

Serco Inspections
Colmore Plaza
20 Colmore Circus Queensway
Birmingham
B4 6AT

T 0300 123 1231
Text Phone: 0161 6188524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/ofsted

Direct T 0121 679 9161
Direct E: ann.morris@serco.com



19 March 2015

Louise Lee
Acting Principal
Oasis Academy Shirley Park
Shirley Road
Croydon
CR9 7AL

Dear Ms Lee

No formal designation monitoring inspection of Oasis Academy Shirley Park

Following my visit with Andrew Wright, Her Majesty's Inspector, to your academy on 18 March 2015, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave us and the time you took to discuss behaviour in your academy.

The inspection was a monitoring inspection carried out in accordance with the no formal designation procedures and conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was carried out because the Chief Inspector was concerned about behaviour at the academy due to high exclusion rates in recent years.

Evidence

Inspectors considered a range of evidence including:

- observations of pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to learning in lessons
- observations of pupils' behaviour throughout the day, including discussion with pupils
- documentary evidence
- discussions with school leaders and staff.

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

Leaders and managers have taken effective action to improve the standards of behaviour and attitudes since the academy's previous inspection.

Context

Oasis Academy Shirley Park is part of the Oasis Multi-Academy Trust. The academy provides education for pupils aged 3–18 through separate primary and secondary phases and a sixth form. It is slightly larger than the average-size school with 1625 pupils currently on roll, 1063 of which attend the secondary phase. About half of the

pupils at the academy are supported by the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority), which is much higher than is seen nationally. Pupils at the academy come from a range of different backgrounds including White British, Black African, Black Caribbean and other White heritages. About one-third of pupils speak English as an additional language which is higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is much higher than seen nationally with about one in three pupils receiving additional support. Pupil mobility is much higher than that seen nationally. About one in eight teachers at the academy joined at the beginning of the academic year 2014/15.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The academy's morning routine ensures that pupils in both phases make a positive start to their day. Pupils in the primary phase settle quickly into lessons and benefit from positive relationships with their peers and teachers. Pupils in the secondary phase are appropriately challenged to ensure a punctual start to the school day. Leaders ensure pupils' lateness is not a source of disruption for other pupils by supervising those who are late until the beginning of the next lesson. Furthermore, lateness is very effectively deterred by same-day detentions which are used for pupils to catch up the work they missed due to their tardiness.

Inspection evidence indicated that the previous high exclusion rates were mostly due to exclusion patterns in the secondary phase. Parents of pupils in the primary phase who spoke to inspectors confirmed that they have no significant concerns about behaviour. Recent parent surveys undertaken by the academy expressed overwhelmingly positive views about the standard of behaviour in the primary phase. Inspectors confirmed this was accurate during brief visits to some lessons. Consequently, inspection activity focussed solely on the behaviour of pupils in the secondary phase.

Most pupils in the secondary phase show positive attitudes to learning in lessons. This is because teachers and other adults create a productive climate for learning supported by the high expectations of the academy's conduct for learning policy. In the majority of cases this is carefully applied to challenge and minimise disruption effectively. In discussion, pupils conveyed a very clear understanding of what is expected from them and the consequences that would follow if they do not live up to the standards. Pupils also commented that, where teachers have consistent routines, for example at the start and end of lessons, these help pupils to behave well.

Not all pupils are able to manage their behaviour in lessons. A very small proportion of pupils lose concentration and engage in low-level disruption. For example, pupils occasionally shout out, rock on their chairs to gain attention or seek to distract others. Most teachers manage this very effectively, but in a small number of cases, it either goes un-noticed or is not challenged. This hinders the learning of a small number of pupils. Teachers and other adults need to exercise skilful care and judgement in managing a very small number of more serious disruptions. This is highly effective and contributes to the calm and orderly environment around the academy. However, in a small number of cases, skilful intervention is required to support teachers who have not had the skills to manage behaviour effectively.

Similarly, a minority of pupils rely too much on the interventions of other adults to resolve some issues.

