

George Salter Academy

Davey Road, West Bromwich, West Midlands B70 9UW

Inspection dates

17–18 May 2017

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	Inadequate

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have the capacity to successfully drive improvements at the school. They respond quickly and robustly to improve the school. Leaders have, with the support of Ormiston Academies Trust, successfully tackled the safeguarding concerns identified at the previous inspection.
- The school's culture of safeguarding is exemplary. Pupils benefit from high levels of care and support.
- Leaders make sure the curriculum meets the needs and aspirations of pupils and prepares them very well for the next steps in their education, training or employment.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and are passionate and enthusiastic in lessons.
- In lessons, pupils often benefit from effective questioning that encourages them to think about their work and learn from each other.
- Overall outcomes at the end of Year 11 and 13 are at least as good as the national average. For some pupil groups, and in some subjects, they are better than this.
- There are still some variations in outcomes for some groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils.
- Some teachers do not alter their plans effectively in response to how well pupils are doing during lessons.
- Leaders' actions have yet to improve the attendance of some groups of pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, attendance of some groups of pupils is too low.
- Current systems to encourage and reward pupils do not motivate them sufficiently well.

Full report

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further strengthen leadership by establishing clearer links between self-evaluation and development plans.
- Further improve the impact of teaching on learning across the school by:
 - ensuring that teachers check pupils' understanding during lessons and use this more effectively to shape learning
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their resilience by reflecting and learning from any errors they make.
- Successfully tackle the remaining differences in the performance of different groups of pupils in the school.
- Drive improvements in attendance across all key stages by working with pupils who are frequently absent from school and their families so that the attendance of these pupils is improved.
- Ensure that the culture of high expectations is reinforced through the development of rewards that recognise and incentivise pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The principal, senior leaders and the interim advisory board (IAB) are ambitious for the school and are leading improvements effectively. They have taken rapid and robust action to successfully address the safeguarding concerns identified at the last inspection. There is well-established capacity within all levels of leadership to further improve the overall effectiveness of the school.
- Middle leaders understand their roles and have a clear focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning to improve outcomes for pupils. They routinely analyse performance information and use this to identify additional actions that they need to take. Middle leaders are enthusiastic and fully involved in the school's development. Senior leaders regularly check middle leaders' progress. Middle leaders have the capacity to continue to improve the school.
- Staff are supportive of the decisions leaders make and work hard to support them. Staff benefit from training and development opportunities, which strengthen their skills to meet leaders' expectations. There is a culture of high expectations and staff are held accountable, but they are appropriately supported to achieve.
- Leaders have a clear rationale about how the school's curriculum is developing. They ensure that the curriculum is successful through a variety of ways, including how successfully pupils move on to destinations when they leave school. The school's option process provides pupils with the opportunity to study subjects that can lead to the English Baccalaureate. An increasing proportion of pupils are studying for these qualifications as a result of changes to the options pathways.
- Leaders ensure that the school offers a wide range of extra-curricular activities including sports and arts clubs. They check carefully which pupils engage with these opportunities. Along with the taught curriculum, the additional activities the school provides make a strong contribution to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural education.
- Leaders continue to benefit from support provided by Ormiston Academies Trust (OAT). Sharply focused help has effectively supported leaders' actions to improve the culture of safeguarding at the school. As leaders' capacity in this regard has grown, the level of support has been reduced appropriately. Leaders also benefit from well-established networks with colleagues in other schools within the trust.
- Leaders use pupil premium funding to address the barriers disadvantaged pupils face. Funds are spent well on a variety of programmes to support pupils academically and pastorally. Although differences between outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally remain, they are closing.
- There are clear procedures for identifying pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities before they start at the school, and once they are there. Extra funding is used well, for example, to train teachers about ways to support pupils with additional needs in class. Clear information about the changing needs of pupils is shared with teachers so they keep up to date.

- The Year 7 catch-up funding is used effectively to support pupils who enter the school with low attainment in English and/or mathematics. Pupils receive in-class and small-group support. The support is effective, for example, by accelerating pupils' reading ages so they catch up with their peers.
- Leaders' judgements about how well the school is doing are accurate. They can provide evidence to support their evaluation. As a result, strategic actions are planned and appropriately prioritised in response to areas that require further improvement. However, the school's formal self-evaluation document does not reflect the careful and objective analysis of evidence that leaders demonstrate. It is not fully clear how self-evaluation links to leaders' strategic plans.

