

Inspection of a good school: Ormiston Bushfield Academy

Ortongate, Orton, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE2 5RQ

Inspection dates:

3–4 December 2019

Outcome

Ormiston Bushfield Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy learning at Ormiston Bushfield Academy. They are proud to be part of a school community where pupils and staff actively support one another. They benefit from a modern, bright and spacious school building. Leaders take every opportunity to celebrate pupils' achievements. Pupils are happy and safe and attend school regularly. Pupils who are new to the school settle in very quickly.

Leaders have the same high expectations of every pupil, whatever their background. They encourage every pupil to do their best and to model the school's shared values of 'Opportunity, Belief and Aspiration'. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Staff deal swiftly and effectively with the few incidents of bullying that occur.

The school offers a wide range of additional activities for pupils to take part in and most pupils take advantage of these. Leaders prepare pupils well for their next stage of education. They aim to make pupils responsible and caring members of society.

Students in the sixth form are happy that they have chosen to continue their studies in the school. Leaders support them well with their learning, and an increasing proportion go on to continue with their studies in higher education, including at Oxford and Cambridge Universities.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Senior leaders, governors and subject leaders are well supported by the trust. They have put a lot of work into deciding what they want pupils to learn and the order in which pupils will learn new knowledge. This work has been particularly effective in English. Teaching in English ensures that pupils build on their skills and that they regularly revisit topics they have covered before. This helps pupils to learn more. Pupils make very strong progress in English by the end of Year 11.

The curriculum is well developed to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). For example, the Year 7 transition provision demonstrates that leaders have ambitious expectations for all pupils, giving them a very good start to their education in the school.

Leaders have carefully considered how long they want pupils in key stage 3 to study a wide range of subjects before making GCSE choices. Leaders have decided that key stage 3 should last for three years instead of two. Previously, only a small proportion of pupils have chosen to study a modern foreign language at key stage 4. This means that the school is falling short of the government's ambition for the proportion of pupils following an English Baccalaureate (EBacc) course, which includes English, mathematics, science, humanities and a foreign language.

The school promotes pupils' personal development in different ways. Pupils can join a number of clubs, for example in performing arts, chess, sports or debating. The school also gives them opportunities to take on roles and responsibilities, such as being a member of the school council, subject ambassadors or sports captains. Several trips and visits add to the school's curriculum. These include visits within the local area to Burghley House or further afield, such as a trip to Boulogne or an excursion to Italy for pupils to learn skiing. Adults make the most of opportunities to develop pupils' cultural understanding of the wider world in most subjects.

A particularly positive aspect of the school's provision is Atlantis House, which caters very well for the needs of the school's most vulnerable pupils who are at risk of exclusion. Here, pupils follow a carefully constructed study programme which provides them with the necessary skills to overcome the challenges they face.

Leaders expect staff to acknowledge the positive aspects of pupils' behaviour so that more and more pupils want to be seen to be behaving well. Hence, there is very little low-level disruptive behaviour in lessons.

Leaders communicate well with parents and carers. Parents and staff who responded to Ofsted's surveys overwhelmingly support the school's aims. Staff feel supported and have no concerns about their workload.

The sixth form is becoming increasingly popular with pupils in Year 11. They are offered a choice of courses which build on the progress they have made in key stage 4. The curriculum aims to build on the knowledge they have previously gained and develop students' analytical and independent skills. Students make stronger progress in some subjects, such as physics, sociology and English. In 2019, progress was less strong in other subjects, such as photography and history. Some students in history do not achieve the top grades when they are capable of doing so. Students are very happy at school and receive good-quality guidance and support.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have received the necessary training in order to carry out their roles in keeping pupils safe. There is a strong culture of vigilance. Staff understand and use the systems correctly to raise concerns about pupils who might be at risk. Records for such pupils are kept secure and are detailed, including actions taken and whether the issue has been resolved.

The school's systems to check whether staff are suitable to work with children are effective. Checks are recorded and any minor errors found by inspectors were put right immediately. The school site is safe and secure.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school is in a period of transition to a three-year key stage 3. Leaders should consider carefully the curriculum content for pupils who will be in Year 9 next year. As the proportion of pupils following the EBacc route is well below the government's ambition, leaders should also consider how they might increase the uptake of modern foreign languages in key stage 4, particularly as pupils who sit GCSEs in languages achieve highly.
- Some subject leaders have worked well together to identify how their curriculums can complement one another. This is helping pupils in the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills, as well as strengthening pupils' cultural capital. Leaders should pursue this further by mapping out how all subjects contribute towards these aspects.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2012.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	135980
Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	10110258
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	964
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	132
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of the trust	Paul Hann
Principal	Dennis Kirwan
Website	www.bushfield.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	1 March 2016

Information about this school

- Ormiston Bushfield Academy is smaller than the average-sized school. It is situated on the south side of Peterborough. It is part of the Ormiston Academies Trust.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above average. The school also has an above-average proportion of pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium funding.
- The school operates its own inclusion unit called Atlantis House. This provision is solely for pupils of Ormiston Bushfield Academy and is located in a separate building opposite the main school.

Information about this inspection

- We met with the principal and other senior leaders, middle leaders and a regional director of the trust. We had telephone conversations with the director for education for Peterborough City Council and the chair of the governing body.

- We looked in detail at four subjects: English, mathematics, science and history. We visited lessons in these subjects with senior leaders. We also met with teachers, curriculum leaders and pupils, and looked at a sample of pupils' work in these subjects.
- We considered a range of school documentation, including information on behaviour and attendance, minutes of meetings of the governing body and school policies.
- To inspect safeguarding, we scrutinised the school's systems for appointing new members of staff and met with the person who has responsibility for safeguarding pupils in the school. We also evaluated how well the school records concerns it has about pupils who are at risk and the actions it takes to minimise these risks.
- We considered 119 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including 64 free-text responses. We also considered 54 responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupil survey.
- Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors returned to the school on 9 January 2020 to complete the inspection. We held meetings with the school's leaders, had discussions with pupils, visited Atlantis House and other special provision for pupils, and scrutinised some of these pupils' work.

Inspection team

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