The vast majority of pupils behave well around the academy. This is because teachers and leaders are visible inside and outside of the school building. For example, pupils move well between lessons because teachers are often positioned outside classroom doors to encourage positive behaviour. Leaders have been quick to identify and address issues as they have arisen. For example, they made changes to student thoroughfares as a result of some incidents on a particular stairwell in the academy. Similarly, at break and lunchtimes, teachers are stationed at carefully chosen locations so that pupils are supervised at all times of the day. The vast majority of pupils currently demonstrate good conduct as a result and make productive use of time to play football or meet with friends. In between or away from supervised areas, a very small number of pupils do not sustain these high standards. For example, very occasionally, some pupils shout expletives across the yard or engage in what they describe as 'banter' which can sometimes include defamatory language.

The academy's behaviour policies and procedures are effective and continue to secure improvements to pupils' behaviour over time. Teacher, other adults and middle and senior leaders demonstrate a clear commitment to manage behaviour through their good quality relationships with pupils. Parents confirm that there has been a continued period of improvement to behaviour in recent years. Teachers, including those new to the academy have a good understanding of procedures to promote good behaviour. Leaders have identified teachers who would benefit from additional support to develop their management of behaviour further. Behaviour systems are carefully tiered to ensure that responses to poor conduct are proportionate. For example, day-to-day detentions and short-term isolation rooms are used well to respond to 'one-off' behaviour issues. More sustained and challenging behaviour is managed effectively through medium-term referrals to 'The Centre'. This provision supports pupils over a six week period to address and improve aspects of their conduct.

The academy's inclusive ethos is recognised by the local authority. In recent years more pupils at risk of exclusion from other schools have been admitted to the academy than any other school in the local authority. These pupils speak very highly of the support they have received from individual teachers, mentors and leaders. One student described that 'it makes you want to do more for the academy and give something back'.

The very high exclusion rates seen in 2011/12 reduced by half in 2012/13 and academy records show a further slight improvement in 2013/14. The consistent implementation of the academy's behaviour policy during this period has contributed to these significant improvements. Academy records for this year indicate that overall exclusion rates will be close to the current national average. Pupils who have recently been excluded speak very highly of the work that the academy does in supporting them to get back on track after exclusion. One student said 'because of the support I received, I feel like it was a turning point in my life'. This is because senior and middle leaders focus their efforts sharply on the needs of individuals before, during and after exclusion. However, pastoral leaders are not expected to track exclusion rates in their year groups. Consequently, they are not able to measure the impact of their work on key student groups such as boys,

disadvantaged pupils or those from White British, Black African and Black Caribbean backgrounds.

Leaders have introduced new, more stringent expectations of pupils' attendance. Recent overall absence rates have been in line with the national average for secondary schools, however, persistent absence remains higher than that seen nationally. New systems to record and follow up attendance have been put in place this year. The academy's attendance team are making effective use of this information to support and challenge pupils who are persistently absent. Pupils are rigorously assessed from a variety of perspectives to evaluate their needs. Leaders' knowledge of individual pupils is used well to provide carefully tailored packages of support. A scrutiny of a small number of case studies confirmed that some pupils are already showing significant improvement. However, leaders recognise that it is important to ensure that those pupils showing less improvement are monitored more carefully so that other leaders can reflect on the impact of their work.

Priorities for further improvement

- Ensure that all secondary phase pupils are fully aware of the need to take responsibility for their own behaviour by:
 - challenging the small proportion of pupils who are not fully engaged in learning
 - ensuring that the small number of pupils that are removed from lessons further develop their own behaviour management strategies
 - challenging the very small minority of pupils who use inappropriate language around the school site.
- Ensure that all secondary phase teachers are equipped with the skills required to challenge and manage low-level disruption effectively.
- Ensure that leaders and managers at all levels in the secondary phase are able to measure the impact of their work on reducing exclusions and persistent absence across year groups and key pupil groups.

I am copying this letter to the Director of Children's Services for Croydon, to the Secretary of State for Education, the Chair of the Governing Body and the Academies Advisers Unit at the Department for Education. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Michael Pennington
Her Majesty's Inspector