

Ormiston Sheffield Community Academy

Broad Way, High Heath, Pelsall, Walsall, West Midlands WS4 1BW

Inspection dates

14–15 May 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils require improvement because pupils have not made as much progress as they should have done in the past.
- Although progress for current pupils is improving and is now stronger, attainment and progress need to improve further to be at least in line with national averages.
- Although attendance is improving, a small number of pupils continue to be absent too often.
- Gaps in pupils' knowledge and weak basic literacy skills hamper pupils' access to the curriculum and achievement. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length.
- Recently introduced approaches to improving teaching and assessment have not yet had a sustained impact on outcomes for pupils.
- Some pupils repeat errors because teachers do not address pupils' misconceptions promptly enough.

The school has the following strengths

- The principal, together with the leadership team, governors and the Ormiston Academies Trust, have established an ambitious culture and curriculum, underpinned by a commitment to equality, inclusion and raising aspirations.
- Teaching, learning and assessment have improved as a result of leaders' strategic focus on improving teaching. As a result, progress for current pupils is improving.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and at breaks and lunchtime. They show respect and concern for each other. They say bullying is rare.
- Pupils are safe in school. Staff are well trained in safeguarding procedures. They are vigilant and apply procedures effectively in practice, taking prompt action when they have concerns.
- Subject leadership has improved. Leaders monitor and evaluate practice effectively to identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- Outcomes for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are improving. Pupils value the support they receive.
- Disadvantaged pupils are now making stronger progress as a result of improved teaching and the impact of pupil premium funding.
- Improvement plans for the sixth form are now strategic and focused on improving learners' outcomes. As a result of leaders' analysis, new qualifications offered suit learners' needs more effectively. There are now more pupils joining the sixth form and completing their courses.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:
 - the new approaches to teaching and assessment are embedded, so that recent improvements in current pupils' attainment and progress is sustained and on track to be at least in line with national averages for pupils with similar starting points by the end of key stage 4
 - gaps in pupils' literacy skills are addressed, particularly by ensuring that pupils have more frequent opportunities to apply their spelling, punctuation and grammar skills in extended writing tasks across the curriculum
 - errors in pupils' work are picked up promptly and misconceptions are addressed more effectively
 - attendance continues to improve, particularly for the small number of pupils who are persistently absent.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal, together with other leaders and with support from the trust, has established a clear vision and ambitious culture for the school. All staff share the vision and are committed to the ambition for every pupil to achieve to the best of their ability. Leaders know the local community well. Their efforts to raise pupils' aspirations are starting to bear fruit and much stronger partnerships with parents and carers have been established through the parent forum.
- Leaders are determined to see outcomes improve and are systematically addressing priorities for improvement. A huge investment in support and training for teachers and other staff has had a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching.
- Staff are proud to work at the school and say that they feel well supported by leaders. There is a commitment to respect for all, raising aspirations, evaluating practice and reflecting on what works. Middle leaders take ownership over their subjects and areas of responsibility. They support teachers to improve, analyse assessment information, set ambitious targets and report to senior leaders on progress against departmental improvement plans. Stronger leadership is leading to stronger pupils' progress.
- Since the last inspection, leaders have addressed most of the areas for improvement effectively. Plans for improvement are now more rigorously evaluated, including those for the sixth form. Governors receive regular updates of leaders' evaluation of impact, for example the impact of additional funding such as pupil premium or Year 7 catch-up funding. Pupils are now benefiting from more specific, targeted support to improve their literacy skills.
- The curriculum is ambitious and constantly reviewed to ensure that it meets the needs of pupils. Leaders have extended the range of GCSE and vocational courses offered, as well as reviewing the intentions behind the curriculum. Leaders of all subjects are currently engaged in reviewing the subjects they offer to ensure that these are consistent with the ethos of the school and meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils currently start studying GCSE courses in Year 9. The impact of this strategy is being evaluated as part of the curriculum review.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well supported through the extensive extra-curricular activities offered, which are designed to broaden pupils' horizons and support every pupil to achieve success in the arts, music or sport. Pupils' cultural awareness is also developed through trips abroad, which all pupils are encouraged to attend. Leaders have established a partnership with another school in a more diverse community to facilitate friendships and activities across potential cultural and faith divides. Pupils are supported well to become responsible citizens in modern Britain. They understand the importance of British values such as democracy, individual freedom and the rule of law.
- Having established an ambitious culture, leaders lead by example and staff model the behaviours they want pupils to adopt. Through the comprehensive personal, social and health (PSH) education programme, pupils learn about healthy relationships, respecting the views of others, and how to stay safe. Based on feedback from staff and pupils, the impact of these lessons is regularly reviewed and revised by the subject leader to

ensure that the content is relevant and effective. Pupils are very positive about the programme, which is shared as good practice more widely with other schools across the trust.

