

Annual review report: Ormiston Forge Academy February 2016

Focus of Review

- To work with academy leadership in identifying any additional guidance on what might be expected of them in an inspection.
- Helping staff in the academy to moderate their evaluations of teaching and learning, personal development, behaviour and welfare of students and outcomes for students.

Key judgements:

	Grade: Last inspection November 2013	This Review
Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement	Good
Quality of teaching learning and assessment	Requires improvement	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement	Good
Outcomes for students	Requires improvement	Good

Summary of key findings:

- The principal and governors are effectively driving sustainable improvement across the academy in all year groups and across all curriculum areas. Committed and hardworking senior and middle leaders and staff support them. A culture of improvement is evident and supported by parents, pupils and staff in the academy. They have successfully maintained improvements year on year since it opened as an academy. Some initiatives, particularly in mathematics are working their way through the academy having started in Year7. These are on track to come to full fruition in the next academic year.
- The impact of good and at times outstanding teaching learning and assessment is evident across the academy. Teachers' good subject knowledge, enthusiasm for their subjects and positive relationships with pupils is developing positive learning habits that support good outcomes. There are good examples of questioning, though in some cases students are not given the chance to develop their own deeper thinking and oracy skills. Teachers are keen to do their best for students and willingly engage in professional dialogue about how to improve their practice.
- Student's personal development, behaviour and welfare are good across the academy. Students exhibit a positive attitude to their learning especially when challenged and encouraged by their teachers. High levels of attendance and pride in their academy are evident amongst pupils. Students get on well together and there is a cohesive atmosphere in the academy. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the way in which the academy keeps their children safe, helps them to progress and develop good behaviour.
- Student outcomes are good overall across a wide range of subjects and year groups. From different starting points pupils are making and exceeding the progress expected of them in English and mathematics. Strategies to support pupils with poor literacy skills are effective

and helping individuals to better access the wider curriculum. The progress of disadvantaged students is closing the gap with national other students.

- Students in the sixth form are securing good outcomes. Progress from their starting points is good for the majority of subjects offered. Most students stay on in their studies and all go on to further education, employment or training, because of effective support and guidance provided by the academy staff. Learners have good opportunities to evolve their personal development and prepare for life beyond the academy.

Information about this academy:

- It is a larger than the average sized secondary school.
- The proportion of girls is slightly higher than boys.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students supported through the pupil premium is much higher than the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding to support students known to be eligible for free school meals and children looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority background is in line with the national average and for those with the first language is not believed to be English it is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is lower than the national average.
- In 2015, the academy met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11.

Information about this review:

- Reviewers observed teaching and learning in lessons across a wide range of subjects and year groups between Years 7 and 13. Most observations were undertaken jointly with senior and middle leaders. Reviewers also attended a number of tutorial sessions.
- Reviewers held meetings with students, subject leaders and leaders responsible for different aspects of the academy's work and with three governors.
- Reviewers looked at the academy self-evaluation of its own performance, its development plans and records of its checks on the quality of teaching, information on student progress, attendance and safeguarding documents. Samples of students' work were also reviewed.
- Reviewers considered the views of 140 parents who in the last year responded to a questionnaire put out by the academy at parents' evenings.

What does this academy need to do to improve further:

- **Continue to secure better outcomes for students by ensuring teachers:**
 - consistently have high expectations of how much learning pupils can do in lessons
 - provide pupils with opportunities to develop their independence of thought and speech
 - help pupils make the most of the learning opportunity provided by oral and written feedback given.
- **Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:**
 - providing the opportunity and time for mathematics teachers to consolidate and build on improvements and initiatives being driven by the department.

