

Oakfield

Hopewell Road, Hull, HU9 4HD

Inspection dates 4–5 December 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Students' achievement requires improvement. The standards students reach over time are low. This is because progress is slower than it should be for students of all abilities.
- Standards in mathematics are lower than in reading and writing because there are too few opportunities for students to use their own initiative in the subject and work things out for themselves.
- Students do not attend school regularly enough and are not always punctual to lessons.
- Teaching requires improvement because there are too few opportunities for students to respond to questions, communicate their understanding and work with their peers. Students do not have enough time to work by themselves or with their peers.
- Not enough use is made of homework to challenge students, especially the most able.
- Governors do not have the skills or experience to challenge school leaders rigorously enough. A consequence of this is that the school's evaluation of its current performance is over generous.

The school has the following strengths

- Students' progress is accelerating and is reflected in the proportion of them achieving five or more GCSE passes including in English and mathematics.
- The headteacher promotes a positive ethos and sets high expectations.
- The school is improving and has the capacity to continue to do so.
- Students' behaviour improves the longer they spend in the school as a result of the care and attention staff provide.
- Students feel safe in the school and they value their good relationships with staff, as do their parents and carers.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 14 part-lessons, six of which were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Informal discussions were held with groups of students and inspectors listened to several students read.
- There were 13 submissions to the online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors took account of the school's own survey of parents and carers. Returns from 40 questionnaires completed by staff were also considered.
- Meetings were held with governors, a senior officer from the local authority, the headteacher and senior and middle leaders. In addition, a telephone interview was conducted with one of the school's two consultants.
- The inspectors evaluated documentation, including information on the students' current progress, the curriculum, development plans and procedures and records on safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and exclusions.

Inspection team

Henry Moreton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sheila Kaye

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Oakfield caters for up to 80 full-time places for students who have behavioural, social and emotional difficulties. There are 67 students currently on roll, six of whom are girls. All have a statement of difficulties.
- Almost all students are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of students who are from minority ethnic heritages is well-below average, as is the proportion of students who speak English as an additional language or are at the early stages of learning English.
- Only a very small number of students are known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium. The pupil premium is additional government funding provided for those students who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- In January 2013, Oakfield relocated and expanded to admit a cohort of 80 students and opened a 36-place residential provision. It has undertaken a merging of students and staff from another school for students with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties in the city over the last two years. The residential provision was inspected separately in June 2013. The report of that inspection can be found at www.ofsted.gov.uk.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to be good or better so that all groups of students make at least good progress and raise standards, by:
 - enabling students to become more active learners, especially in mathematics, through encouraging them to work on their own and with others
 - providing students with regular, challenging homework to consolidate and extend their learning
 - involving students more in lessons through opportunities to answer questions and offer their views and opinions.
- Strengthen the impact of leadership at all levels, including governance, by:
 - ensuring training for middle and senior managers so that they are rigorous in the monitoring of the quality of teaching
 - improving rates of attendance and punctuality further by working even more closely with parents so that they have a thorough awareness of the importance of regular school attendance
 - ensuring governors play a full part in the school's evaluation of its performance.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because too few students make rapid enough progress over time. This is because of interruptions in their schooling before starting at Oakfield, attendance which is below average for some, and weaknesses in teaching.
- Students' progress is beginning to accelerate. There has been a rising trend in progress over the past year. Progress is faster in English than in mathematics, especially for girls. This has been as a result of improved teaching and the provision of additional support to students through effective use of pupil premium funds.
- Students' attainment remains below average in English and in mathematics, but in 2013 there was an increase in students achieving five or more GCSE passes at A* to G including English and mathematics. This is a significant improvement on the previous year's performance.
- More students are now reaching their academic targets. In 2013, almost every student left with some form of accreditation, placement at college or employment. Gains in their personal development provide a more purposeful route to life after school for most students.
- The pupil premium funding is used well to support individual pupils. Students who are supported by the pupil premium have made similar progress to other students in the school.
- Achievement information on students shows that there is no consistent variation over time between groups. Most recently, the school has been particularly successful in narrowing the gap between girls and their peers nationally, especially in English. The gap in the achievement of boys in mathematics is still not closing fast enough in comparison to their peers nationally.
- Pupils with additional learning needs are making the same rate of progress as others in the school.
- Students generally have poorly developed literacy skills when they arrive. Most make steady progress in reading because of their developing interest, a result of teachers' own enthusiasm. Fewer make progress in writing. The less-able students remain too dependent on adult support. The most-able students are making better progress now because of teachers' higher expectations. Progress in mathematics is slower because students' basic calculation skills are not securely in place. This is due to students' previous weak learning habits and the below average attendance of some. Many students lack confidence in their abilities in mathematics. This improves as students move through into Key Stage 4.
- Since the last inspection the number of available subjects has increased significantly and they are now taught by teachers with good subject knowledge. This is beginning to have a demonstrable impact on the progress students make, especially the most able.
- All students follow appropriate pathways and in Year 11 are now able to achieve accreditation in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology as well as in a range of academic and vocational subjects.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is too variable. Not enough is consistently good to ensure students make good progress in all classes and subjects.
- Students have too few opportunities to discuss their ideas, including with each other, or to work on practical activities on their own. Their speaking and listening, personal study and collaborative working skills are not developed enough, especially in mathematics.
- Teachers miss opportunities to extend learning by providing regular, purposeful homework.
- Teachers do not consistently apply high expectations for students' dress and language which is often inappropriate for learning well.
- Teachers' better subject knowledge is gaining students' interest more readily. As a result, the most-able students are beginning to see the benefits of their work in terms of positive academic

