

Inspection of Ormiston SWB Academy

Dudley Street, Bilston WV14 0LN

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 November 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Sixth-form provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils and staff are proud of how their school has improved. Ormiston SWB Academy is a happy place to be. The school's C.O.R.E values of character, organisation, resilience and excellence run through every facet of school life. All staff expect the best from pupils in everything they do. Pupils are rising to this challenge.

Leaders have addressed previous shortcomings in pupils' behaviour. They have established clear routines and expectations that everyone understands. Staff reiterate and reinforce these expectations fairly, calmly and consistently. Internal and external suspensions have reduced significantly. Pupils know how to behave well. They are polite and courteous to each other, staff and visitors. Staff continue to work to raise standards even further.

Through the C.O.R.E values, leaders have created a school community that is respectful of all. Pupils learn to treat everyone equally. They recognise that things can go wrong, and that bullying can and does sometimes happen. When it does, pupils trust their teachers to sort it out quickly to help put things right.

Life at school extends well beyond the academic. Pupils can, and many do, participate in a wide range of clubs and activities, from learning sign language to Scalextric club.

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

The school is well led. The principal and senior leaders have taken action to improve the whole school. They have been successful. Their ambition has spread throughout the community. Leaders and staff have benefited from the support provided by the multi-academy trust. Everyone is working together to drive continued improvement.

Leaders have made significant changes to the curriculum. It is fit for purpose and serves pupils well. Leaders have changed the key stage 3 curriculum so that it is broad and deep. For instance, pupils now study a modern foreign language until at least the end of Year 9. Pupils in key stages 4 and 5 choose from a range of academic and vocational courses. These are ambitious and varied. Pupils in Year 11 and students in Year 13 can gain the qualifications that help them take their next steps.

Not enough pupils currently gain the qualifications that make up the English Baccalaureate (EBacc). This is because too few pupils take a modern foreign language qualification. Leaders have strengthened this area of the curriculum and their work is beginning to bear fruit. As a result, pupils are increasingly positive about the benefits of learning a language.

Leaders have constructed effective subject curriculum plans in all key stages. They have thought carefully about the best way to order learning. As a result, pupils learn

new knowledge that builds on what they have learned before. In the best instances, such as geography and English, leaders have broken plans down in detail. This means that teachers know which are the most important concepts for pupils to understand. This clarity helps pupils connect new knowledge with other things they have learned. In a few subjects this is not the case. Here, while the curriculum is well sequenced, it lacks detail. Plans lack a sharp focus on the key building blocks of knowledge. As a result, pupils do not develop a deeper understanding through connecting their knowledge.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They expect pupils with SEND to learn the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. Staff adjust lessons so that this happens. Staff know pupils with SEND well. They are alert to each pupil's specific needs.

Leaders give staff time to talk about teaching. Teachers use this time well. They plan lessons together, learning from each other. They think about how best to explain new knowledge to pupils. Teachers use common approaches to continually check on pupils' understanding. As a result, they address pupils' misconceptions quickly and provide prompt support.

Leaders have prioritised reading. Displays, posters and a vibrant central library promote reading. Teachers read to pupils regularly with gusto. In lessons, teachers encourage pupils to read. For instance, in science, pupils regularly read scientific articles. Sixth-form students are 'reading buddies' to younger pupils. Pupils who need support to improve their phonics knowledge get the help they need.

Leaders have built an impressive personal development curriculum, called the C.O.R.E programme. This covers all aspects of personal development, from careers to online safety to diversity and equality. Leaders provide all pupils, including sixth-form students, with a rich range of experiences. The curriculum encompasses tutor time, weekly timetabled lessons and five dedicated 'C.O.R.E days'. Pupils from all year groups, including sixth-form students spoke to inspectors enthusiastically about the C.O.R.E curriculum. They enjoy and value it highly.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is a strength of the school. Staff are well trained and alert to any sign that a pupil may be at risk of harm. They report any concern, no matter how small. Staff record all concerns in writing, and these are kept securely. Safeguarding leaders act on information swiftly and without delay.

The C.O.R.E curriculum gives pupils the information they need to keep themselves safe. For instance, pupils clearly understand what harmful sexual behaviour is, and what to do if they are concerned about a friend. They know where they can get help and trust that they will be listened to.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Currently, too few pupils have chosen to study a modern foreign language at key stage 4. This means that the proportion of pupils completing the EBacc is too low, and it has not been at the heart of the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that they follow through on their existing plans, so a greater proportion of pupils complete the EBacc.
- In a small number of subjects, curriculum plans are not sufficiently detailed and do not explicitly identify the key pieces of knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. In addition, these plans do not make clear how new knowledge will be integrated with what pupils have learned previously. This means that pupils are not able to make the connections they need to develop a deeper understanding. Leaders should ensure that all curriculum plans provide teachers with the necessary detail so that pupils can learn the curriculum well.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 the school and 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	145008
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	10201068
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	1,121
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	71
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paul Hann
Principal	Rod Hughes
Website	https://ormistonswbacademy.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is sponsored by the Ormiston Academies Trust, which it joined in July 2017.
- The school currently uses two registered alternative providers and has its own internal alternative provision which it opened in September 2021.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported through pupil premium funding is above average.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause. This means that pupils in Years 8 to 13 receive information about the full range of education and training options open to them. This includes opportunities for a range of education and training providers to speak to pupils about technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- During the inspection, inspectors held discussions with the principal and other senior and middle leaders, including curriculum and pastoral leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and those responsible for post-16 education.
- Inspectors held discussions with teachers, members of the local governing body and representatives of the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in mathematics, English, modern foreign languages, science, geography, health and social care and religious education. For each of these subjects, inspectors met with subject leaders, carried out visits to lessons, spoke to pupils and looked at some of their work.
- Inspectors visited a careers fair and a range of lessons delivering the school's C.O.R.E day programme.
- Inspectors met with members of staff individually and in groups and spoke to pupils formally and informally at various points in the inspection. Inspectors took account of responses to pupil and staff surveys, as well as Ofsted Parent View.
- An inspector visited the school-based alternative provision and spent time talking to leaders at the one of the external alternative providers used by the school.
- Inspectors looked at records relating to behaviour, bullying, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding arrangements by checking the school's approach to staff recruitment, scrutinising policy documents and meeting with the designated safeguarding lead.

Inspection team

Ian Tustian, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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