

Oasis Academy Fir Vale

Owler Lane, Fir Vale, Sheffield, South Yorkshire S4 8GA

Inspection dates

6–7 February 2018

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
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	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils' progress is not consistently good in reading, writing, mathematics and a wide range of subjects because of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching.
- Assessment of pupils' work is not used well enough to set work that challenges pupils to make consistently good progress.
- The quality of questioning varies and is not used consistently well to check pupils' learning and develop good reading skills.
- Teachers do not manage the work of their classroom assistants consistently well to strengthen pupils' learning.
- Across a range of subjects, there are too few opportunities for pupils to write extensively and show a good understanding of what they are learning.
- In the early years, adults are not ensuring good progress. They are not using the outdoor area well to ensure that good learning takes place.
- In subjects other than English and mathematics, subject leaders are not sufficiently skilled in checking pupils' work and the quality of teaching.
- Pupils do not listen well enough in class. The behaviour of a small proportion of pupils is not good around the school.

The school has the following strengths

- Senior leaders and governors have established a very effective leadership team. As a result, staff morale is high, and the quality of teaching and pupils' progress is improving at a good pace.
- Pupils said that they are safe and enjoy school. Staff and parents and carers agree that children are safe.
- Pupils joining the school speaking little or no English have a good programme of induction.
- Leaders have ensured that the curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development and welfare.
- Leaders have made sure that there are high-quality systems in place to safeguard and protect pupils from harm.
- Parents are highly supportive of this improving school.

Full report

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better and leads to all groups of pupils making at least good progress by:
 - setting work that is consistently challenging and precisely matched to pupils' needs and abilities
 - using skilful questioning to engage pupils well and deepen their understanding of what is being learned, especially in reading
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length in a wide range of subjects
 - managing the work of teaching assistants effectively to support good learning
 - ensuring that the pace of learning is good.
- Improve pupils' behaviour by making sure that pupils:
 - concentrate fully on their learning at all times and make a good contribution to their progress
 - manage their conduct well around the school at all times.
- Improve the quality of teaching in early years to ensure that children make good progress by making sure that:
 - outdoor activities develop good learning and good skills
 - learning takes place at a good pace
 - adults manage children's behaviour consistently well.
- Increase the effectiveness of leaders and managers by making sure that:
 - subject leaders of foundation subjects are skilled in checking pupils' learning and the quality of teaching in their areas
 - professional development for staff results in consistently good teaching across the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal, deputy principal and other leaders are passionate about pupils' achievement and personal development. They have developed a strong sense of purpose among all staff and ensured that the overall effectiveness of the school has improved since the previous inspection.
- Senior leaders have worked tirelessly to make sure that personal development, behaviour and welfare, teaching and outcomes are all improving. The principal has established a very effective leadership team. Some leaders are new and their work is demonstrating improvement. Parents are very positive about the work of the school and have confidence in leaders.
- School plans set clear priorities for further improvement and reflect leaders' accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. Priorities are being tackled systematically, and staff are clear about what is required of them.
- The quality of teaching and pupils' work is checked regularly, using a wide range of information. The leaders of mathematics, phonics and English are contributing well to the improvements being made. However, some other subject leaders require support and training to develop their skills fully.
- Professional development for teachers and their assistants is well organised. It makes use of good practice within the school, coaching and mentoring for teachers and good practice from an outstanding school. The effect of this training has improved the quality of teaching, but more work is needed to make sure that teaching is good.
- Leaders make sure that pupils study a wide range of subjects in an interesting and exciting way. There is an emphasis on learning through practical experiences and a strong emphasis on the development of English language skills to meet the needs of pupils. There is a good range of additional activities. Visits to the seaside and the cinema and a visiting professional theatre company all contribute well.
- Throughout the curriculum, there is a strong emphasis on British values, personal development and welfare and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils study and celebrate religious festivals and learn about Vikings, Anglo Saxons and other aspects of British history.
- Extra funding to support the development of physical education and sport is spent effectively. It has been used to provide coaching for pupils, extra sports equipment and training for staff to teach a wide range of sport.
- Extra funding for those pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is used well. Leaders make sure that these pupils have effective support in school and extra specialist support from external agencies when necessary.
- Disadvantaged pupils benefit from targeted support from teachers and assistants. Leaders make sure that the extra funding for disadvantaged pupils is used appropriately to meet the academic and personal development needs of these pupils. The funding is used to make sure that they can participate in all aspects of school life.

