

Oasis Academy Immingham

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135176
Local authority	NA
Inspection number	343191
Inspection dates	1–2 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Jane Jones HMI

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	852
Of which number on roll in the sixth form	161
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Wes Sutton
Executive Principal	Mr Tony Rawdin
Date of previous school inspection	NA
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 34 lessons, applied learning provision at the Manby Road site, an assembly, and tutor time. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of students. Inspectors observed the academy's work, and looked at documentation including the academy's assessment data, development plans, monitoring reports, minutes of governors' meetings, curricular information, data on students' attendance and behaviour, and 199 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the academy's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the academy's 2009 examination results and data for current students' attainment and progress, particularly in Years 9, 11 and the sixth form
- students' personal development
- the quality of teaching and use of assessment, and how these have improved since the monitoring visit in October 2008
- the curriculum, including the academy's specialisms and sixth-form courses, and provision for students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
- how leadership and management at all levels tackle weaknesses and drive improvement.

Information about the school

The academy opened in September 2007 and, one year later, started a sixth form. It moved into new buildings in January 2009. In October 2008, the academy was monitored in relation to the academies initiative. The visit raised some concerns about the quality of teaching, use of assessment and aspects of leadership and management.

The academy is one of two in the locality that are sponsored by Oasis, a charitable trust of Christian character. It has two specialisms: engineering, and business and enterprise. Almost all students in the academy are of White British heritage; very few speak English as an additional language. About 40% of students, double the national average, have special educational needs and/or disabilities and, of these, 18 have a statement of special educational needs. Around 20% of students are eligible for free school meals and 40% of sixth-form students receive the educational maintenance allowance. The proportion of students entering or leaving the academy part way through their secondary schooling rose in the last year to average.

The academy has experienced significant difficulties in staffing. Many teachers are in the early stages of their teaching careers. Eleven are unqualified instructors, most of whom teach applied learning courses, including motor vehicle maintenance, construction, and hair and beauty. Following the principal's resignation in June 2009, an executive principal, who is an experienced National Leader of Education, and an associate principal were appointed to lead the academy.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Oasis Academy Immingham is emerging positively from a recent period of considerable change and shows several important areas of rapid improvement. The executive principal is providing strong strategic leadership, driving the academy forward with a clear sense of direction and purpose. At the same time, he and the associate principal are coaching and empowering other leaders and managers to work more effectively within their areas of responsibility. Decisive action on improving structures and systems is enabling a better focus on improving outcomes and raising expectations of staff and students alike, although in some areas data systems lack refinement. Self-evaluation is accurate and planning for improvement robust. Governance is satisfactory: the academy council and Oasis executive have worked in partnership on resolving the issues the academy has faced and understand its current strengths and weaknesses. Standards at GCSE rose significantly in 2009 and are set to rise again in 2010, with challenge and support for performance that has previously been too low. All of this underpins the academy's satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Student's achievement is satisfactory. Attainment is rising across the academy, most rapidly at Key Stage 4. Success in applied learning courses, including business, information and communication technology, and engineering, led to a sharp rise in the proportion attaining at least five A* to C grades. While sixth-form students following applied learning pathways generally achieved well, too many of those studying traditional AS and GCSE re-sit courses failed. Swift action has been taken by senior staff to rectify weaknesses in provision. Current progress is satisfactory.

The improving picture in achievement reflects effective moves to strengthen the quality of learning. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and improving. Around a third is good or outstanding, but this is not enough to ensure students make consistently good progress. Robust action has been taken to tackle unsatisfactory teaching. An improved system for identifying students' special educational needs and/or disabilities has recently been introduced but there is insufficient guidance for staff on how those needs should be met in lessons.

Students' personal development is satisfactory. Around half participate in extra sporting activities and a minority take up opportunities to have leadership roles such as student councillors and sports leaders. Students say they feel safe at the academy. While many behave well, there is some inattention and low-level disruption

in lessons, particularly when teaching is weaker, and some boisterousness around the site. Little bad behaviour was observed during the inspection but students, parents and staff expressed concerns around the poor behaviour of a minority.

The curriculum has innovative and traditional components but, until recently, its effectiveness has been impeded by weaknesses in leadership and management. Timetabling problems arose again in September 2009. The executive and associate principals took the sensible decision to rewrite the timetable in October. While this has been unsettling for staff and students, it provides a much clearer curricular structure with better pathways through qualifications. A major strength of the curriculum is the specialisms. Under good leadership, they are having a positive impact on students' achievement, personal development and self-esteem. The academy works in effective partnership with other agencies to care for the most vulnerable and to provide a relevant curriculum to meet older students' individual needs and interests with the result that almost all Year 11 students in 2009 continued in education, training or employment.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the rate at which all students make progress throughout their time in the academy, ensuring that data systems provide staff with a ready overview and detail of the progress of cohorts, groups and individuals.
- Improve students' behaviour and attitudes to learning so that all are enabled to learn effectively and reach their potential.
- Raise the satisfactory teaching to good by:
 - adopting a systematic approach to improving the weaker features of the teaching, particularly too much talking by the teacher and lack of attention to meeting all students' needs
 - making the most of opportunities to share best practice through coaching, mentoring, and peer observation.
- Improve provision for special educational needs further by:
 - ensuring students' individual needs are accurately identified and guidance provided for staff on how they might be met in lessons
 - monitoring the effectiveness of the provision and acting on the outcomes.
- Develop the expertise of leaders and managers at all levels so each becomes influential in securing improvement in provision and outcomes for students.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Standards are low but rising, though more quickly in some areas than others. The 2008 GCSE results were poor. In 2009, an average proportion of students, 64%, attained five or more A* to C grades, a rise of 27%. Only 30% included English and mathematics in this measure, which is too few, but this was twice as many as in 2008 and met the government's target. There is some variation in the performance

