

Overton Grange School

36 Stanley Road, Sutton, Surrey SM2 6TQ

Inspection dates	27–28 January 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good academy

- The leadership and management of the academy, including the sixth form is secure. Governors are stringent when holding leaders to account. A culture exists whereby everyone 'takes ownership of pupils'. Consequently, leaders have addressed well the areas for improvement since the last inspection.
- Pupils who receive pupil premium funding, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are making progress similar to their peers.
- The curriculum is diverse. A wide range of extra-curricular activities allows pupils to explore diversity. This develops their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.
- Pupils' attendance is good. They generally behave well and are supportive towards each other. This enables all pupils, including those accessing the hearing impairment resource, to be included well in academy life.
- Achievement at Key Stage 4 in English and mathematics is above average and is particularly strong in science and humanities. However, the decision to enter pupils early for examinations affected the 2015 results. Sixth form achievement is good.
- Teachers have high expectations. They use secure subject knowledge to engage the interest of all pupils, including learners in the sixth form.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are good. Pupils say that they feel safe. They know how to keep safe and to seek the help, care and guidance the academy offers.
- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders and governors undertake appropriate and careful checks on staff, and record information well. Staff undertake regular and effective safeguarding training.

It is not yet an outstanding academy because

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment does not always include highly effective questioning from teachers. As a result, pupils and learners are not always stretched, despite the strong progress they make.
- Pupils do not always behave impeccably and meet the high expectations set by the headteacher. Therefore, the level of exclusions is higher than expected.
- Pupils, and learners in the sixth form, do not achieve as well as they could across all subjects.

Full report

What does the academy need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistent throughout the academy by:
 - ensuring all teachers use highly effective questioning which enables all pupils and learners to make the best progress possible
 - developing the teachers' understanding of the new assessment and information system, so they can provide pupils and learners with detailed information on their progress
 - enabling the most-able pupils and learners to achieve the highest grade outcomes possible in all subjects.
- Improve the attendance of all pupils and learners and further reduce the number of fixed-term exclusions.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher and his senior leaders provide strong and insightful leadership. Leaders and governors are highly evaluative. Since the last inspection, leaders have addressed the areas identified for improvement. They have a thorough understanding of the needs of the academy. Leaders and governors have high expectations of themselves, staff and pupils. Leaders are accurate and astute in their self-evaluation, which is externally checked to ensure priorities are met.
- Staff speak highly of the support and mentoring they receive. Middle leaders understand their roles well. Their focus on ensuring the progress of particular pupil groups is consistent with the expectations set by senior leaders. Middle leaders participate in a range of professional courses. They share good practice and support each other well to develop strong professional links. Middle leaders are actively engaged in the professional development of teachers and support those who are experienced or new to the profession.
- Leaders ensure the pupil premium and catch-up funding is used well. It provides for a good programme of interventions. Consequently, the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils is rising because of effective checking and strict evaluation by leaders. These pupils now make good progress. Gaps between their achievement and that of their peers are small and narrowing against others nationally.
- Senior leaders monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment carefully. Leaders regularly observe teaching. They provide detailed feedback to teachers on their performance. Leaders are thorough and accurate in their assessment of teachers. This enables performance management to reward effective teaching.
- Leaders have established a strong emphasis on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development throughout the academy. Pupils reflect on their own and others' beliefs through a wide range of opportunities. For example, the academy invites outside speakers from different religious groups. Pupils participate in an extensive range of extra-curricular activities. Sporting, musical, cultural and artistic activities develop diversity, understanding of right and wrong, tolerance, and respect for others. External visits throughout the year enhance the citizenship curriculum.
- The curriculum of the academy is very diverse. An effective and careful approach to careers guidance includes guest speakers, independent advice and visits to colleges and universities. Pupils and learners are able to make well-informed choices about the next steps in their lives. Displays are vibrant and aspirational. They promote careers and academic success.
- Leaders and governors have carefully reviewed the curriculum so that it meets well the needs of pupils of all ages, aptitudes and abilities. A careful balance of academic and vocational choices exists. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They have a firm understanding of the importance of democracy and the rule of law. However, leaders acknowledge the necessity to develop even more curriculum flexibility to support those pupils who occasionally demonstrate challenging behaviour.
- Leaders manage the hearing impairment resource well. Pupils from the resource are supported and integrated fully into the main academy. Their curriculum reflects the ethos of the academy to take ownership of all its pupils.
- The academy has efficient and appropriate systems in place to protect its pupils and staff. Leaders are highly focused on ensuring statutory safeguarding requirements are met. They regularly engage with parents to make sure that all pupils are supported and safe.
- Parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire Parent View and those who spoke with inspectors were fundamentally positive. A high proportion would recommend the academy to others. Staff views support that of parents. Staff at the academy say that they are proud to work there.
- **The governance of the academy**
 - Governors perform their statutory duties with meticulous scrutiny and exceptional challenge to leaders. However, such close checking does not always allow flexibility to encourage leaders and staff to excel. Governors ensure that performance management is thorough at all levels. They are well aware of the academy's strengths and areas for improvement.
 - The governing body ensures its members are effectively trained. Governors receive training on their statutory duties, including those of safeguarding, finance, performance information, and health and safety. Governing body meetings are well attended. The headteacher is required to provide regular