- A number of pupils continue to leave the school during the school year. Leaders have analysed the profile of those pupils, whose parents have elected to educate their children at home. School leaders are now working very closely with Walsall local authority officers to provide additional support to pupils and parents. This is starting to influence parents' decisions to keep pupils in school. Local authority officers confirmed that this issue is becoming more prevalent across the borough and nationally and that Shelfield is an inclusive school.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. They value the professionalism and expertise of the principal and acknowledge the impact of his actions so far on improving the quality of education.
- Individual members of the local governing board (LGB) use their extensive expertise to support the school to improve. Their backgrounds include headteacher experience, specialist education experience and commercial experience. Governors use their experience to support the school, for example in the provision of training for teachers in how to support pupils' social and emotional mental health, in their contribution to the school's careers fair, and in the introduction of external mentors for pupils.
- Governors hold leaders to account effectively through the strategic progress board, which is attended by the regional director of the trust, the chair of the LGB and another governor. Records of discussions demonstrate challenging questioning and show how leaders report to governors on the impact of their decisions, for example in relation to spending of the pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding.
- The principal has ensured that leaders at all levels understand their accountability to governors. They are expected to report to governors on progress for their areas of responsibility against the academy improvement plan. Governors say that they can see how leadership has been strengthened across the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff are well informed about safeguarding procedures because they receive regular training and weekly safeguarding updates. Leaders check staff and pupils' understanding and awareness of safeguarding regularly through surveys and quizzes. Ormiston Academies Trust runs surveys across the trust. Analysis of the responses tells leaders where they need to provide additional training. For example, training was provided recently on forced marriage, as this emerged as a training need in a survey.
- Pupils speak confidently about how the school supports them to stay safe. They say they feel safe in school and there is always someone they can talk to if they need help. Pupils with additional needs say staff support them very well.

- Staff provide early interventions and support as soon as there is any indication of need and leaders involve external agencies when necessary.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching across the school has improved and is now more effective as a result of leaders' recognition that, in order to improve outcomes, teaching needed to improve.
- There has been a concerted focus on improving the quality and accuracy of teachers' assessments and strengthening subject leadership. Leadership, teaching and assessment are all now much stronger, which is starting to have an impact on current pupils' progress.
- In many subjects, teachers' strong subject knowledge and effective teaching approaches enable teachers to spot pupils' misconceptions and correct them promptly. In most lessons, pupils' learning is supported effectively by well-structured learning tasks, which address the needs of pupils appropriately. Where this is not yet the case, staff are receiving support to improve their practice.
- Staff at all levels have benefited from focused support to enhance their skills. Staff forums have been established to encourage professional dialogue within the school and with colleagues from schools across the trust. Running alongside individualised support, leaders have introduced a whole-school approach to lesson planning. Teachers follow a 'blueprint' for learning so that lessons follow an agreed set of principles, based on evidence of effective teaching strategies. Teachers use and adapt this model to suit the needs of the pupils and the demands of the subject. Teaching is now more consistently effective, and this is starting to have a positive impact on pupils' progress. However, more time is needed for these strategies to become more established and for significant impact on pupils' outcomes to be seen.
- All departments have a teacher representative on the SEND forum. These representatives share good practice and pass on training to other teachers so that support for pupils with SEND improves. Learning support assistants (LSAs) provide effective support to pupils with SEND in many lessons. Pupils say that they value this support highly. LSAs are developing their practice further through the introduction of a 'blueprint' for support.
- Pupils are keen to learn and improve their work. The majority of pupils know their targets in different subjects and there are regular assessments throughout the year, which help pupils to understand how they are progressing. In many subjects, teachers' feedback helps pupils to improve their work. The assessment and feedback policy has recently been revised. Teachers now provide more immediate feedback verbally in lessons and pupils mark their own and each other's work. While pupils say this helps, their books show that pupils' errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar are not corrected consistently, which means that errors persist. Where errors are picked up, teachers do not always follow up to check that the learning is embedded in later pieces of writing.
- Work in pupils' books shows that, in some subjects, pupils have limited opportunities to write at length. This means that they do not practise their spelling, punctuation and grammar skills enough to apply them accurately and automatically in their writing.