of different groups though the most pronounced gaps closed in 2009. While most students made satisfactory progress, including those identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, some did not catch up on ground lost earlier, particularly in English and mathematics. The academy's assessment information anticipates significant rises in both subjects in 2010; inspection evidence aligned with this view of improvement. A notable result in 2009 was that 93% of students gained at least five A* to G grades including English and mathematics, which is higher than the national average. Thus equipped, the vast majority of students carried on with their education in the sixth form or at college, or went into employment and training.

At Key Stage 3 in 2009, teacher assessment showed standards to be average in English but significantly below average in mathematics and science, although both subjects are set to rise in 2010. While inspection evidence broadly supports the accuracy of teachers' assessment, data is not always readily available or in a useful format to check the progress of individuals, groups and cohorts of students.

The quality of learning is satisfactory. In the best lessons, students strive to meet teachers' high expectations of their progress and contribution. In some other lessons, students make less progress than they might if work was better tailored to their individual needs. Many students are well behaved and listen to their teachers, but do not always have opportunities to participate actively or develop their thinking orally. Not all students take sufficient responsibility for their learning, sometimes chattering or distracting others. Some work in books is carelessly presented.

Experiences through the specialisms and applied learning courses and skills in information and communication technology make a strong contribution to students' future economic well-being. Students understand how to live healthily and are aware of the dangers of drugs and alcohol. They have some opportunities to contribute to the academy and its wider community, such as through sports leadership and artistic performances. The student council has recently been reintroduced. It has four strands: learning, environment, behaviour and charity, each with enthusiastic membership.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

In the best lessons, teachers are enthusiastic and skilful in encouraging learning, using their positive relationships with students to manage behaviour effectively. They ask stimulating questions that provoke students' thinking. These lessons have a clear purpose and an effective sequence of activities that develop knowledge, skills and understanding. Good use is made of assessment to inform students about what they will learn. Students receive good feedback about what they have achieved and constructive comments about how to improve.

The overall quality of the provision, however, remains only satisfactory because too many lessons are satisfactory rather than good, and a few are inadequate. Although teachers are aware of students' individual needs, insufficient guidance is provided about the nature of those needs and how they can best be supported. Some teachers talk too much with the result that students have few chances to contribute actively, their attention wanders, which slows the pace, and opportunities are missed to build on what students already know. In some lessons, behaviour is not managed effectively: teachers talk over students' chatter without insisting on good listening. At the end of some lessons, insufficient time is given to summarising learning effectively.

Recent modifications to the curriculum ensure it is satisfactory with some important strengths, including the range of applied learning courses. 'Opening Minds' in Years 7 and 8 is better focused on students' progress while developing wider learning skills through the humanities and personal, health, social and citizenship education.

Care, guidance and support are good. Students' behaviour is monitored systematically and action taken, with some good examples of success. The academy works hard to promote regular attendance. Pastoral support is effective, as are guidance and advice at times of transition and when making subject choices. Students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are enabled to progress through to the sixth form, many following applied learning pathways successfully, thereby continuing in education and later entering employment.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

A sense of purpose is evident at all levels of leadership and management. Strong strategic leadership, coupled with clarity of vision around the academy's future direction has been translated into coherent and robust structures and systems. Not all of these are fully embedded: their impact is only starting to emerge. Planning is well-thought through and grounded in an accurate view of the academy's strengths

and weaknesses and relevant priorities for improvement. Despite the pace and amount of change in recent months, staff morale has risen and the large majority of students, parents and carers are positive about much of what the academy offers.

Teaching is improving because senior leaders monitor teaching and learning effectively, drawing appropriately on external agencies and partners for professional development and support for specific areas. New teachers and those with identified professional weaknesses are well supported by senior and middle managers to develop their skills and confidence in the classroom. Whole-academy systems have established consistency in lesson planning and in the way teachers in all lessons share the learning intentions and success criteria with students.

The academy tackles discrimination and promotes equality of opportunity satisfactorily. It makes good use of partnerships to promote students' learning and well-being. These include strong business links which have generated funding and contacts which benefit students seeking work placements or employment. Through the specialisms, the academy works with local primary schools, for example, on the recent fashion show. The academy is well resourced; students and staff take pride in the new building and facilities. Value for money is satisfactory.