and detailed reports on government funding and on the progress and achievement of pupils and learners. Consequently, governors successfully hold the academy to account.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The governor responsible for safeguarding regularly and thoroughly checks the policies and procedures in place.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have worked stringently to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Increased checking of teaching, with accurate feedback, has enabled leaders to identify where the strengths are and to address areas which need further improvement. Tighter consistency in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment now exists across the academy.
- Teachers follow the academy's assessment policy well. They plan lessons effectively using a wide range of assessment information about their pupils. As a result, teachers ensure that pupils and learners make good or better progress. They use homework regularly to consolidate the learning of pupils and learners. Across the academy, the teaching of English and mathematics supports all pupils and learners to progress competently in their learning.
- Literacy and numeracy are promoted with consistency. High-quality visual displays link well to subject areas and frequent opportunities within lessons develop number and communication skills. Close checking by senior and middle leaders provides well-directed interventions and catch-up activities for pupils. Such interventions are precise and focus on the needs and aptitudes of those pupils and learners who require them. Consequently, because of good teaching and assessment, a high majority of pupils and learners now progress well. Pupils who receive pupil premium funding, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are making progress similar to their peers.
- Pupils are clear about the characteristics of teaching and assessment that support strong learning. Pupils told inspectors about the strategies used by leaders to ensure that teaching was effectively matched to the appropriate 'corridor' assessment path which they follow. For example, they told inspectors that in the higher 'corridor groups' the challenge on them increased. Pupils say that they wish to be provided with greater information on the progress they make. A small proportion of pupils were unclear of the rate of their progress in some subject areas. However, all understood they were on track to succeed.
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs, including those with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan, is typically very good. Leaders acknowledged that, occasionally, those pupils who access the hearing impairment resource are not always supported as effectively as they could be. For example, teachers do not always ensure they are fully included in all activities with their peers during lessons.
- All teachers have secure subject knowledge and high expectations. Teachers meet regularly with leaders to discuss the progress made by pupils. Therefore, they are able to share good practice and develop their strategies to extend the learning of those individuals whom they teach. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 is consistent with that in the sixth form. However, the progress made by pupils and learners in modern foreign languages is not as strong as in those other subjects taught across the academy.
- Parents and staff share the view that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. A large proportion of parents and the majority of staff say that pupils are taught well and make good or better progress.
- Where teaching staff use highly effective, lively questioning to stimulate answers, the progress pupils and learners make is substantial. Often, this is because of a high level of independent thinking by pupils and learners or through careful assessment with their peers. However, leaders acknowledge that where teaching, learning and assessment is less strong, it does not stretch as well the learning of pupils, particularly learners in the sixth form. Leaders are accurate in their evaluation of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They now address any variation promptly with appropriate action.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not outstanding. In some subject areas there are inconsistencies in the effectiveness of questioning from teachers. As a result, pupils and learners are not always stretched, despite the strong progress they make.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The academy's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils say that they enjoy the vast majority of lessons. They are self-aware and are provided with a wide range of strategies to promote their own welfare. For example, a well-planned citizenship programme encourages discussions around issues such as extremism and radicalisation, and personal safety. The academy provides clear and impartial careers advice and guidance. Pupils are carefully guided to make appropriate choices for their next stage of education, training or employment.
- Pupils and learners say that they value their education. Opportunities exist to engage in extra-curricular activities including the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, 'Young Enterprise' (a charity focusing on developing personal and business skills) and the academy's debating club. These successfully develop the self-confidence of those who attend.
- Pupils and learners say with confidence that they feel safe in the academy. They understand that the site is secure and there are 'safe zones' if required. Pupils have an awareness of e-safety and are clear on how to seek help and support. They told inspectors about assemblies that have included the dangers of gang violence and how to respect those of different religions and faiths.
- Parents who spoke with inspectors or responded to the Parent View questionnaire confirmed the views of pupils. The vast majority would recommend the academy. Parents agree that the safety of pupils and their personal development and welfare are effectively supported by the academy.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The academy is well maintained with litter-free corridors. Attendance is rising. The number of pupils and learners who are frequently absent has reduced significantly. As a result, attendance is good across the academy and broadly average in comparison to other schools nationally.
- Pupils take pride in their own appearance. Teaching staff encourage them to take a similar pride in their work. Staff provide appropriate interventions where instances of poor presentation occur.
- Staff readily challenge pupils to behave well. Pupils and learners are typically ready to learn, because of being well equipped and punctual to lessons. They have a haste and purpose for learning. Pupils move around calmly and respect the behaviour expectations of the academy. During lessons and lunchtimes, pupils support each other to learn well. When incidents of low-level disruption do occur, staff rapidly resolve them.
- Pupils told inspectors that bullying is rare, although some occasional name-calling occurs. They understand what homophobic bullying is and were confident that it does not exist in the academy. Pupils said that everyone could be 'open' at the academy.
- The academy has taken strong action against a small number of pupils who display challenging behaviour. As a result, the level of fixed-term exclusions is higher than expected. Leaders are exploring opportunities to provide these pupils with a more flexible curriculum to meet their needs. Leaders rightly recognise this as an area for further improvement. Two permanent exclusions have taken place this academic year.
- The behaviour of pupils is not outstanding because pupils' behaviour does not always meet the high expectations set by the headteacher.

