

Annual review report: Ormiston Academy Stoke High School

Last inspection	Ofsted 2012: Overall Effectiveness - Good OAT Review April 2014: Overall Effectiveness– Good
This review	21 st -22 nd January 2015
Overall Effectiveness	Grade 2 - Good
Achievement of pupils	Grade 2 - Good
Quality of teaching	Grade 2 - Good
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Grade 2 - Good
Leadership and management	Grade 2 – Good

Summary of key findings:

- Students progress and achievement continue to improve, and the attainment gap between different groups of students is narrowing.
- The leadership of the academy is strong and continues to have a very positive impact on all aspects of its provision. Middle leaders are becoming increasingly effective.
- There have been a number of new initiatives introduced to improve the quality of teaching, learning and behaviour. These are beginning to have an impact, but not all have had sufficient time to fully embed or are not being applied consistently across the academy.
- Behaviour around the school continues to improve and the majority of lessons are calm and productive.
- The Self Evaluation Summary and Operational Plan are detailed, analytical and accurately identify the key areas that require further improvement, and substantiates the numerous successes from the previous academic year.

Information about this academy:

- Stoke High School is a smaller than average 11-16 secondary school with 735 students on role. It serves an urban area of Ipswich, which is high on the school deprivation indicator (0.28). The percentage of students receiving free school meals is above the national average. The school receives pupil premium funding for 37% of students.
- Attainment on entry is significantly below national average in all year groups. The school receives students mainly from two local primary schools, but in total 16 other primaries send pupils to the school.

- Over 25% of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities with 17% supported at school action level and 15% at school action plus or with statements of special educational needs, these are above the national average and puts the school in the highest quintile.
- The majority of students are of white British heritage, the remainder mostly coming from Eastern Europe. The school receives pupil premium funding for nearly 37% of its students, which is above average. There is relatively high transience with about 20% joining the school part way through the academic year, only 78% of students in the current year 11 started Stoke in Year 7.
- At the last Ofsted inspection the school was given three key areas to improve further:
 - 1) Ensure that teaching is consistently good and that more is outstanding
 - 2) Further reduce the remaining variations in achievement
 - 3) Reduce persistent absence and bring overall attendance in line with the national average
- In the last OAT review the school was given the following targets:
 - 1) Maintain and consolidate the good progress that students have made recently in all subjects by further developing an unequivocal focus on literacy and numeracy across all subjects, especially for boys in English
 - 2) Improve and sustain the quality of teaching and learning
 - 3) Improve student's responses to teachers' marking and increase the amount of time given to them every week to reflect on their work and the learning of their peers.
- The focus for this review was to look at all aspects of the schools provision and to help prepare it for the forthcoming Ofsted inspection.

Information about this review:

- The team observed 43 lessons over the two days, undertook a learning walk focused on key stage 3 and interviewed groups of students from years 7 and 8, 9 and 10 and 11.
- Meetings were held with the Chair and Vice Chair of Governors as well as with the Principal, Vice-Principal, Senior and Middle Leaders.
- Students work was scrutinized, and the teachers marking and progress data were looked at.
- A variety of documentation was reviewed, including the most recent (unvalidated) RAISE, other data monitoring student progress and achievement, the schools self-evaluation, action plans and monitoring documents.

What does this academy need to do to improve further:

- Ensure that work in all lessons meets students' needs more closely, and that it provides the support and challenge to enable all pupils to make rapid and sustained progress.
- Ensure that the quality of marking is consistent across the academy, and that students are provided with the time in lessons to actively engage with it.
- Encourage students to take greater ownership of their learning by providing more opportunities for independent and self-study

Achievement of pupils is good:

- When students join the academy in Year 7, there is a large gender gap. Nearly twice as many girls at Level 5 compared to boys; twice as many boys are below Level 3 in English compared to girls. Boys are in line to achieve expected progress above National Average in English and Mathematics. In 2014 results rose from 41% 5A* -C (in 2013) to 43% A*-C. The EBacc rose from 8% in 2012 to 13% in 2013 and 2014. The number of students achieving 5A*-G rose from 88% in 2013 to 90% in 2014 (with 98% achieving at least 1 A*-G). On this broad measure, students made very good progress and were more successful than their predecessors.
- There was a smaller than national gender gap in EBacc Science, MFL and Humanities although a small gap did exist between English and Mathematics in 2014. The overall VA progress gender gap narrowed (reflecting the 3 year trend). 2012 gap of 56.3; 2013 gap of 52.1; 2014 gap of 17. Best VA score increased significantly: 2013 score of 963.2 up to 2014 score of 984.4
- Predicted data for 2015 reflects the fact that this is the largest and weakest year group in the school. The predicted A*-C results for 2015 are 45% (a continuation of the improvement over 3 years from 41% in 2013). EBacc is predicted to rise to 17% with a smaller gender gap than National. 5 A*-G prediction for 2015 is 90% (this reflects some issues with students who have had medical problems). Those achieving 1 A*-G is predicted to be 99%. English and Mathematics A*-C are predicted to be 60% (above National progress) and 63% (above contextualised National progress). The gender gap is much smaller for 2015 compared to 2014 thus boys and girls are expected to achieve in line with or above national in English and Mathematics.
- The academy has taken determined action to improve students' progress in English and Mathematics. For students in Year 11, progress is now good in mathematics and very good in English. Results in these subjects are therefore forecast to improve considerably in 2015. Students are also making better progress in modern foreign languages and predicted much better grades following a dip in results in 2014 due to problems with coursework.
- In science and humanities subjects in Year 11, middle-ability students are making expected progress. Some are finding it hard to apply their knowledge and skills in the ways now expected in GCSE examinations. The academy has already tackled this issue for Year 11 but this need to become consistently embedded across all subject areas.
- In other year-groups, students are developing their skills well. Those with weak reading and numeracy skills are supported well to catch up. The academy is encouraging all students to read more widely. Progress in English and Mathematics is a little slow during Years 7 but accelerates from Year 8 onwards.
- The progress of different groups of students is in line with national expectations for good achievement. In 2013, the gap between disadvantaged students and others was non-existent. Disabled students and those with special educational needs are achieving just as well as students with similar prior attainment. Students who speak English as an additional language are making good progress due to the support package in place. Girls are now making good progress in mathematics, something that had previously been a problem.
- Following the academy's last review in 2014, one recommendation was to raise the achievement of the most-able students. The forecasts for 2015 show that the academy has begun to address this area for improvement. The most-able students are making good progress in all the major subjects, including separate sciences. There is scope for further improvement in the number of A and A* grades by adding more challenge to lessons. This would also help progression to A-level and other similar courses.

- During the review, achievement was good or better in a large majority of lessons. Students respond well where they receive clear guidance and feedback, whether through marking or discussions with the teacher and fellow students.

Quality of teaching is good:

- Teaching is good and improving. As a result students make good progress over time.
- Teachers have high expectations. Relationships in lessons are good and there is a positive environment for learning in lessons. Mostly students find their lessons interesting and engaging.
- Behaviour management in lessons is good; during the visit no lesson seen was interrupted by poor behaviour.
- In most lessons teachers regularly check students' knowledge and understanding through questions and observation. This means they can make informed decisions about the direction of the lesson; whether it is time to move on to new work or spend more time reinforcing current knowledge and understanding to improve learning.
- Marking and other feedback is improving. At its best teachers provide specific and detailed information about how work and grades can be improved, which students respond to positively in green pen. However this is not yet the consistent picture across all lessons. While most teachers are providing regular feedback, not all are providing students with time in lessons to make 'green pen' corrections.
- Teaching assistants and other adults play a valuable part in promoting learning, especially for students with special needs.
- Teachers plan most lessons well. They use resources such as computers and games effectively to engage students and promote good learning. For example, very good practice was seen in year 10 and 11 mathematics where teachers used test results to plan revision lessons that matched students' needs precisely by addressing weaker areas in their knowledge and understanding. This is not always the case and in a minority of lessons the work provided that it either too hard or too easy. As a result students lose concentration and progress slows.
- There were good examples of planning that developed students' independence. For example, a Year 8 DT class were given the opportunity to design and make a wheeled vehicle. This enabled students to apply imagination and bring personal interest to the project, which they thoroughly enjoyed. In a Religious Studies lesson students were researching the Muslim faith and given the responsibility to follow up their personal lines of enquiry to extend their knowledge and understanding. There is scope for teachers to provide more opportunities for students to explore their own line of enquiry and take responsibility for their work in this way.