The academy adopts recommended good practice with regard to safeguarding, led by a team of highly committed staff. All statutory requirements are met on child protection and health and safety. Staff are appropriately trained and knowledgeable. The school engages satisfactorily with parents and carers and endeavours to consult with them on matters of policy. The effectiveness with which the academy promotes community cohesion is satisfactory. While it understands and works with its own and the local community, the academy has yet to develop plans to help students gain a better awareness of life in modern multicultural Britain.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Sixth form

The effectiveness of the sixth form has improved recently and is satisfactory. Externally verified assessments show that the majority of Year 13 students who are studying applied learning courses are on track to meet challenging targets. Year 12

students are making satisfactory progress overall. This contrasts with 2009 when the achievement of too many students was unsatisfactory. Low results on some AS courses and re-sit GCSE English and mathematics stemmed from weak teaching and assessment, often by temporary and unqualified teachers, and poor timetabling. Senior leaders did not spot the problems soon enough because teaching and students' progress were not monitored closely. Effective steps have been taken to improve the quality of staffing where it was weak: leadership and management are now satisfactory.

Teaching in the sixth form is satisfactory overall and good in some subjects. In the better lessons, good questioning promoted students' acquisition of understanding and practical skills. Teachers were skilful at engaging students in discussion and group work. Where teaching was weaker, the purpose of the lesson was unclear and students lacked motivation.

The academy offers a satisfactory range of sixth-form courses at levels 1, 2 and 3, working with other post-16 providers to ensure students choose appropriately. However, the small size of some teaching groups is inefficient. Additional activities contribute positively to students' enjoyment. Pastoral leadership is good. Students appreciate the helpful individual advice and guidance from teachers and tutors and are well supported in preparations for higher education, training or employment. They have good access to counselling on personal and health issues. Students are beginning to make a positive contribution to the life of the academy through their leadership of the student council. Their attendance is satisfactory.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth Form	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	3
Leadership and management of the sixth form	3

Views of parents and carers

Most questionnaires were from parents and carers of students in Years 7 to 10. They show that the very large majority are confident that the academy keeps their children safe. While most are happy with their children's experience at the academy, some expressed particular concerns on the disruption caused by timetabling and option changes, with occasional references to temporary teachers. The most frequent concerns were the way the academy helps parents and carers to support their children's learning, and about the progress their children were making. Inspectors agree that there have been concerns about students' progress but that it is improving. Around one fifth of responses indicated unhappiness with students' behaviour, occasionally expressing concern about bullying. Students told inspectors that there are a few instances of bullying, but that they are generally handled appropriately. Inspectors judge that behaviour needs to improve and that students have some responsibility for this. Too many students could concentrate harder in lessons and chatter less. No unacceptable behaviour was observed during the inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Oasis Academy Immingham to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 199 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 852 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	52	26	122	61	21	10	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	68	34	121	60	8	4	1	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	51	26	115	58	30	15	3	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	45	22	108	54	42	21	3	2
The teaching is good at this school	31	16	127	64	33	16	1	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	12	121	60	44	22	4	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	18	143	72	19	10	1	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	34	17	130	65	23	12	5	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	34	17	133	66	28	14	4	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	46	23	107	54	34	17	10	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	12	126	63	37	18	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	29	14	127	64	27	14	5	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	53	26	113	56	22	11	9	4

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>the following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.



7 December 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of Oasis Academy, Immingham, DN40 1JU

I would like to thank you for the friendly welcome you gave us during the recent inspection. We enjoyed visiting lessons and talking to you about your experiences of the academy. Here are some of the things we liked best about your academy.

- Results in Year 11 went up a lot in 2009. The teachers tell us that those of you currently in Year 11 should do even better if you continue to work hard!
- You feel safe and like the facilities you have in the new building. The academy has some good partnerships that support the applied learning courses. The specialisms of engineering, business and enterprise add quite a bit to your experience at the academy.
- About half of you enjoy extra sports while others like performing or other activities. The student councillors are very enthusiastic and are trying to make a difference. Others of you take responsibility as sports leaders or form reps.
- The sixth form had a mixed start last year but initial problems are now sorted out. It is good to see so many of you carrying on in education after Year 11. You are starting to have a greater role in the academy's day-to-day life.

You are right that the academy is improving, though not everything is as good as it might be. Here are the things we have asked the executive principal, staff and governors to improve.

- Help you all reach higher levels and grades, whatever year you are in.
- Encourage you all to behave well. Many of you have really good attitudes to learning in some lessons but not in others. Sometimes you lose concentration or start chatting and this slows down your progress. You should take greater responsibility for how well you learn.
- Improve the teaching so that more lessons are good or outstanding and you learn well.
- Ensure that all the teachers know how best to help students learn according to their individual needs.
- Develop the skills of leaders and managers so that they are even better at helping the academy to improve.

I wish you all success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Jane Jones
Her Majesty's Inspector

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