Governance of the school

- The IAB has been responsible for governance at the school since the previous inspection. Members of the IAB meet regularly to review how well the school is doing. They use the detailed information that leaders provide to monitor progress and their extensive skills and knowledge of the school to effectively hold leaders to account. The IAB has been instrumental in the rapid progress the school has made regarding the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection.
- The members of the IAB understand their key responsibilities for ensuring that pupils in the school are safe. They check that the school's policies and procedures relating to the safeguarding of pupils are followed. They maintain an oversight of how well safeguarding referrals are dealt with. The IAB is able to ensure that the school's arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The IAB carefully scrutinises how well the additional funding the school receives is spent, and ensures that it is directed to improving pupils' outcomes. For example, the IAB receives reports about how the pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding are spent, and their positive impact on pupils' progress.
- Members of the IAB have a clear and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, they have not been fully involved in production of the school's formal self-evaluation document.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff are much more confident regarding their roles and responsibilities for ensuring that pupils are safe than they were at the time of the previous inspection. They perceive pupils to be much safer than before. Parents agree with this point of view. Staff identify a huge positive change in safeguarding culture at the school. Changes to procedures introduced since the previous inspection are well embedded. There is a well-established culture whereby safeguarding cases are reviewed and evaluated. This contributes to the impact of safeguarding procedures becoming further refined and improved.
- Staff use an electronic system to record safeguarding issues and subsequent actions. This record provides detailed information about steps taken to support pupils. Such records are invaluable in providing comprehensive information when communicating

with external support agencies, when required. Staff continue to meet regularly to discuss safeguarding, ensuring constant accountability. Additionally, the immediacy of such communication strengthens the coordination of responses from a range of staff.

- Leaders are now focused on early identification of pupils who are vulnerable in order to reduce the proportion of safeguarding referrals. Leaders monitor how well these pupils are doing at the school. They put support in place to reduce the impact of identified vulnerabilities on progress.
- The exemplary ways that the school leads and manages safeguarding are now used as best practice within OAT. Consequently, pupils in other schools benefit from this school's approach to safeguarding.
- Leaders have clear procedures to address any concerns they receive. Senior leaders investigate these and the principal shares clear information with concerned parents. Many parents are extremely positive about most aspects of the school. A small minority do not feel able to approach leaders in the first instance to discuss their concerns. The principal is aware of this, and is working hard to remedy the situation.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- A good standard of teaching, learning and assessment has been maintained since the previous inspection.
- Where teaching is most effective, teachers are lively and enthusiastic, which is infectious. As a result, pupils participate in lessons and are keen to learn. Pupils say the lessons they enjoy the most use a variety of different activities. They make progress as a result. There are strong relationships between pupils and adults in the classroom, which contribute to a positive learning environment.
- Teachers use their subject knowledge to introduce pupils to specialist key terms and phrases within lessons. This expands pupils' vocabulary and develops their confidence in using technical language when answering questions.
- Teachers make sure that they take opportunities in lessons to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, in geography, pupils have the opportunity to reflect on how human activity impacts on other people. In history, pupils consider how attitudes towards other people have changed with the abolition of slavery. Similar opportunities exist to promote British values.
- Teachers carry out regular formal assessments of pupils. They use these to monitor how well pupils are doing and the progress they make. As a result, teachers know their pupils well and take account of this in the lessons that they plan. Pupils are initially provided with work, which is appropriate for their starting points. For example, high prior-attaining pupils are routinely expected to complete more challenging tasks at the start of lessons than other pupils.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively in lessons to target pupils identified for additional support. They use questions and additional resources to support learning and make sure the pupils they work with are able to learn.
- Teachers generally use excellent questioning skills that encourage discussion and thought. Pupils regularly contribute to learning through the answers they give, and

often these answers benefit the learning of their classmates. For example, in mathematics lessons, when using mini-whiteboards to answer questions, teachers will select different answers and encourage the class to consider where different answers have come from, and which one is correct.

- Teachers carefully consider pupils' progress over time in their planning. However, not all teachers judge effectively how well pupils are doing during the lesson. As a result, teachers do not adapt their plans to suit pupils' needs as the lesson develops. This means that sometimes pupils move on to new learning before they have mastered previous work, or that they can spend too long on tasks, which does not challenge them appropriately. As a consequence, pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to learn from any errors or mistakes. This slows their development of resilience, leading to disengagement from learning for some.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders make sure that high levels of care and support exist for pupils. Pupils who are most vulnerable benefit from high-quality and timely additional support. This includes effective specialist intervention by organisations external to the school. Leaders identify and carefully monitor pupils who may become vulnerable. They intervene to address issues as they arise. Pupils say that there are adults they would talk to at school if they felt that they were at risk or had any problems. Pupils are also mindful of their peers and share any concerns about them appropriately and sensitively.
- Pupils benefit from an extensive and wide-ranging programme that helps them learn about ways to keep themselves safe and well. This includes mental health, knife crime and the risks posed by extreme views. Pupils have a much more highly developed sense of how to keep themselves safe in a range of different situations than they did at the time of last inspection.
- Opportunities to contribute to pupils' personal social and health education and promote British values are carefully mapped and effectively delivered through the curriculum. For example, a knife crime drama performance created by sixth-form students contributes to their qualification and heightens awareness of this important topic among other pupils. Additional sessions are carefully scheduled throughout the year to enrich pupils' experiences.
- The small number of pupils who attend Sandwell College for part of the week behave well and are safe. A member of school staff who ensures their personal development, behaviour and welfare when at college accompanies pupils.
- Leaders ensure that a wide range of clubs, trips and other activities are available outside lessons. Pupils' personal development benefits from participating in extra-curricular activities because they strengthen relationships with each other and their teachers. Relationships between pupils and their peers, and with staff, in lessons are mostly also positive. For example, there are extremely high rates of pupil participation in practical physical education lessons.

