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Simon Firth
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Dear Mr Firth

Serious weaknesses monitoring inspection of Oasis Academy Lord's Hill

This letter sets out the findings from the monitoring inspection that took place on 15 October 2025, on behalf of His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills. The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and was the second monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses following the graded (section 5) inspection that took place in June 2024.

The purpose of a monitoring inspection is not to grade the school's key and (where applicable) provision judgements, but to identify and report on the school's progress. It is to highlight to the school and parents any improvements that school leaders have made since the school's previous graded inspection.

During the inspection, Simon Graydon, His Majesty's Inspector (HMI), Chris Parker (HMI) and I discussed with you and other senior leaders, other staff, the chief executive officer (CEO) of the trust, the chair of trustees and the local authority the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent graded inspection. We discussed the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. We also visited lessons, observed the start of the school day, visited tutor time, and observed breaktimes and lunchtimes. We also met members of staff and spoke to groups of pupils. We reviewed the school's single central record, scrutinised documents relating to safeguarding, and reviewed various documents, including the school's action plan. I have considered all this in coming to my judgement.

Leaders have made progress to improve the school, but more work is necessary for the school to no longer be judged as having serious weaknesses.

The progress made towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation

Since the previous monitoring visit, leaders have made key staffing changes to oversee important improvement priorities. These additions have strengthened leadership capacity and demonstrated leaders' integrity and commitment to sustainable school improvement.

Informed and knowledgeable leaders have a clear and ambitious vision to improve the quality of education. Leaders have established robust systems for curriculum planning, quality assurance, and professional learning and development. They use pupils' achievement information more effectively to identify those at risk of falling behind. Teachers have begun addressing these gaps through adaptive teaching strategies in lessons and catch-up support in key stage 4. Leaders recognise that some staff need ongoing support to use pupil achievement data more effectively to identify pupils who need extra help to fulfil their potential.

Teachers now implement the curriculum more consistently, although some variability remains. Most teachers explain new concepts well and use appropriate subject-specific language. When teaching is most effective, teachers design learning to correct errors in pupils' understanding. However, previous weaknesses in teaching have left some pupils with significant knowledge gaps. At times, teachers fail to check precisely what pupils know and remember from prior learning. They sometimes introduce new ideas before pupils secure foundational knowledge. Misconceptions, particularly among pupils with the largest gaps, can go unaddressed. Leaders acknowledge the need to support staff further to implement the curriculum effectively.

Reading provision has improved rapidly since the last visit. Leaders prioritise helping pupils to become confident and articulate readers. The school has selected a range of engaging books. It has increased dedicated time for pupils to practise reading skills. During these sessions, staff apply their enhanced training to help pupils understand new vocabulary. Pupils speak positively about these lessons, although it is too early to evaluate the full impact on pupils' reading fluency and comprehension.

Leaders have acted to improve provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff receive guidance on high-quality teaching strategies that support all pupils, including those with SEND. Teachers receive detailed information about pupils' needs. However, some strategies remain too general and fail to target specific needs. There is variability in how effectively teachers use pupil information to adapt their teaching. As a result, some pupils with SEND do not learn as well as they should.

Leaders have taken deliberate, pupil-centred steps to improve behaviour across the school. Clear routines, such as structured line-ups at the start of the day, create a calm and orderly beginning, especially for younger pupils. Most staff consistently reinforce expectations during lessons. Pupils say that behaviour in lessons has improved because

staff apply the rules more fairly. Most lessons are now calm and without disruption, allowing pupils to focus on learning.

During unstructured times like breaktime and lunchtime, staff do not consistently model or insist on high expectations of behaviour. Consequently, some pupils experience boisterous or unfriendly behaviour from their peers. The school is addressing this by increasing staff vigilance and introducing a split lunch schedule to provide more space for pupils to play.

As classroom behaviour has stabilised, suspensions have decreased, including repeat suspensions. The school now identifies barriers faced by frequently suspended pupils more precisely. Staff design tailored interventions, informed by specialist advice, to help pupils engage positively with education. Some of this work is in the early stages. Consequently, a smaller group of pupils still receive frequent suspensions.

The school and trust recognise poor attendance as one of the most significant barriers to pupils' academic success. Despite the implementation of a multi-layered approach to improving attendance, too many pupils, especially pupils who are disadvantaged and/or in older year groups continue to miss school. Leaders understand the challenges some families face and work tenaciously with the local authority to overcome them. For example, to help pupils where transport is a particular issue, the school is now operating a minibus service to ensure pupils can get to and from school safely and regularly. Leaders have also adjusted the school day to raise expectations around punctuality.

The school's approach targets the many factors that influence attendance. There is inconsistency in how effectively staff engage with families when pupils' attendance starts to fall. Targeted support for pupils who are persistently absent is not consistently effective. Leaders recognise this and are providing guidance for staff to do this more confidently. The trust is recruiting new staff to strengthen attendance efforts. The school is now working more effectively with the local authority and other professionals to secure successful support for pupils with very poor attendance.

Trust governance has strengthened strategic planning. School leaders collaborate closely with the trust's monitoring and evaluation team to assure the quality of the school's work. Staff report positively on professional development and workload. Leaders have invested in leadership training at all levels to ensure sustainable improvement. The trust helps the school to be outward facing, working with other trust schools to collaborate and share best practices.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, and the CEO or equivalent of Oasis Community Learning trust, the Department for Education's regional director and the director of children's services for Southampton. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Michelle Payne
His Majesty's Inspector