

Oastlers School

Flockton Road, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD4 7RH

Inspection dates 4–5 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Good 2
Leadership and management		Outstanding 1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding 1
Quality of teaching		Good 2
Achievement of pupils		Good 2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Throughout the school and together with the governing body, leadership and management are outstanding. The high expectations of the headteacher are shared by the senior leadership team and middle managers. As a result, the school is improving very quickly indeed, with some aspects already outstanding.
- All groups of students make the expected progress or better in English, mathematics and other areas of study. Their achievements are good. Older students are prepared well for public examinations and for moving on to the next stages of their lives. Their personal developments are of a high standard.
- The excellent relationships promoted by staff encourage students to attend school regularly and take part productively in lessons. Attendance is very high.
- The headteacher has ensured that staff are well trained and skilful in behaviour management. Consequently, there are very few serious incidents.
- Students' attitudes to learning and their behaviour generally in the school are outstanding. As a result, they learn well and gain self-confidence from their successes. Their gains in spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are exceptionally strong.
- Leaders and managers ensure students are safe in school and when attending alternative education. This is acknowledged by parents, staff and the students themselves.
- The quality of teaching and achievement is never less than good and is improving rapidly. The impact of teaching is increasingly outstanding because of the consistent drive for improvement from the headteacher, the senior team and the governing body.
- Staff promote British values well through the courses they provide for students and by ensuring students have opportunities to learn about the public services and government of the country.
- The governance of the school is of a very high standard. Members of the governing body support and challenge senior leaders very well at every opportunity.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not outstanding because teachers do not always take sufficient account of students' individual learning difficulties and disabilities when planning lessons.
- Students do not always make as much progress as they could in some lessons because they do not always fully understand what they are expected to achieve.
- Occasionally, the writing students are expected to read is beyond their ability. For students who are at the early stages of learning to read, staff do not always provide them with text where the letters are formed clearly and are of a uniform size.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited 10 parts of lessons, always accompanied by the headteacher. He visited an alternative education provision to check that students are safe when placed there, and that the course of study provided is appropriate.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, middle managers, an officer of the local authority and four members of the governing body. Inspectors spoke with students during lessons and at break times. A telephone interview was undertaken with a school improvement adviser.
- Many key documents were scrutinised including the school's own analysis of its strengths and weaknesses and plans for future development. Important records such as those concerning students' academic progress and their behaviour were looked at. The procedures and policies for safeguarding were examined.
- There were insufficient responses to the on-line survey, Parent View, but a parent wrote to the inspector and he met with four others. The inspector looked at the school's own surveys of parents' views and 42 questionnaires completed by staff were taken into account.