- Leaders have made sure that there is additional support for pupils and families to settle into school and the community. New pupils and their parents have individual meetings with a member of staff to determine the needs of the child and any specific needs the school might be able to help the family with. Most parents responding to the Ofsted questionnaire would recommend the school. Parents spoken to by inspectors were exceptionally positive about the work of the school.
- The support from the trust has had a good effect on improving the school. The regional director provides a good level of support and challenge to senior leaders, which has assisted in developing improvements. Leaders have had access to the support of an outstanding school in the trust, including the support of specialist leaders of education. Senior leaders' use of this good support has improved the overall effectiveness of the school.

Governance of the school

- The academy trust and the academy council make a good contribution to the leadership of the school. They are ambitious for the pupils and very clear about what is working well and what needs to be improved. They receive detailed and accurate reports from senior leaders and use external expertise to confirm the effectiveness of the school. Governance is very effective in holding leaders to account for their work and knows the school is improving.
- The academy council and the trust work very well together through the trust's regional director. Governance has made sure that the extra government funding for disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities, as well as the physical education and sports funding, is used effectively.
- Academy councillors find out parents' views by speaking to parents at parents' evenings. They are clear that parents believe that the school is improving and that teachers and leaders willingly resolve any concerns they might have. The academy council has an excellent understanding of the community the school serves. There is a wide range of skills among councillors, including safeguarding, financial, legal and educational skills.
- Governance has made sure that the school provides a wide range of support for parents.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Safeguarding records are of high quality. They exhibit clearly the school's commitment to keeping children safe, particularly the most vulnerable children. Strong links with parents and external agencies are evident. School leaders are tenacious in making sure that safeguarding issues are dealt with swiftly and appropriate action is taken should any children be missing in education.
- Leaders have had a sharp focus on safeguarding children. Staff are well trained, knowledgeable and vigilant about safeguarding matters. The principal and the trust have appointed a full-time safeguarding leader who is passionate about making sure that children are kept safe from harm. Staff and pupils know what to do should they

have any concern relating to safeguarding matters. There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school.

- Appropriate checks are made to ensure that all staff are fit to work with children and the school's single central record meets requirements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, teaching has been improving because of leaders' support and effective use of professional development. However, the quality of teaching is not consistently good across the school and requires improvement.
- Assessment is not used well enough to plan learning that matches pupils' abilities and meets their needs. Work set is not consistently well planned because on occasions it can be too easy for pupils and at other times much too difficult. When this occurs, teachers do not adapt the work swiftly to meet pupils' needs and to ensure that learning is well paced.
- Some teachers use skilful questioning to check pupils' understanding and engage them well. However, this is inconsistent and questioning is variable because it is not used well to probe and deepen the understanding of a wide range of pupils. There are times when questions are not used well to check pupils' understanding of what they are reading and to develop comprehensive vocabulary.
- Teaching assistants have benefited from additional training and some have good skills, particularly in the teaching of phonics. However, there are times when teachers do not check and manage the work of teaching assistants to make sure that a wide range of pupils are given good support for their learning.
- Teachers plan interesting work that captures pupils' imagination and, when the pace of learning is good, pupils engage fully and make good progress. Work about conquering Everest was enjoyed by pupils and linked very well to reading, writing and mathematics.
- An analysis of current pupils' work shows good handwriting skills and pupils taking care to spell correctly. It shows some good work in science, art and history and good opportunities to use mathematical skills in science. However, it also shows that the quality of pupils' work varies in a wide range of subjects including reading, writing and mathematics because of inconsistent teaching. Pupils' work shows too few opportunities for pupils to write at length in a range of subjects to develop a deep understanding of the subjects and practise their writing skills.
- Good relationships exist between pupils and staff.

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 are keen to share their views about the school with visitors. They are proud of their school.