Effectiveness of leadership and management: **Good**

- The principal is driving forward a clear vision of improvement that is subscribed to by all the senior and middle leaders in the academy. A focused and structured approach to improvement is securing improvements in the quality of teaching, personal development, welfare and behavior and outcomes for pupils. Leaders who joined reviewers on lesson observations demonstrated a good and accurate understanding of the features of effective learning.
- Senior leaders have an accurate view of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They prioritise appropriately and invest heavily in continual professional development (CPD) at whole academy and individual levels. High rates of attendance at CPD events provide evidence of how highly these are valued by staff. Members of staff, middle leaders, and senior leaders evaluate the impact of training and make adjustments should any further support be needed to aid development. Improved outcomes across a range of indicators provide evidence of impact. Greater accountability, a strengthening of line management and a clear focus on outcomes has contributed to securing these gains.
- Middle leaders are coherently focused on the priorities of the academy and this is contributing to the effectiveness of its improvement strategy. They are conservative in the predictions of their outcomes, often securing better outcomes than those they predict. Changes to syllabuses and the implementation of new initiatives and assessment systems are partially responsible for this appropriately cautious approach. Middle leaders subscribe to the improvement agenda and know that whilst being given the freedom to manage their areas and being valued they are acutely aware of the performance of their areas.
- The academy offers a curriculum that is flexible, innovative and responsive to pupils' needs. A two year curriculum at Key Stage 3 includes extension for more able pupils, through 'challenge' club; nurture groups and 'flying start' for those pupils whose literacy and numeracy skills are significantly below those expected for their age. For those identified as requiring specialised support, the 'success centre' provides a balanced curriculum alongside individualized mentoring . In addition a classics 'taster' is provided in Year 8 and in Year 9 'philosophy for children' (P4C) to develop thinking skills. At Key Stage 4 a wide range of options, alongside core subjects, are offered, together with alternative curriculum to meet the needs of the most vulnerable. Similarly at Key Stage 5, a range of 'A' level and BTEC subjects are available. Beyond this the academy offers an extensive range of activities to support pupils' interests and broaden their experiences. Pupils' views are used to contribute to the evaluation of any programmes on offer; pupils highly appreciative of what is available to them.
- A strong focus on improving literacy from transition, right through to Year 13 has led to rapid improvement in reading and writing. Relentless evaluation and interventions by senior leaders have driven this, but a willingness by all staff to build on the success of efforts of all has contributed to the improvement made.
- The academy has well-informed careers strategy to ensure effective guidance for all and to enable pupils to make informed choices from Year 8 onwards about the variety of options available to them. The academy provides impartial careers advice and works with a wide range of external providers. A range of activities and personalized support are available, increasingly, pupils go onto universities, apprenticeships, FE colleges, 6th forms and employment. The

success of this is indicated by all learners going onto further education, employment or training.

- The ‘Success Centre’ is a highly effective facility enabling pupils with special educational needs or disabilities to receive their bespoke support and interventions they require. In Year 7 the small nurture groups if supported separately initially but integrated as they gain in confidence and skills. As a result of this effective support SEND pupils are making better progress. The academy is rightly proud of the support it offers and has invested considerable time and resources in ensuring that all students achieve their full potential.
- Students spiritual moral social and cultural (SMSC) development is good. The philosophy for children and religious education that all students undertake provides opportunities for students to be reflective about their own beliefs and those of others. There is evidence that pupils debate current issues and have an awareness of different cultures through displays in corridors. Pupils spoken to talk about the fundraising they do for different causes throughout the year. Pupils also access numerous enrichment and extra-curricular activities. Pupils are aware of what constitutes British values and demonstrate their involvement through the numerous responsibility opportunities they take up.
- Safeguarding arrangements are effective. The academy addresses safeguarding well. All staff receive regular training on safeguarding issues and this includes governors and ancillary staff. Students are taught about how to stay safe on line, lead healthy life styles and receive appropriate information on relationships, exploitation and substance abuse. Students say they value this information and guidance. Good relationships with parents are developed and maintained and this helps understanding of issues, which impact positively on pupils safety and behaviour. Pupils and parents overwhelmingly say they feel safe.
- **The governance of the school**
 - is made up of skilled and committed individuals who subscribe to and drive the improvement agenda. They keep abreast of changes in the education landscape by undertaking appropriate training. They play their part in contributing to the strategic planning for the academy and reviewing its performance. Governors appropriately challenge and support to secure improvements.
 - They fulfill statutory requirements and monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements and the provision for SEND pupils and the development of British values.
 - They monitor the impact of expenditure for disadvantaged pupils and evaluate the link between pay and performance for staff, taking difficult decisions if necessary.