- Pupils benefit from a well-planned programme of careers information, advice and guidance. The programme also raises aspirations and provides pupils with information and experiences about a full range of options available to them. As a result, pupils are able to make well-informed choices about the next steps in their education. The proportion of pupils who successfully move on to sixth form, college, university or further training at the end of Year 11 and Year 13 is high.
- Pupils are tolerant and respectful of each other. They know that abusive and discriminatory behaviour are unacceptable. Pupils say sometimes inappropriate language is used between pupils when staff are not around to hear it. Pupils state that bullying is uncommon, and should it occur, they have confidence in adults at the school to address it appropriately.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils move around the school site sensibly and arrive at their lessons promptly. Their conduct at social times is generally calm and orderly. Pupils say that they value the high levels of staff supervision and they feel safe in all areas of the school.
- Pupils show pride in their school by wearing their uniform correctly and neatly. They keep the environment free from damage and litter. Pupils take pride in their work and their books are neat and tidy.
- Rates of exclusion have increased sharply earlier this year as a result of higher expectations of conduct. The proportion of pupils excluded from the school has now started to decline as behaviour improves. There has also been an increase in the number of pupils permanently excluded from the school this year. Leaders carefully consider permanent exclusion, used only as a last resort, and in response to incidents that merit it.
- Pupils' attendance continues to be slightly better than the national average for all pupils. Leaders routinely analyse information about pupils' attendance. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are absent much more often than other pupils. Leaders have introduced many measures to tackle low rates of attendance, but some pupils continue to be regularly absent. Leaders continue to prioritise actions to tackle the reasons that still cause some pupils to miss school.
- Leaders have introduced a system to monitor pupil behaviour in school. Much more information about pupils' behaviour is collected and routinely analysed than at the time of the last inspection. Leaders use this information to identify actions to improve poor behaviour. Pupils are clear about how this system should be used but identify some inconsistencies in how well this system works. For example, the positive reward points pupils receive are not incentivising them sufficiently to improve.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- GCSE results in 2016 show that pupil' rates of progress in English, mathematics and a range of other subjects were similar to that of all pupils nationally. Overall rates of

progress in subjects that contribute towards the English Baccalaureate were below the national average. This was because some pupils did not study enough of these subjects. The proportion of pupils who are entered for these qualifications is higher this year, which will contribute positively to overall progress.

- The proportion of pupils achieving GCSEs at grades A* to C in English and mathematics in 2016 was similar to the national average. Pupils' average attainment across a range of subjects was also similar to all pupils nationally. The proportion of pupils who achieved the English Baccalaureate was just above the national average. Comparison of current pupils to the previous cohort at the same point last year demonstrates that most pupil groups are better placed this year. However, in mathematics low prior-attaining pupils are performing less well. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
- Leaders' analysis of school assessment information identifies that rates of progress increase for younger pupils across a range of subjects.
- Currently, high prior-attaining pupils are making more progress in a range of subjects than they did in the past. Leaders' analysis shows less precisely how well high prior-attaining pupils are doing in English and mathematics. This is due to limited information about the standards required for the highest grades in new assessments in English and mathematics. Pupils with low levels of prior attainment are now making more progress than before in science and humanities.
- The very small number of pupils who complete some of their education at a different location are achieving well. They make good progress towards qualifications that prepare them well for the next stage of their education.
- The progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities that are supported by the school was below that of other pupils in 2016. As a result of improved rates of progress for current pupils, these differences are reducing, but still present.
- In 2016 disadvantaged pupils in Year 11 made, on average, about one third of a grade less progress than other pupils nationally. Also, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who achieved the English Baccalaureate was much lower than for other pupils. The impact of the pupil premium funding is improving because the progress and attainment of current disadvantaged pupils is better. Differences are reducing, but they still remain.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Leaders of post-16 provision have high expectations of students in the sixth form. Their leadership has a positive impact on teaching and outcomes.
- In 2016, students' overall outcomes in academic qualifications were well above the national average. Progress was outstanding in psychology, business, law and history and similar to the national average in many other subjects. Leaders' monitoring information of students currently in the sixth-form predicts similarly strong outcomes overall this year.
- Sixth-form leaders ensure a wide range of academic and applied general qualifications are available for students. This range meets students' interests and aspirations.

