

Ocean Academy Poole

Fourways Campus, Constitution Hill Road, Parkstone, Poole, Dorset BH14 0PZ

Inspection dates

22–23 May 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The executive principal has established a successful and oversubscribed school in just three years.
- Trust leaders hold school leaders to account well.
- The trust provides strong professional development. This includes training and leadership roles within local trust schools.
- Teachers have high expectations and have established good routines. As a result, pupils are engaged in their learning and make good progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are progressing as well as their peers.
- The curriculum is full of exciting opportunities for pupils to learn in varied ways. Pupils gain many rich experiences.
- Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school.
- Pupils behave in an exemplary manner around the school and in lessons. They show respect for each other, teachers and visitors.
- Well-trained staff look after pupils' emotional and physical well-being very effectively.
- Pupils feel safe and are safe within the school. They are taught well about how to stay safe in a coastal area, which is very relevant because of the school's location.
- Teaching does not stretch and challenge the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged, frequently enough.
- A few teachers are weaker in their practice, which leads to inconsistencies in pupils' learning.
- Pupils' attendance is good. Staff have communicated effectively with parents to make sure previous poor attendance has improved.
- Learning in foundation subjects lacks sufficient structure. The most able are not provided with learning that deepens their understanding and low-ability pupils are not supported adequately in these subjects.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders should ensure that:
 - teachers provide the most able, including those who are disadvantaged, with challenge to deepen their thinking, write at a greater depth and reason more proficiently in mathematics more frequently
 - teachers enable pupils to increase their knowledge in a range of subjects within the wider curriculum, and enhance their literacy and numeracy
 - inconsistencies in pupils' work are addressed so that learning is more secure.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The executive principal has been relentless in establishing a good school. From small beginnings in incomplete buildings, she has overseen the school's growth as a strong learning environment. Leaders are well prepared for the first Year 6 group in September 2018.
- Leaders at all levels have high expectations and total commitment to continually improving the school. They are effective role models for staff and pupils alike in their drive and enthusiasm.
- Trust leaders have added leadership capacity effectively as the school has grown year on year. A year ago, they appointed a vice-principal who has ensured that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities make good progress. This year, trust leaders appointed a new principal who joins full time in June 2018. In the interim, she has focused on establishing better personalised learning for disadvantaged pupils.
- Trust leaders have secure systems for improving learning and holding school leaders to account. Governors provide an effective link between the school and parents. The majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, spoke of their satisfaction and pleasure in the school.
- Leaders evaluate the quality of teaching with precision. Leaders track pupils' progress and work accurately, so leaders know what needs to be done to improve them further.
- Staff are trained locally with other trust members and gain from colleagues' experiences. Moderation of work with local primary schools ensures that teachers have a precise understanding of what pupils' work should be in key areas.
- Middle leaders are relatively new to their posts but receive effective training. They work well as a team and support each other in developing subject knowledge and planning for pupils' learning. They are evaluating their plans carefully as the school expands with each additional year group. This benefits pupils, who are making more rapid progress now. Middle leaders ensure that they provide new teachers with clear expectations of policy and practice.
- The curriculum is a source of rich experiences. Leaders of English and mathematics are developing effective ways to engage learners in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils participate in artistic and cultural activities regularly, as well as studying foundation subjects. For example, the whole school went to a concert of the regional symphony orchestra on the week of the inspection. As yet, planning in the wider curriculum is not sharp enough.
- There is a host of extra-curricular activities that take place before, during and after the school day that enrich pupils' physical and emotional well-being. Pupils spoke of their enjoyment of rugby, multi-skills, cookery, drama and other clubs.
- Leaders use funding for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities well.
- Leaders have used the physical education (PE) and sport premium very effectively. School leaders gained the School Games Mark at gold level because of the good range

of sporting activities offered. Staff are trained by experts to ensure sustainability when the funding ceases.

- The three guiding principles of the Aspirations Academy Trust, self-worth, engagement and purpose, underpin the spiritual, moral, social and cultural curriculum of the school. Pupils are given several positions of responsibility that assist their understanding of accountability and leadership, such as those of peer mediator, learning ambassador, maths and sports leader, and librarian. Some are democratically elected, such as the members of the school parliament, which helps pupils understand British values. The maths and sports leaders present workshops for pupils and parents in these areas.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective. The trust's regional governing body holds school leaders to account well.
- Governors provide effective links with nearby universities and higher education institutions, business partners and local residents that enhance pupils' experiences and aspirations.
- The chair of governors is both a trustee and governor and so is part of the accountability framework as well as a local link. The duality of his role is effective. He shares any strengths and weaknesses with governors and holds school leaders to account in the overarching arrangements of the trust.
- The trust has exacting arrangements for managing the performance of staff.
- Governors have a thorough understanding of the spending of the pupil premium and PE and sport premium, as well as the funds for SEN and/or disabilities.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The executive principal has created a culture where assessing risk is the norm. The checks on staff, visitors and recruitment are stringent. Secure processes are in place for monitoring and recording any safeguarding concerns. Staff are trained in how to keep pupils safe from abuse or sexual exploitation, and from the influence of radical or extreme views. A specialist staff team works sensitively with parents and external agencies to monitor and support any vulnerable pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Leaders have found a suitable system for assessing pupils' progress in the past year. Teachers moderate pupils' work to ensure that the assessment information is accurate. Teachers are using this to support planning effectively as a result and it is improving progress for many pupils.
- Teachers have high expectations and have established good routines for pupils. As a result, pupils are ready and eager to learn.
- Teachers use time productively. Pupils engage with their learning and respond well to

challenge.

