talked to the inspector said that behaviour has improved this year. They say there remain occasions where pupils can disrupt their learning but it is dealt with consistently by their teachers.
- The school's 'zero tolerance' approach to behaviour is fully understood by all staff and pupils. Pupils say they like the routines and rewards that are used by teachers to help them 'to stay on gold', and this encourages them to work hard and be the 'best they can be'.
- Leaders' consistent actions ensure that challenging behaviour is well managed. Leaders consistently apply the behaviour systems against the thresholds set for behaviour standards in the school. Boundaries are firmly understood by pupils and staff. Consequently, high rates of exclusion are now decreasing.
- Leaders' monitoring and tracking of incidences of bullying are robust. Pupils say they know whom to go to if they need help.

## **Outcomes for pupils**

### **require improvement**

- Since the previous inspection, too few pupils have made enough progress from their starting points. Consequently, pupils' attainment at the end of key stages 1 and 2 has been consistently lower than the expected standard nationally. Outcomes for pupils at key stage 1 and in the early years declined even further in 2015.

- There has not yet been enough improvement across the school to fully recover from the considerable dips in performance and weak teaching since the previous inspection. Consequently, some pupils still underachieve in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment is not yet high enough in some years.
- Standards in pupils' presentation and handwriting are poor in a few year groups.
- Progress for pupils currently in the school is improving this year. Standards of attainment are steadily increasing in most subjects and years. Teachers are making better use of assessments in order to tackle gaps in pupils' understanding. This is resulting in a greater proportion of pupils making expected progress from their starting points this year.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making stronger progress in reading than their peers, and similar progress in writing and mathematics. Reading interventions are closely matched to pupils' needs and this is resulting in a greater proportion of pupils meeting the required standard for their age. In mathematics, because pupils move too rapidly from one area of mathematics to another, this can hinder their progress and ability to apply their understanding of calculation to solve problems.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make progress that is in line with their peers. Other adults provide caring support. There is a strong focus on speech and language development, and this is helping more pupils access whole-class lessons and develop a wider range of vocabulary. Writing skills, however, are not always sufficiently developed.
- Progress of boys and girls is uneven across the school.
- The most able pupils are not being regularly challenged, particularly in writing and mathematics. The work on offer for the most able pupils does not build on what they can already do. They are not making enough progress in some classes. There is evidence of teachers' questioning in lessons to develop the most able pupils more quickly, but this is not translating to them producing work that is at a sufficiently high level, particularly in writing and mathematics.
- Outcomes in writing are not consistently good. Pupils' progress is uneven and deficiencies in spelling, caused by previously weak teaching, have not been fully tackled. Spelling rules are not consistently applied in key stage 2. The school acknowledges that there is still more to do to improve grammar, punctuation and spelling in lower key stage 2. Some pupils do not have sufficient stamina for writing longer pieces of work. Insufficient opportunities to apply their writing skills across the curriculum hinder pupils' progress in this subject overall. Year 6 pupils are making faster progress this year but too few pupils reach attainment levels that are in line with that expected of pupils nationally.
- Pupils are making rapid progress in reading. Standards in phonics in 2016 have risen dramatically. However, attainment in phonics still falls short of that achieved nationally in 2015. The school's focus on improving phonics teaching is ensuring that pupils get work that precisely matches their needs. Targeted reading support for those pupils who are falling behind is helping them to catch up. Better teaching of comprehension skills in Years 5 and 6 is resulting in higher levels of attainment in reading. The proportion of pupils who are working above the standard expected for their age in 2016 is greater than in previous years.
- Published outcomes in mathematics are considerably lower than those achieved nationally. The school's current focus on basic calculation skills is making pupils more secure in their mental recall of number facts and multiplication tables. Work in pupils' books shows that too few pupils have sufficient opportunities to apply their mathematical skills and to solve problems. Pupils move quickly through a range of mathematical topics but do not get sufficient opportunity to go back and check their mistakes prior to moving on. This hinders their progress over time.

### Early years provision

### requires improvement

- Published outcomes in the early years have been significantly lower than those achieved by other schools nationally. Recent changes in leadership are providing clearer direction and are beginning to bring about improvement. External support recognises that new leaders have brought about much-needed stability. Consequently, because teaching expectations are higher, more children are on track to meet the early learning goals expected of them for their age.
- Children feel secure and safe. The atmosphere is encouraging in the early years. Adults and children have positive relationships with each other.

- Children are benefiting from improved outdoor areas in Nursery and Reception classes. They have better access to activities to support their development across all areas of learning. Daily challenges help adults to prompt and support pupils in their play. Individualised targets and assessments of what children can and cannot do are enabling teachers to plan more accurately for their next steps.
- Interventions to develop early language skills for disadvantaged children are very effective and this is helping these children better access their learning.
- Adults support children in their play to help them sustain their concentration in a wide range of activities. However, adults do not sufficiently model speaking in complete sentences. Too often short responses from children are accepted. More complex language skills are not actively modelled by adults across the Nursery and early years classes.
- The most able children are not identified quickly enough. Teachers do not build on what children already know, so children have to undertake repetitive tasks that do not challenge their thinking. Expectations for these children are not sufficiently high.
- The school's recent focus to develop early writing is resulting in children being keen to write and extend their sentences. Consequently, a greater proportion of children are achieving standards matched to their age. Provision in mathematics is less secure. The work on offer in mathematics does not build on what children already know, particularly the most able.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138278
<b>Local authority</b>	City of Bristol
<b>Inspection number</b>	10012372

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	304
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alison Findlay
<b>Executive Principal</b>	George Franks
<b>Telephone number</b>	01275 894 590
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.oasisacademyconnaught.org">www.oasisacademyconnaught.org</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:info@oasisacademyconnaught.org">info@oasisacademyconnaught.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4–5 June 2014

## Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school and is part of Oasis Community Learning (OCL), a well-established academy sponsor that serves communities nationally.
- Oasis Academy Connaught converted to be an academy school on 1 September 2012.
- OCL governs the school overall. Local governance is undertaken by the local academy council. National governance is undertaken through the national office and regional academy director on behalf of the OCL board. The board oversees the work on aspects such as finance, business and accounting.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is well above the national average. This is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- There is a nursery on site that is managed by the academy council.
- The school has a breakfast club that is managed by the academy council.
- The school met the government's current floor standards in 2015, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.
- The school meets the requirements on the publication of information on its website.

## Information about this inspection

- The team of inspectors visited a number of lessons or part-lessons, many of which were visited jointly with the senior leaders in the school.
- Meetings were held with the executive principal, the wider leadership team, staff, the academy council and the regional academy director from OCL. The inspectors took into consideration the responses in questionnaires completed by 18 members of staff.
- A wide range of documentation was scrutinised during the inspection including the school's evaluation of its own performance, the school development plan and data relating to pupils' attainment and progress. The inspector also checked the effectiveness of the school's safeguarding arrangements and attendance information.
- The inspector talked with a group of pupils to seek their views about the school. The views of other pupils were gathered during lessons, playtimes and lunchtimes. The inspector listened to pupils read.
- The 21 responses to Parent View were taken into account. The inspector considered comments provided by text message and also spoke to parents during the inspection.

## Inspection team

Julie Carrington, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Fiona Allen	Ofsted Inspector
Heather Barraclough	Ofsted Inspector

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