Students are particularly proud of the range of non-qualification activities that are available to them such as the 'electives' programme. These opportunities contribute to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students identify many opportunities to contribute to the school and develop their leadership skills. The school's sixth form meets the requirements of 16 to 19 study programmes.

- Students who start the sixth form without a grade C or above in English and/or mathematics are required to follow a course to improve their grade. They make good progress in these qualifications, particularly in English.
- Clear and helpful careers information, advice and guidance successfully supports many students to gain places in university. Others successfully secure other forms of education, employment or training after leaving the sixth form. Students who leave the sixth form before the end of Year 13 are carefully supported to find alternative courses or suitable training or employment. Many students benefit from participating in work experience placements.
- Where learning is most effective, teachers use information about students' starting points to plan lessons that develop learning and understanding. For example, teachers use their knowledge of how well students are doing to target questions with an appropriate level of challenge. Then they use these pupils' answers to develop the understanding of other students. In some applied general lessons, where students are completing assignments that contribute towards their final grades, teachers do not routinely expect the same rates of progress as they do in taught lessons. This slows down the progress that some students make.
- Students' progress in applied general qualifications was well below the national average in 2016. Leaders regularly use assessment information to identify which students are falling behind, put appropriate support in place and monitor its impact. Leaders' analysis suggests that this has proved effective. This is because the difference between outcomes in academic and applied general qualifications looks set to reduce this year.
- Students' attendance at school is too low, although improving. Students whose attendance or punctuality do not meet expectations are more closely monitored in these respects.

School details

Unique reference number	135234
Local authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	10021070

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1270
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	277
Appropriate authority	Ormiston Academies Trust
Chair	Mr Frank Green
Principal	Mr Pank Patel
Telephone number	0121 553 4665
Website	www.georgesalter.com/
Email address	info@georgesalter.com
Date of previous inspection	2–3 March 2016

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- Ormiston Academies Trust (OAT) sponsors the school.
- The school is larger than the average secondary school and has a sixth form.

- Pupils enter the school with levels of prior attainment which are below the national average. Prior attainment levels are increasing for younger pupils.
- Two out of every 5 pupils are supported by the pupil premium. This proportion is much higher than average.
- There is a very high proportion of pupils from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. An above average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- An average proportion of pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health or care plan. One in every 5 pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities supported by the school. This proportion is much higher than average.
- A very small number of pupils attend alternative provision at Sandwell College for part of the week.
- The school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11 and by the end of 16 to 19 study programmes, in 2016.
- Two principals shared leadership responsibility for the school following the departure of the principal who was in post when the previous inspection took place. A new principal took up post in September 2016. There have been changes and clarification of roles and responsibilities of leaders in the school.
- The governing body was disbanded and replaced by an interim advisory board (IAB) shortly after the previous inspection. The IAB monitor and evaluate the progress the school is making and hold leaders to account.
- There was a period of change in staffing following the previous inspection. There is now more stability in staff working at the school. Teachers who are new to the school this year include new and recently qualified teachers as well as those with more experience. Now, vacancies arise due to promotion of staff or as a result of leaders' decisions to seek additional capacity. Leaders expect the school to be fully staffed for the new academic year.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 34 lessons, 11 of which were carried out with members of the school's senior leadership team. Lessons covered a wide range of subjects and year groups. An inspector visited an assembly. Inspectors visited nurture and inclusion facilities. Inspectors also evaluated pupils' behaviour between lessons and at social times.
- Inspectors reviewed pupils' work in lessons.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders, including those with responsibility for safeguarding, members of the IAB and a representative from OAT, the school's sponsor.
- Inspectors evaluated leaders' analysis of responses from parents to a school questionnaire and spoke to some parents. Inspectors took into account the views of staff, meeting with them, for example, to provide feedback after observing lessons and through school staff questionnaires.
- Pupils met formally with inspectors on two occasions. Inspectors evaluated the responses for pupils to a school questionnaire and also conducted many informal discussions with pupils during lessons and at social times.
- Inspectors reviewed a variety of documentation including school policies, self-evaluation and action plan documents and information about attendance, behaviour, outcomes and teaching and learning.

Inspection team

Rob Hackfath, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lois Kelly	Ofsted Inspector
Eddie Wilkes	Ofsted Inspector
Graeme Rudland	Ofsted Inspector
Linda McGill	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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