- Pupils' presentation of their work improves as they develop their handwriting skills.
- Teachers' planning is collaborative and reflects the expectations of the national curriculum well. Teachers evaluate the impact of planning on learning regularly. This has been an essential aspect of the recent more rapid improvement in pupils' writing.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities are as engaged in their work as other pupils and are making good progress.
- Pupils of low ability are exceeding expectations as they are well supported by skilful adults.
- Teachers comply with the school's marking policy. The regularity of this is particularly effective in mathematics.
- Pupils are keen to discuss their learning. At times, teachers do not model the language of learning effectively.
- The most able, and most able disadvantaged pupils are not reaching the higher levels as, too often, the work does not challenge them sufficiently or quickly enough.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are very confident and keen to show off their school.
- Pupils are inquisitive and relish the opportunities teachers give them to research and develop their learning.
- Pupils have a genuine desire to do well in their work and enrichment activities. They support each other and are unselfish in their attitudes.
- Specialist staff support the most vulnerable pupils very well. These pupils are flourishing academically and socially. Parents are delighted with the progress made.
- Transition from infant to junior school is managed very effectively by teachers. Teachers visit the feeder schools and discuss individual pupils so that they meet the needs of every pupil when they join Year 3. Parents commented on this favourably in discussion with inspectors.
- Staff are highly trained to manage the emotional and physical well-being of pupils. Special clubs exist to boost self-esteem, develop good relationships and promote physical activity. Pupils opt in or teachers steer them sensitively as required. Every day, pupils run a daily mile. Pupils walk to any local events to encourage healthy attitudes and stamina.
- There are many ways pupils develop leadership skills and understand the demands of responsibility, from working in the library to being an ambassador for high-profile events.
- Pupils comment that bullying is very rare and staff deal with it effectively when it happens. Older pupils are trained as peer mediators: they intervene in low-level

friendship issues and provide the first port of call at social times if pupils have more serious concerns.

- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe. They have received education on e-safety, and road, railway and water safety. They are aware of the importance of fast evacuation during fire drills.
- Pupils have a strong grasp of the right and wrong way to do things. They enjoy learning from 'Stone Age visitors', and they appreciate classical music concerts. There is a ukulele group, a choir, and drama and dance groups. These many and varied activities are part of a daily diet of which school leaders are rightly proud. Aspirations are high and encouraged with links with local universities and international businesses. Pupils' responses to adults reflect the impact of this enrichment. Pupils do not fully understand the language associated with British values, although pupil elections are undertaken and diversity encouraged.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils behave impeccably throughout the day.
- Leaders have known and secure systems to manage any disruptive behaviour. The occasional lapses of poor behaviour reflect complex issues with which a minority of pupils struggle. Leaders work diligently and determinedly with local agencies to support these pupils.
- Pupils respect and appreciate the school environment. They use the indoor and outdoor spaces willingly. Leaders have thought carefully about different uses of the grounds. Pupils participate in gardening, and sit in quiet areas and reading areas. There are safe areas and those where more exuberant physical activity can take place safely. Pupils are eager to share aspects of the school with visitors.
- Specially appointed staff have tackled the poor attendance issues of the recent past. Overall attendance and the attendance of specific groups, such as disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, are above the national average now whereas at the start of the year, these were languishing several percentage points below. This level of change and the speed with which it was accomplished are symptomatic of the work of leaders.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The majority of pupils are of average ability who arrive from key stage 1 at the level expected of them. They continue to make good progress at Ocean Academy.
- Staff support pupils of low ability very well. These pupils make better progress than their peers, considering their starting points.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities are making good progress because teaching meets their needs. As a result, they do as well as other pupils.
- The most able pupils make good progress, but too few are learning at greater depth.

Although these pupils undertake more challenging work, a minority of teachers do not check the timeliness of what they offer or whether it is at the required depth of learning frequently enough.

- Some teachers of Year 3 and Year 4 pupils do not have a clear understanding of what expected pupil progress is. This has hampered progress for a few pupils, especially the most able. Leaders are aware and actions are in place to manage this situation, but it is too soon to measure the impact.
- Pupils read fluently and well. The most able pupils are not provided regularly with reading choices that would add further depth to their reading. Teachers do not check reading consistently enough. As a result, pupils' progress in reading, especially in comprehension, is not as advanced as it could be.
- As yet, there is no Year 6 so there have been no end-of-key-stage tests undertaken.

School details

Unique reference number	141089
Local authority	Poole
Inspection number	10048327

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	7 to 10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	268
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mark Brocklehurst
Executive Principal	Ellen Humphries
Telephone number	01202 606888
Website	www.aatocean.org
Email address	office@ocean-aspirations.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Ocean Academy Poole was opened in September 2015. It is part of the Aspirations Academy Trust. Currently, it has pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5. It is similar in size to other junior schools nationally.
- The executive principal was appointed in April 2015 and the principal takes up her full-time post in June 2018.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Ofsted's head of strategic evaluation shadowed the inspection on day 2.
- All pupils went to a Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra concert on the afternoon of 23 May 2018.
- Inspectors visited lessons jointly with senior leaders.
- A wide sample of pupils' work, from all year groups and a range of subjects, was scrutinised.
- Inspectors talked with groups of pupils from Years 3 to 5, as well as with pupils informally across the site.
- Meetings were held with the managing director, the deputy managing director and the regional director of the trust, the executive principal, the newly appointed principal, senior and middle leaders, recently qualified and returning teachers, and the chair of the governing body.
- Information and other documentary evidence were evaluated, including that relating to safeguarding, assessment, school evaluation and external reviews.
- Inspector took account of the 92 responses to the online Parent View survey and 66 comments from parents.

Inspection team

Kathy Maddocks, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Deborah Wring

Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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