Teaching, learning and assessment: **Good**

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good overall with some outstanding practice, ensuring that improved outcomes are being secured.
- Teachers use information they have on pupils to plan activities and develop resources to meet individuals’ needs. Where teaching is most effective, teachers know their pupils well and structure support for learning whilst allowing freedom for exploration. Teacher pupil relationships are positive and habits that support learning are embedded. High expectations of participation and engagement are established and pupils engage well with each other and the

teacher. Many involve themselves in supporting peers who are struggling and they can be observed guiding each other. Pupils take pride in their learning and this shows itself in well-presented and complete work with clear responses to teacher comments.

- There is a clear policy for marking and feedback. Teachers often give detailed advice on how to improve, though the degree to which pupils use this is variable leading to missed opportunities for further learning.
- Literacy has been promoted successfully across the curriculum, Weak literacy skills are addressed from transition onward as evidenced through the focused use of language in lessons. As a result of this, an increasingly secure basis is in place for pupils to access all aspects of the curriculum leading to improved outcomes.
- Teachers use of questioning is often highly effective leading to depth of knowledge and understanding in responses given, though this can still be variable, as evident in lessons in which teachers provide answers themselves or inadvertently lead pupils to what they perceive the 'correct' response to be.
- Reading is promoted successfully throughout the academy and is a strength, for example in Year 7, eighteen boys with reading ages below their chronological age are paired up with Year 11 boys who were also 'on watch' when they were in Year 7. The Year 11 boys hear the Year 7 boys read, help correct any mistakes and discuss content with them. All the boys saw this as a positive, As one Year 11 said 'It makes me read better too...a learning experience for both of us.'
- At Year 12 and 13, a high level of debate and challenge was in evidence in classics and ethics lessons. Learners were confident in exploring ideas and presenting views on range of challenging topics such as the morality of why individuals act in certain way. At Key Stage 4, however, allowing that same independence of thought and speech was limited at times by the lack of time given for pupils to develop their own ideas.
- Where learning is at times less effective, expectations are unclear as are the intended outcomes. Teachers do not use timing appropriately and this can lead to students lacking a sense of urgency and full engagement.
- The academy is developing the teaching of mathematics to secure deeper understanding and mastery. This was more evident lower down the year groups. In a Year 8 lesson, students experimented with laying out counters and measuring distances to develop the idea of locus. Students engaged well, made mistakes, learnt from them and deepened their understanding of the topic. The themed approach to mathematics is showing positive signs of deepening students understanding. Higher up the academy, mathematics is well structured and clearly addressing the gaps in learning students have due to previous poor experiences in the subject. Teachers in Year 11 are guiding and preparing pupils more for examinations than for understanding. Many are learning how to arrive at the correct answer and this is securing the expected progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare: **Good**