Outcomes for pupils are good

- In 2015, the proportion of pupils obtaining five or more good GCSE grades, including English and mathematics, was marginally above the national average. However, this result was based on the academy's philosophy to enter some pupils early for examinations in Key Stage 4. A significantly higher proportion of pupils would have obtained five or more good GCSE grades, including English and mathematics; however, their result was not recorded in government performance tables. Most pupils achieved well in science, and in the academy's specialism, humanities. Leaders acknowledge that their examination entry decision affected the outcomes of pupils. They have correctly decided not to repeat this process. Achievement in the sixth form is good and outcomes for learners are above average for A-level subjects overall.

- The academy now tracks the progress of pupils very closely. Current assessment information reliably indicates that pupils are on track to exceed those standards achieved in 2015. Improved outcomes are expected for all pupils, particularly the most-able pupils, those who are disadvantaged and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs.
- The gap between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and their peers has reduced in recent years, and is now closing significantly. A strong focus on this group of pupils across the academy is having a positive impact. As a result, the gaps in progress between disadvantaged pupils in English and mathematics are now closing in comparison to others nationally. Literacy and numeracy skills are developed well across the academy, preparing pupils very successfully for the next stage of their education. Consequently, the academy does not need to use alternative provision to support the outcomes of its pupils.
- The progress of pupils with special educational needs dipped in 2015, when compared to other years. As a result, leaders have worked hard to ensure that these pupils have been given the additional support they need to make progress, now, similar to that of their peers.
- Pupils in the hearing impairment resource make good progress, similar to their peers with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- In 2015, the most-able pupils achieved results that were below the national average. This was a consequence of the academy's examination entry philosophy. However, leaders have provided a range of training and support to ensure these pupils now perform well. Current assessment information shows that they are outperforming their targets.
- Leaders are accurate in their identification of those groups of pupils who made slower progress than their peers did in 2015, particularly boys, disadvantaged pupils and those studying modern foreign languages. Consequently, the gaps between the various groups have been closed and improvements have been made because of good teaching, learning and assessment.