- Pupils said that they feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe. They understand how to stay safe when using the internet. Pupils are confident that, should they have any worries, they know that adults would listen to them and sort matters out. The school teaches pupils well about how to stay healthy.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to take on leadership roles. They enjoy being classroom monitors and members of the school parliament. Pupils are democratically elected to the school parliament.
- Pupils celebrate Remembrance Day and debate matters about the law and respect. The school's values are well known by pupils and make a very positive contribution to British values. Pupils understand what it takes to be a good citizen.
- Pupils are active at breaktimes and lunchtimes. The school parliament played a big part in asking leaders to provide better equipment for playtime. Leaders listened and upgraded outdoor facilities. Pupils enjoy playing on the trim trail, using basketball equipment and playing cricket and football.
- Breakfast club gives many pupils a positive start to the school day. There are effective procedures in place to keep children safe when they are attending breakfast club.
- Parents and staff believe that children are safe and well cared for in school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning vary, especially when the pace of learning is not good. Some lose concentration and their learning slows. There are times when pupils do not listen well enough to their teachers and their peers and they are not learning well.
- Around school, the majority of pupils behave well throughout the day and meet the school's high expectations. However, there are times when some pupils do not manage their behaviour well, and adults have to remind them of the school's rules. Pupils usually respond well.
- Pupils said that, although bullying occurs at times, they are confident staff deal with it effectively.
- Actions taken by the school have led to significant improvements in attendance and a considerable reduction in the proportion of pupils regularly absent. The school attendance officer and inclusion officer work tirelessly to ensure that pupils attend school. Home visits occur regularly to make sure that parents are sending their children to school. When new pupils arrive at school, their parents are told that the school expects them to make sure that their children attend regularly.
- Exclusions are above average but are quickly reducing, as pupils' behaviour is getting better across the school.
- Inspectors found the school to be orderly, with pupils responding appropriately to adults. The school is litter free and there are many interesting displays of pupils' work.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils are not making good progress across the school because the quality of teaching is variable. Since the previous inspection, progress has increased but not quickly enough to make sure that it is good and, consequently, pupils' outcomes require improvement.
- Published information for pupils at the end of key stages 1 and 2 does not take into account the high proportions of pupils joining and leaving the school during each key stage. Only half the pupils had progress measures in the published information, and many joined the school speaking English as an additional language.
- Pupils whose progress was measured at the end of key stage 2 in 2017 made average progress in reading, well above-average progress in writing and average progress in mathematics. In 2017, attainment at the end of key stages 1 and 2 improved from the previous year.
- Inspectors concluded that published information did not take into account the very challenging circumstances the school works in. Therefore, they focused on the work of current pupils across the school and checked the school's progress and attainment information.
- Inspectors analysed pupils' work and found that the progress pupils make is not consistently good across subjects. There is good progress for pupils who are taught well, but inconsistencies in the quality of teaching slow the progress of other pupils. Inspectors found that progress is more consistent in mathematics than in other subjects.
- The right pitch and challenge in work are not consistently available to pupils, including the most able pupils, and consequently progress is not good. Progress and attainment are improving but remain variable across the school, and most pupils work below national expectations. Those pupils who spend most time at the school make better progress than others.
- Disadvantaged pupils, many of whom are with the school for longer than others, benefit from the improving teaching in school. They make better progress than other pupils in the school. Differences in attainment, when compared to other pupils nationally, are beginning to diminish but not consistently across the school.
- Leaders plan appropriately to meet the needs of those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. However, further work is to be done to ensure that teachers and their assistants are meeting pupils' needs well enough to make sure that progress is good.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language have good support in acquiring skills in speaking English. Teachers and teaching assistants have been well trained to help pupils acquire skills quickly to take part in mainstream classes. This is a good example of the school's commitment to equality of opportunity for all.
- From their very low starting points, pupils make good gains in phonics, and standards are improving at the end of Years 1 and 2. Overall, reading is promoted well by the school and pupils have good opportunities across the curriculum to read regularly. Pupils enjoy reading. Many take opportunities to read at the start of the day. Some pupils attend the Wednesday morning library sessions with their parents and pupils