Inspection team

Terry McKenzie, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Oastlers School opened in purpose-built premises in August 2013 and was entirely funded by Bradford City Council. It educates students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD). All have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan (EHC). The school is registered to admit students aged 11 to 19 but, so far, there have been none in the sixth form. Most arrive at the school at the start of Year 7 but students can be placed at any time during their secondary career.
- Students are placed by Bradford local authority and most travel by taxi or minibus to school.
- Almost all students are eligible for support through the pupil premium funding, a far greater proportion than seen nationally. Pupil premium is the additional funding for disadvantaged students, those who are known to be eligible for free school meals or are looked after by the local authority.
- All but a very few are of White British origin.
- The school makes use of one alternative education provider: The Tile Academy at Tong, Bradford.
- The school does not enter students early for GCSE. It will enter its first candidates for GCSE in 2015. This is the first inspection by Ofsted since the school was opened.
- Oastlers has achieved the Financial Management in Schools award.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Take even better account of students' special educational needs and abilities by:
 - encouraging teachers to always tailor tasks with students' learning difficulties and requirements in mind
 - providing students with small steps of learning so they understand precisely what is required of them
 - ensuring that students are always able to read and make sense of any written materials provided for them.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Since the school opened, there has been a relentless drive by the headteacher and leaders and managers at all levels to provide the best for students. As a result, some aspects of the school are already outstanding and all other aspects are improving very rapidly.
- Teaching is good and improving quickly with an increasingly outstanding impact on students' learning. This is because the headteacher monitors teachers' work closely. Classroom staff are challenged with targets designed to help students' improve.
- Leaders and managers link teachers' performance closely to pay and promotion. For example, the middle managers appointed are extremely skilled in their major role of coordinating important areas of learning such as English and mathematics. They fulfil their responsibility for the management of students' behaviour with great effectiveness.
- Robust systems have been designed and introduced to help staff understand how well students are doing in their studies. Leaders and managers use these to help them know when students require additional help. For example, if any start to fall behind in their studies it is usually quickly discovered by leaders and managers who then arrange extra and effective help.
- The senior team keep a close eye on classrooms. Their observations indicate that students often make better than expected progress. The pupil premium is used well, largely to purchase equipment and resources designed to help students overcome their difficulties in literacy and numeracy.
- When setting up the school, the headteacher concentrated staff efforts in fully understanding behavioural, social and emotional difficulties and managing behaviour and learning through training staff how to prevent potential difficult and dangerous situations occurring. Consequently, students' behaviour has quickly become outstanding and they have superb attitudes to learning.
- The arrangements for safeguarding in the school are high quality with leaders and managers making every effort to keep students safe in school and when attending alternative education. Staff teach them in lessons how to avoid personal dangers. Great efforts have been made to encourage parents to work cooperatively with the school. As a result, the rate of attendance is above expectations and a vibrant parents' group has been established to work with students on, for example, fund raising for charity.
- The parents who spoke with the inspector emphasised the changes for the better in their children as a result of attending the school. All spoke about how their family life is better because of the improvements in their children's behaviour.
- Opportunities to achieve are equally available for all students through the wide range of courses available and through attending alternative education. Good advice and guidance is provided to help them make informed choices about future careers opportunities. All are included and none are excluded from learning and this applies to any particularly disadvantaged and those eligible for the pupil premium. The school ensures equality of opportunity for all and that none are discriminated against. This is a very cohesive community where extremism is not tolerated. All are encouraged to work and get on well together.
- Leaders and managers ensure that students attend regularly at alternative education placements and behave well there. Their progress through Buildings Trades courses is monitored carefully.
- The development of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural attributes is a priority, and there are plenty of opportunities for students to meet and work with others from different backgrounds. Students go abroad on trips, for example to the European battlefields. Here they learn about why the United Kingdom went to war in defence of democracy and to support the British way of life. They are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The local authority provided very close support for the school throughout its first year. This continues with, for example, visits to the school by officers of the authority and others to provide support to the senior team. With their help, the headteacher has established systems to accurately find out about and report on the strengths and weaknesses of the school. She has made excellent plans for development based on these findings.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governance of the school is outstanding. Members of the governing body have a great range of skills. These have been put to exceptionally good use in supporting and challenging the headteacher. Members express high expectations of staff and are working towards gaining the best possible outcomes for students. They have ensured that all of the requirements for safeguarding are met, the finances of the school are appropriately managed and staff morale is maintained.
 - Members support and challenge the headteacher and senior leadership team at every opportunity. They

have a good awareness of the quality of teaching and of school performance data. They are involved in the appointment of staff and closely scrutinise the information about teachers' performance and students' achievements to ensure the school is improving and to reward good performance. Members set targets for the headteacher designed to move the school forward. They look closely at the information about how the pupil premium is used and the extent to which it helps students catch up and close the gaps they have in learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. This is a major contributor to their good learning. Students have excellent attitudes to work and rarely disrupt classrooms. Throughout the inspection, no incidents of bad behaviour were witnessed by the inspector.
- Behaviour outside classrooms is usually exemplary. During the inspection students were a credit to the school. Many approached the inspector and shook hands with him. A large number introduced themselves and asked about the purpose of the inspection.
- Students enter and leave the assembly hall and dining room with dignity and respect for each other and staff. Their behaviour is greatly supported by the very strong relationships that they have with staff and with each other.
- Examples were brought to the attention of the inspector of unusual and moving ways by which students support each other. They make remarkable progress in what for them is the challenging process of forming positive relationships with their peers.
- Students attend school very regularly and the rate of attendance is extremely high.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The arrangements including policies and procedures for safeguarding are robust. The designated persons for safeguarding maintain close links with the local authority child protection teams. Incidents of bullying are very rare. Students report that when things go wrong they fully trust staff to deal with incidents. Racial intolerance is almost unknown. Students feel very safe here. Parents and staff agree.
- A parent reported to the inspector that her child resents weekends and holidays 'because he's not allowed to come to school!' Leaders and managers including members of the governing body recognise that students are safe when in school. Consequently, they have organised summer play schemes that provide students with safe and interesting activities.
- Teachers are vigilant about the safety of the students, including in practical lessons and when attending alternative provision. Health and safety management is extremely robust including all the arrangements relating to fire safety. Records are completed and maintained meticulously. Staff are provided with appropriate training in the required areas of safeguarding, first aid and health and safety.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is improving quickly. Through the setting of high expectations of teachers by leaders and managers the quality of teaching has improved rapidly since the school opened. The good and outstanding teaching is instrumental in helping students demonstrate good achievement, outstanding behaviour and high attendance.
- Classroom staff know students extremely well and support their personal needs skilfully, such as in the reading development lessons that happen every day. Staff know how to help students without doing too much for them. For example, some have helped students complete their written coursework, required for public examinations, to a very high standard indeed.
- For many students their reading and writing is well below the standard it should be for their age. Sometimes, however, students are given hand-written materials to use that they cannot read which holds back their progress. Similarly, some worksheets and other written materials are not closely matched to students' reading levels and abilities.
- Students make good gains in mathematics because it is taught effectively by specialist teachers and by others who provide extra lessons for them to catch up and fill in gaps in their learning.
- A great feature of the school is the strength of relationships that exist between students and staff. This is a major factor in moderating students' behaviour. For example, students are exceptionally well supported by staff when moving around the school. As a result, the range and number of incidents is very small