Leaders have identified that the quality of pupils' writing needs to improve and have introduced a literacy strategy across the school. Subject teachers focus on the spelling of key subject-specific vocabulary. Staff in the English department have shared with teachers of other subjects the features of different text types, along with their approaches to the teaching of writing. In this way, pupils know what is expected of them in their writing, whatever the subject. This is starting to have an impact on pupils' literacy skills, but it will take more time for this to be fully embedded and for pupils' literacy skills to improve.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Through the many opportunities to take on responsibility across the school, pupils develop confidence and self-assurance. The impact of the active school council is valued by all pupils. For example, the school council has successfully secured more varied menu items for lunch and improved toilet facilities. Pupils say that they feel their voice is heard. Sheffield pupil ambassadors talk proudly about their role in helping the school run smoothly.
- Pupils have a well-developed understanding of the contribution they can make to the wider community. For example, through the eco-council, pupils work with staff to reduce plastic use and to recycle more waste. For the school's chosen charity, the Teenage Cancer Trust, pupils and staff have together raised more than £12,000 so far this year.
- Pupils' physical development is well supported by the many extra-curricular clubs and sporting activities on offer. Leaders are keen to see gender divides between sports broken down, so they encourage boys and girls to consider a wider range of sports and activities.
- Comprehensive careers advice, information and guidance support pupils very effectively as they choose the next steps beyond school. For example, there is an annual careers fair, and work shadowing and work experience opportunities, as well as a wide range of visits to universities and local employers. The success of this approach is underpinned by leaders' commitment to broadening pupils' horizons. A very high proportion of pupils go on to positive destinations in employment, education or training.
- Pupils say that bullying is rare but, if it happens, it is sorted out quickly by staff. They also say that racist, homophobic or discriminatory language is not tolerated. Pupils value the comprehensive pastoral support and education provided to help them maintain and improve their mental health and well-being.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.

- At breaks and lunchtimes, the school is a calm and orderly place. Pupils queue in an orderly fashion in the dining hall and socialise sensibly during their free time. Pupils appreciate the modern, airy environment of the impressive school building. Pupils are smartly dressed, and polite and respectful of each other and towards adults.
- Leaders have established a positive culture where caring relationships between pupils and staff are key to pupils' achievement and enjoyment. Pupils feel well supported and valued. The school uses one alternative provider and has established separate programmes in school to address the needs of more vulnerable pupils and those who find it hard to concentrate in mainstream classes. Leaders monitor the progress of these pupils closely to ensure that they return to mainstream classes as quickly as possible.
- In lessons, the majority of pupils are engaged in their learning and are keen to learn. On the rare occasions where this is not the case, it is often because the teaching fails to interest pupils and their attention drifts.
- Pupils say that behaviour has improved recently. They say that the consequences of poor behaviour are now much clearer, and rewards motivate them to do well. As a result of recent changes to behaviour management, the number of fixed-term exclusions has increased this academic year. However, this is below the national average for similar schools.
- Attendance is improving as a result of leaders' concerted focus on getting pupils into school. Many pupils who have previously missed too many days of their education have responded to the support and interventions provided to improve their attendance. However, the attendance of a small number of pupils who are persistently absent still needs to improve. Leaders now analyse attendance data more strategically to identify patterns. With support from the local authority and from the trust, staff work more closely with parents to help them understand the importance of regular attendance. When necessary, fines are issued to parents who do not ensure that pupils come to school regularly.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- At the time of the last inspection, pupils' progress had improved from well below the national average in 2016 to be in line with the national average in 2017. However, in 2018, pupils' progress dipped to below the national average once again. Across the English Baccalaureate subjects, pupils' attainment and progress were below, and in some cases well below, the national averages for pupils with similar starting points. Leaders identified a number of reasons for this. For example, in science, many pupils failed to achieve a grade because they had been entered for the higher tier, which was not appropriate for them. As a result of previously weak provision, older pupils particularly have significant gaps in their basic scientific knowledge, which need to be addressed.
- Across a number of subjects, there have been changes to staffing and leadership, which are starting to turn the tide of underachievement. Work in pupils' books shows that current pupils are now making stronger progress. Based on teachers' moderated assessments, leaders predict that pupils' progress will be closer to the national average in 2019 and 2020. However, progress needs to improve further so that pupils in all

year groups are on track to achieve at least as well as pupils with similar starting points by the time they reach the end of key stage 4.