Behaviour and safety of pupils is good:

- Most students display positive attitudes to learning. They settle quickly and work hard. They are keen to learn and are enthusiastic and engaged, particularly when they are given a stimulating range of resources and activities which are designed to challenge and support them to learn well. These traits are not always fostered consistently well in all lessons.
- Students behave well in lessons and around the academy. They are considerate, sensible and welcoming, because the academy has high expectations of them and because they are well prepared through the effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural programme. Positive relationships between students and between adults and students promote a secure atmosphere and sense of community within the academy.

- Students arrive well prepared for their lessons. Most are punctual, smart, bring the right equipment and follow instructions from teachers. Most show pride in their work, as seen in the neat presentation in their books.
- The academy has effective systems in place to manage behaviour and attendance. There has been an increase in the number of students referred for internal isolation as a result of the raising of expectations this academic year. Current figures show that this figure is reducing when compared to the previous term. A high proportion of parents feel students at the academy are well behaved.
- Exclusions have remained below the national average and attendance has improved though remains below the national average. Persistent absence was halved a year ago and been sustained at a lower level but is above the national average. A dedicated educational welfare officer and social worker are employed by the academy to support students and families with issues that relate to behaviour and attendance.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Recruitment arrangements and the compilation of the single central record are robust.
- Students in all year groups say they feel safe, and parents also say their children feel safe.
- The academy ensures that students know how to keep themselves safe in all circumstances. They are fully aware of different types of bullying, the risks relating to e-safety and how to make the right decisions in relation to their health.
- Students say that bullying is rare and they have every confidence that it will be dealt with if reported to an adult in the academy.
- Arrangements are in place to ensure that the few students using alternative provision are safe.

SMSC

- Students' SMSC is well developed. The welcoming nature of the academy and its support arrangements for students arriving from other countries is conducive to all students getting on well together.
- During break times students of different cultures can be seen engaging positively with each other.
- Inspiring assemblies are a regular feature of the academy and these cover a range of topics including opportunities for students to volunteer and play their part in building a harmonious community.
- SMSC is mapped across a number of curriculum areas and particularly through the PSHE programme. In addition to a range of other relevant topics it engages students in considering their role in being voters in democratic Britain.
- Students learn about other cultures through the wider curriculum and RE.
- The majority of students engage in extra-curricular and enrichment activities organised by the academy. Academy performances are a regular event with large number of students staying behind after school to rehearse their parts. A prefect systems, alongside mentoring opportunities for Year 10 students develops their sense of responsibility which all contribute to the broader SMSC provision.

Leadership and management is good:

- The senior leadership team sets high standards which are clearly communicated to both staff and students. These have contributed to the progress the school has, and is continuing to make.
- The leadership team has implemented effective monitoring procedures which are linked closely to the performance management process, and tailored professional development to meet the needs of individual teachers or departments.
- The leadership team has implemented a variety of realistic strategies to improve the quality of teaching, learning, behaviour and achievement across the academy. While these are beginning to have a positive effect not all have, as yet, had sufficient impact, or are not being applied consistently across the academy.
- The academy has produced a detailed and accurate self-evaluation document, which is backed by relevant data to substantiate their assessments. This document is effectively aligned to the Operational Plan which accurately identifies the key priorities for the academy.
- The role and leadership of middle managers is becoming increasingly effective and they are now more robust in building on the strengths and addressing areas requiring improvement.
- The school's curriculum has responded to the government's agenda while continuing to provide a broad range of opportunities for students to develop their academic, technical and sporting abilities.
- The academy option system is structured so as to meet the needs of the changing performance criteria but has retained some courses that specifically meet the needs of a small group of students. More able students have access to triple sciences and additional languages. Some languages are on offer to students who have English as an additional language.
- The school is highly responsive to the needs of its students which can be challenging given the numbers of transient pupils.
- Governors effectively challenge the leadership team, and have a good knowledge of the schools priorities. They are kept well informed and have undertaken a variety of training to increase their understanding of whole school issues. This has enabled them to rigorously question and offer effective support to the broader leadership team.

Ormiston review team:

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