indeed and there are very few exclusions and restraints.

- A wide range of teaching methods is employed throughout the school to try to ensure that students do not become bored but have exactly the right amount to do. However, teachers do not always accurately match tasks to students' levels of ability because they do not take sufficient account of students' individual learning difficulties and disabilities when planning lessons.
- Students speak about staff with great respect, as do parents. The work of the teachers and others in the school plays a huge part in the changes that students make in their achievements and behaviour. Some parents reported that their children have made leaps in learning here that they simply did not expect.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Achievement is good because the great majority make and exceed the expected progress including those students in alternative education provision. Almost all students arrive with standards well below those typically found in mainstream schools. Most have previously experienced long periods of disruption to their education or have been absent from school for extended periods, resulting in great gaps in their learning.
- Nevertheless, following enrolment, almost all students demonstrate great changes in their attitudes to school and willingness to participate in education. As a result, they take part in lessons and start to make up the lost ground. Through gaining success in learning their self-confidence grows and they undertake activities similar to those in mainstream schools. An example of this was seen when students made pewter badges in a technology lesson. This involved a complex series of operations by students including the production of detailed plans and safe handling of molten metal.
- School information about students' progress in different subjects is collected efficiently by leaders and managers. It is starting to show that in some areas of study and in some parts of the school achievement is outstanding but it is not yet uniformly so. Furthermore, the school has yet to have a cohort of students entering for GCSEs and their equivalents.
- All groups of students, including those who are disadvantaged, boys and girls, those with additional learning difficulties and disabilities, and those who are the most able, make good progress in English, mathematics and other areas of learning including the development of reading skills. Good achievement is demonstrated by students in each of the Key Stages 3 and 4. Students are expected to undertake homework. Parents can keep an eye on their children's work and progress through the recently established virtual learning environment they can access through the internet.
- The most able students achieve well because they are given work that engages their interest and challenges them to learn.
- The attainment of disadvantaged students in English and mathematics remain below those expected nationally and this is because of their particularly low starting points. Nevertheless, most fill in many gaps in their learning and catch up with others in the school. They begin to close the gaps with students in mainstream schools.
- In most lessons students can work as part of a team and individually. There is variety in what they do. This helps them to concentrate and not become bored. Occasionally, however, students' rates of progress are slower than might be expected. This is because students are not always provided with clearly defined individual small steps of learning that they understand. Consequently, they are not always sure what is expected of them.
- In some lessons, students demonstrate standards in line with those expected in mainstream. Teachers are keen to provide them with learning opportunities that give them parity with their peers in other schools. This was seen in a lesson in which students developed a computer game through the use of programming code.
- Students' learning is supported by the bright and attractive new building and the provision of specialist practical rooms. Areas for quiet study are made available so those who temporarily cannot cope being in a classroom can continue working on the tasks set by the teacher.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	138099
Local authority	Bradford
Inspection number	449899

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	59
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lynne Smith
Headteacher	Lyndsey Brown
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01274 307456
Fax number	01274 307475
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