outcomes. More are taking pride in their achievements, encouraged by the school's reward system.

- Students make good progress when they work together in lessons. This was seen in a mathematics lesson where students each measured one small part of an area and used the data to work out the larger area together. Marking is a strength of teaching in all classes and subjects. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Students are given regular and helpful guidance on how to improve their work. Most-able students gain confidence in using their literacy skills when they have the opportunity to engage in discussion.
- The promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is part of their daily activities. There are several planned opportunities each day for students to come together to reflect on how they are feeling and to listen to each other. The potential to make all of these sessions purposeful is missed. Students who are feeling upset during the day are well supported by staff. As a result, most are able to return to their studies. Students' spiritual and cultural awareness is underdeveloped.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Behaviour is not yet good because some students do not show enough interest in their work or take opportunities to work things out for themselves. While the most-able students are beginning to do this, especially the girls, the less-able students are over-reliant on adults.
- There are lapses of concentration by a few students in lessons and around the school and some low-level disruption. However, the effect of this on lessons and learning is declining. This is because of good day-to-day management and care. As a result, most students and their parents and carers rightly judge that they are able to enjoy school more, and learn. Students are aware of the different types of bullying. They feel safe when they are in school.
- The number of fixed-term exclusions has been too high. These are becoming fewer as a result of the developing skills of staff to prevent the escalation of poor behaviour. Teachers are planning more interesting lessons and this, too, is engaging students more.
- In most of the lessons and activities observed, students' attitudes to learning were generally positive and behaviour was mostly appropriate. During the inspection there was occasional disruption but the students who were not involved did not respond and calm was soon restored. All students to whom the inspectors spoke were respectful.
- Attendance is improving year-on-year but it requires improvement because it remains low. This year effective use has been made of pupil premium funding to target persistent absentees through increased rigour in tracking and personalised one-to-one support. The school's reward programme is having a positive impact but a few persistent absentees still have erratic patterns of attendance which is slowing their progress.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- The school's leaders are securing improvements in achievement but leadership and management overall still require improvement because teaching is not good enough to ensure that students of all abilities make the progress of which they are capable.
- Evaluation of the school's performance is not accurate.
- The headteacher provides determined leadership, successfully guiding the school through a period of significant change. She is well supported by a new and still developing team of senior colleagues.
- The site is well managed with high expectations for its care and maintenance. As a result, students work in a safe and welcoming environment.
- Systems for collecting and recording information about students' progress are improving and beginning to show a clear picture of how well different groups are achieving over time. This reflects the successful work of the new team of middle and senior leaders since the last

inspection.

- Leaders ensure that all students have equal opportunity to succeed. This is because they organise classes to reflect the academic and social needs of students.
- Arrangements for managing teachers' performance are in place. Only those teachers who meet the required high standards, as judged by the headteacher, now move up the salary scale. Where teaching requires improvement teachers receive the appropriate coaching and training.
- The school's monitoring arrangements involve formal lesson observations as well as analysis of students' work and progress. The senior leadership team is involved in this process. The middle leaders are beginning to take more of a role. However, collectively the leadership team is not skilled enough in this aspect of its work. Better-targeted support and training are required in order to bring about further improvements in the quality of teaching more rapidly.
- Currently, the local authority and the school do not have a working partnership. This year, the school has received little advice from the local authority about how to improve the quality of teaching. It takes support from two independent consultants.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are committed to the well-being and safety of students, many of whom feel vulnerable. They provide good personal support for the headteacher. Governors ensure that the performance and salary progression of staff are monitored. Governors have a sound overview of how the funds for students attracting the pupil premium are used. However, they do not ask searching questions so that they fully understand the information on students' progress and how it compares with similar settings. Governors are not sufficiently involved in the school's self-evaluation and do not have procedures in place to ensure that all the statutory requirements are met rigorously. Safeguarding procedures do meet current requirements.

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	118140
Local authority	Kingston upon Hull City of
Inspection number	425709

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	67
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lee Morfitt
Headteacher	Rachel Davies
Date of previous school inspection	12 December 2011
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