16 to 19 study programmes

are good

- Leadership and management of the sixth form are good. Leaders ensure that the curriculum in the sixth form is broad and flexible. As a result, learners are able to follow a good range of academic and vocational study programmes. Learners join the sixth form from both the academy and other schools. The 'unique football academy' scholarship scheme enables aspiring footballers to combine A-level studies with a football development programme. Consequently, the sixth form is as inclusive as the rest of the academy. Suitable opportunities exist for learners to participate in work experience, apprenticeships and charity work.
- Learners enter the sixth form with broadly average attainment. They make good progress from their starting points in the majority of subjects. Outcomes in the sixth form are above average for A level and vocational subjects overall. Boys outperform girls in the sixth form, but leaders are working swiftly to reduce any gaps in performance or variation between subjects.
- A proportion of learners enter the sixth form having not attained good GCSE grades in English or mathematics. Those who do so progress well and therefore pass examinations in Year 12.
- Personal development and welfare in the sixth form are strong. Learners talk enthusiastically of their opportunities to learn through enrichment activities. They say that they feel well supported by teachers in a positive atmosphere. The academy provides a good range of events and visits to promote careers, advice and guidance, such as regular visits to universities and apprenticeship workshops. A very high proportion of learners stay in the sixth form for two years, and of those who complete study programmes, all progress well to their next stage of education, training or employment.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the sixth form is good. The majority of teachers use sharp questioning and their secure subject knowledge effectively to deepen learning. Teachers typically have high expectations of learners. However, occasionally in some subjects teachers' questioning and assessment techniques do not stretch and extend the progress of all learners. Leaders appropriately address any variation in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Behaviour in the sixth form is very positive. Learners told inspectors that they feel safe and are aware of the risks in society from gang violence and radicalisation. Attendance in the sixth form is good.
- Outcomes for learners are not yet outstanding because achievement is not consistently high across all subjects.

Academy details

Unique reference number	136756
Local authority	Sutton
Inspection number	10001967

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the academy roll	1,250
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	220
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brenda Morley MBE
Headteacher	Peter Butterworth
Telephone number	0208 239 2383
Website	www.overtongrange.sutton.sch.uk
Email address	overtongrange@overtongrange.sutton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 December 2013

Information about this academy

- Overton Grange School is a larger than average-sized 11 to 18 mixed comprehensive school which became an academy in June 2011. It was last inspected by Ofsted in December 2013, when it was judged to require improvement.
- The academy has a specialism in humanities and a resource for hearing impairment.
- There are fewer girls on roll in the academy than boys.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. Pupil premium is additional funding given to schools for looked after children and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- A higher than average proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is slightly above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with a statement of educational needs or an education, health and care plan is lower than average.
- There are 23 pupils eligible for Year 7 catch-up funding, which is for pupils who did not achieve the expected Level 4 in reading or mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.
- No pupils on the academy's roll receive alternative provision (education in another school or unit).
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 42 part-lessons, many jointly with a member of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also attended tutor-group sessions and a Year 9 assembly. They discussed lessons jointly visited with senior leaders.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, a range of staff, including newly qualified teachers, and groups of pupils and learners in the sixth form. Discussions also took place with parents, the Chair of the Governor Body and two parent governors, and the academy's own improvement partner.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including the work of pupils and learners, records relating to pupils' behaviour and attendance, minutes of meetings, information on the progress made by pupils and learners in the sixth form, the academy's self-evaluation, and records relating to the quality of teaching and the performance of teachers. Inspectors also reviewed safeguarding records, policies and procedures, including the single central record of checks made on staff.
- Inspectors took into account 117 parents' responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and questionnaires completed by 81 members of staff and 23 pupils.

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