- Historically, disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND have not achieved as well as other pupils with similar starting points in many subjects. As just over half of the pupils in the school are disadvantaged, this is a significant group of pupils who have not made sufficient progress. However, disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND currently in school are now making better progress as a result of improved teaching and better support. Staff provide comprehensive and effective pastoral support to help remove barriers to pupils' learning.
- In the open elements of Progress 8, where pupils have a free choice of options at GCSE, pupils have fared better in recent years. In subjects such as art, drama, design technology and business studies, pupils achieved well, and their progress was in line with or better than the national average. Inspectors observed pupils' enjoyment of, and engagement with, these subjects, which clearly contribute to their stronger progress.
- In many cases, pupils' weak literacy skills hamper their progress. The standard of pupils' writing is often let down by errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar, which are too frequently left uncorrected.
- There has been a concerted drive to encourage pupils to read more. In tutor time, pupils read books and newspaper articles. They enjoy reading challenges and compete to win prizes for reading the most books. Leaders recognised that, while this may be encouraging pupils to read, they were not reading challenging enough books. Therefore, the focus of the competitions has been changed to encourage pupils to read more challenging texts. Pupils who have benefited from specific reading interventions are making strong progress.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Outcomes for students in the sixth form are improving. In 2018, in vocational courses, students made strong progress, but A-level outcomes dipped slightly overall compared with 2017. In 2018, a higher proportion of students than nationally left the sixth form before completing their courses. Following analysis of 2018 published data and students' needs, leaders reviewed the courses on offer. Students joining the sixth form now have a wider range of courses to choose from in three pathways, including vocational and practical options, as well as A levels. This has resulted in more students completing their courses and more Year 11 pupils intending to join the sixth form next year.
- Leaders expect outcomes at A level and in vocational courses to improve this year. This is due to the wider choice of courses and better advice given to students to ensure that they are on the right pathway. To ensure that students make the correct choices for their sixth-form courses, they are now guided more carefully towards vocational or mixed programmes. Subject leaders are now heavily involved with enrolment to the sixth form at the end of Year 11. This has helped ensure that students are on the right courses for their individual needs and their career aspirations.
- Since the last inspection, leaders have sharpened the focus of their improvement plans for the sixth form. Leaders have benefited from support from senior colleagues and

other colleagues across the trust to ensure that improvement planning is strategic and focused on improving students' outcomes. As a result, leadership of the sixth form is now stronger.

- Students' attitudes to learning are positive. Students learn well independently. They value their experiences in lessons and in the wider opportunities on offer, such as extra-curricular activities, trips and visits, which bring learning to life. For example, students recently performed at an arts festival in Walsall Arboretum, and history students visited Berlin.
- Teaching is well structured and delivered in the sixth form, with a good balance between independent activity, support and tuition. One student summarised the views of many when she said, 'Teachers are very dedicated to get the best out of their students.'
- Access to the sixth form is open to all students, regardless of ability. The wider range of courses better suits the needs of more students. If necessary, students can stay in the sixth form for three years, for example if they need to re-take mathematics and English or complete level 2 courses before moving on to level 3. An increasing number of students are improving their grades when re-taking GCSEs, especially in English.
- Students value especially highly the effective careers education, information, advice and guidance they receive in the sixth form. They have many opportunities to experience the world of work through work experience, careers fairs and work shadowing. A higher proportion of students progress to employment, education or training at the end of their course than is typically the case nationally and locally.

School details

Unique reference number	135769
Local authority	Walsall
Inspection number	10088404

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,382
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	185
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Paul Hann OBE
Principal	Stuart Turnbull
Telephone number	01922 685777
Website	www.scacademy.co.uk
Email address	r.smith@scacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 September 2018

Information about this school

- Ormiston Sheffield Academy is part of Ormiston Academies Trust. The school has a local governing board that reports to the board of trustees, which is in turn accountable for performance and standards.
- The school is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- A higher proportion of pupils are disadvantaged than is typical nationally.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- A very small proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.

- The school has a higher than average proportion of pupils with SEND. The proportion of pupils with education, health and care plans is broadly in line with the national average.
- A higher than average proportion of pupils enter the school with skills below the level expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school has one pupil on placement with Alpha Training, an alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

- Prior to the inspection, the lead inspector reviewed a range of information on the school's website and analysed the school's published data.
- Meetings were held between the lead inspector and the principal, vice-principal and the regional director of the trust to discuss their evaluation of the school's performance and the quality of provision, as well as improvement plans and support.
- The lead inspector met with the vice-chair and another member of the local governing board, as well the regional director and the national director for education of the Ormiston Academies Trust. The lead inspector held a telephone conversation with the chair of governors, who could not be present at the time of the inspection. A telephone conversation also took place with a representative of Walsall local authority school admissions team.
- Inspectors met with subject leaders, the head of sixth form, the special educational needs coordinator and other leaders to discuss improvement plans, the curriculum, safeguarding, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility.
- Lesson observations were carried out in a wide range of subjects across all key stages, many of which were joint observations with leaders. During lessons observed, inspectors looked at work in pupils' books and spoke to pupils about their learning.
- During break- and lunchtimes, inspectors spoke to pupils about their learning, safety and welfare and how the school teaches them to keep themselves safe. Inspectors also spoke to staff about their understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Inspectors held meetings with three separate groups of pupils and a small group of teachers.
- The 148 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, were considered. There were no free-text responses. There were no responses to the pupil survey. The 80 responses to the staff survey were taken into account.

Inspection team

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