from a local secondary school. Pupils said that they enjoy the support they have from their parents and the secondary school pupils as it is helping them to read better.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children enter Nursery with skills that are below those found typically for their age, and some are well below. The numbers of children at the start of Reception almost doubles, and the majority of those joining have skills well below those typically found for their age.
- The proportion of children attaining a good level of development by the end of Reception has increased in recent years but remains well below average because children's progress is not good.
- The recently appointed early years' leader has high expectations. She has checked the quality of teaching and children's progress and has an accurate view of the strengths and areas for development. She has made sure that there are systems in place to assess children's skills accurately. She is providing effective leadership to make sure that recent improvements are sustained and further developed.
- The quality of teaching is improving and leading to improved rates of progress. However, at times, children's learning does not move on quickly enough and they lose concentration. When children find their learning interesting, they show good attitudes to learning.
- Leaders have ensured that adults are well trained and understand how children learn. Consequently, children are making better progress in most areas of learning, although attainment in reading, writing and mathematics remains well below average. As a result, not enough are well prepared for their learning in Year 1, and children's outcomes require improvement.
- Support for disadvantaged children is effective and they make better progress than other children in school. However, their progress requires improvement, as these children are not catching up quickly enough with others nationally.
- Outdoor provision is well resourced, but adults do not make sure that it is used as effectively as the indoor provision. Consequently, children's skills and learning are not developing quickly when they are outdoors.
- The school has very effective transition arrangements in place to support the children joining the provision, including the high proportion of children who join during the school year. School staff and leaders have worked hard to involve parents in their children's learning. This has led to a significant increase in the number of parents taking part in regular stay-and-play sessions.
- Children enjoy learning through a range of activities. For example, they were very excited when taking part in a role-play hospital. They took turns to weigh and measure each other's height, taking great delight in reading the numbers on the scales. They enjoy brushing their teeth and learning how to stay safe, with visits from the fire brigade and police service.
- Children behave well at most times. Occasionally, they lose interest when the pace of learning is too slow. They usually take turns and share, although some children need to

be reminded of this by adults. At times, adults are not consistent in managing behaviour well enough.

- Children are safe and happy because staff provide good levels of care, and procedures for safeguarding are effective.

School details

Unique reference number	140218
Local authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	10042137

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	352
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair of the Academy Council	Jonathan Savage
Principal	Helen Round
Telephone number	01142 012300
Website	www.oasisacademyfirvale.org
Email address	info@oasisfirvale.org
Date of previous inspection	12 January 2016

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is over twice the national average. Six out of 10 pupils are disadvantaged pupils.
- Almost all pupils are from a minority ethnic background and speak English as an additional language.
- The large majority of pupils are Roma.
- The proportion of pupils who have support for SEN and/or disabilities is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is average.
- The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the usual times is exceptionally high.

- Children attend Nursery in the morning. Children receive full-time education in Reception.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- There have been significant changes in leadership and staffing since the previous inspection. A new deputy principal was appointed from 1 April 2016 and an inclusion manager from 1 January 2016. From 1 September 2017, a new early years leader, a new special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and a new literacy leader joined the school.
- Oasis Academy Fir Vale works closely with Oasis Academy Watermead and has received support from this outstanding school. On 1 January 2018, the principal of Oasis Academy Watermead became the executive principal of the three Sheffield schools organised by the Oasis Academy Trust, including Oasis Academy Fir Vale.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed a range of teaching and learning throughout the school. Several lessons were jointly observed with leaders.
- During the two days of the inspection, inspectors spoke with pupils, both individually and in groups, about learning and safety. Inspectors also spoke with parents.
- Inspectors reviewed pupils' work in lessons and analysed samples of work in pupils' books.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading.
- An inspector held a meeting with the regional director for the trust and an academy councillor.
- A meeting was held with the executive headteacher.
- Inspectors also held meetings with senior leaders and other staff.
- Inspectors looked at the school's review of its own performance, its development and improvement plans, a number of school policies and the minutes of meetings of the governing body. They considered a range of documentation in relation to child protection, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors analysed 14 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, Parent View. They also considered 23 responses to the Ofsted staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Jim McGrath, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Cook	Ofsted Inspector
Lesley Bowyer	Ofsted Inspector

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