- The behaviour of students in all classes observed is good. All students are respectful of their teachers and each other. Lessons are calm and orderly and no disruption was observed during the review.
- Students conduct themselves well around the academy during breaks, between lessons and before and after the academy day.
- As a result of pupils' valuing their learning and the robustness of academy systems to promote attendance it stands at above the national with the numbers being persistently absent being well below the 2015 national average. Personal targets set for individuals and rewards for high attendance are instrumental in securing good attendance. Year 11 students have to secure 96% attendance to gain access to their prom.
- Exclusions are below national averages. A contributing factor to this is the structured and effective way in which an internal support facility is operated. Behavioural issues are dealt with in a restorative and supportive way. The success centre provides a range of bespoke support which meets the needs of individuals and enables them to rapidly and successfully reintegrate into the mainstream provision.
- Students' personal development and welfare are good.
- Students' attitudes to learning are good especially where teachers have high expectations and devise engaging and interesting activities. In a few lessons, where opportunities for learning are offered, but expectations are not made clear some students work in a relaxed way, are less focused on their learning, and make limited progress.
- The academy emphasizes the importance of well-presented and completed work. Most students take pride in their work and make the effort to keep their work well presented and complete.
- Students know how to stay safe when using new technologies. They speak about what constitutes healthy living and how they can avoid risks. Students get on well together and they listen to and respect different opinion. This is reflected in the low incidents of physical and prejudice based bullying.
- Students are polite and most are enthusiastic and articulate in describing their time at the academy when speaking with reviewers.
- All 140 parents in the survey carried out by the academy say the academy keeps their children safe and behavior is well managed.

Outcomes for students/pupils: **Good**

- Outcomes overall are good in the academy. Across a wide range of subjects and year groups students are currently making the progress expected of them. This is in keeping with the continuation of the three year improvement trend leaders and managers have secured. Expected levels of progress in English, given pupils' starting points, are on track to be exceed the 2015 national average and be close to the average for more than expected progress. This is supported by what was seen in lessons and books alongside tracking information held by the academy. For mathematics, for both expected and more than expected progress across year 7 to 10 progress is expected to be good. In Year 11 it is expected to be close to the 2015 national average.
- In post 16 studies the progress learners are making in both academic and vocational studies is good when errors in the un-validated information is corrected. Progress currently, seen by reviewers suggest this will improve further at the end of this academic year.
- Performance for the current Year 11 students is being tracked to be above last years. The proportion on track to secure 5A*-C grades including English and mathematics is due to be just above the 2015 national average. This is for a cohort that came into the academy with English and mathematics that was significantly below the national average. Work scrutinised supports this picture of further improvement. Progress 8 measure for the current Year 11 students is expected to positive.
- Disadvantaged student performance gaps with national others have been reducing year on year. The proportion making expected levels of progress in English and mathematics will close further. Pupils benefiting from pupil premium expenditure will be around half a grade behind others nationally this year but those in mathematics will still be over one and a half grades behind. In Year 10 these gaps are being eradicated for English and reduced significantly for mathematics. In other years the gaps between disadvantaged students and others is being eradicated on some measures and reduced significantly on others.
- The academy subject leaders all have a focus on improving the outcomes of higher ability students and this is having a positive impact. Higher ability pupils are being challenged in all their subjects to address work that will lead them to secure higher outcomes in examinations.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities are receiving very effective support and guidance. This is done through time in the success centre and dedicated mentoring. Their progress across a range of subjects and year groups is positive and judged to be good.

16 to 19 study programmes are **GOOD**

- Leadership and management of post 16 study programmes is effectively driving the improvement of teaching, personal development and outcomes for learners. Learners receive appropriate one to one guidance before setting off on their programmes of study. These include work experience placements for all students and a range of personal development activities to help them prepare for their next steps and life in the real world.

- The quality of teaching is monitored through lesson observation, work scrutiny and learner voice. Teachers observed have strong subject knowledge and where high expectations are clearly driven engagement of students is positive leading to good outcomes. Learners repeating their English and mathematics are supported by having opportunities to revisit topics they covered in Year 11. Whilst many are improving their grades the degree of engagement in lessons is variable.

- Learners are eager to make the most of their learning and speak about positive experiences in lessons. They are positive about the arrangements the academy has in place to support their personal development and preparation for next steps. All students regularly progress onto further education, employment or training. The number going onto University is rising, and for many they are the first ones in their family to do so.

- Outcomes for learners are improving year on year. Value added measures are positive for the majority of courses and for some vocational subjects they are significantly above the national average. Learners overall points scores are high enough to secure placements of their choosing.

Ormiston review team:

Lead reviewer: Pankaj Gulab	Team reviewer: Jacqui Rothery
Team reviewer: Derek Wiles	