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Ormiston Academies Trust
AN OAT ACADEMY



How are we doing at Cowes Enterprise College?

SEF 2023-2024

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Introduction

Overall effectiveness	Good	
The quality of education	Good	
Behaviour and attitudes	Good	
Personal development	Outstanding	
Leadership and management	Good	
Sixth form provision	Good	
Outcome from previous Ofsted inspection	Good	March 2023

Cowes Enterprise College is an 11-19 co-educational non-selective academy located in Cowes on the Isle of Wight. Ofsted graded us as ‘good’ in every category in 2017 and we remain a good school following an ungraded inspection in March 2023. CEC is part of the Ormiston Academies Trust which contains 7 primary schools, 32 secondary schools, 1 special school and 3 alternative provision schools. We have over 1250 students on roll.

We are a community centred school and fully reflect our community in terms of our intake. Our students, of whom the majority are white British, display a wide range of prior attainment abilities. We have 54% of our students being male. The number of students who have received free school meals within a period of 6 years sits at about the national average and we have above national average numbers of students with special educational needs or disabilities, with the main categories being students with social, emotional and mental health needs, specific learning difficulties and moderate learning difficulties.

Our long-term strategy sets out our ambition for the academy as we move forward. We believe that it is our relentless drive to improve our students’ experiences that results in their progression to excellent routes beyond school. The quality of relationships within the academy – between groups of students and staff – is tangible evidence of our ethos in practice. As a result, our students learn well and are well prepared for a successful future life.

Executive summary

Overall effectiveness	Good	
The quality of education	Good	
<p>“Pupils benefit a great deal from coming to this school” (Ofsted, March 2023). Data shows that the majority of students are making good or better progress. Our curriculum is rooted in high expectations and is inclusive, broad and stretching. We are inclusive by making appropriate adaptations for students to enable them to study the full suite of subjects, plus delivering high quality literacy interventions through a variety of structures. We are broad through a three-year Key Stage 3 which delivers 17 subjects, also offering 22 at Key Stage 4. Also, our EBACC entry level has risen from 11% to 96%. We stretch through our challenging curriculum which includes the award-winning Maritime Futures curriculum.</p>		
Behaviour and attitudes	Good	
<p>“Classrooms are purposeful and the school site is calm” (Ofsted, March 2023). We have strong pastoral structures and systems in place to support behaviour interventions and actively teach what good behaviour is. We discipline with dignity and our students are ready, respectful and safe. Bullying is rare and we deal with it quickly, consistently and effectively. Clear and effective attendance systems are embedded and pre-COVID, attendance and persistent absence were better than the national average. The school tracks and intervenes to improve behaviour through the Success Centre’s Inclusion team and engagement of external services.</p>		
Personal development	Outstanding	
<p>“A thoughtful and comprehensive personal development programme nurtures their understanding of the world beyond the school and the island that they live on. Pupils describe this learning as timely and helpful” (Ofsted, March 2023). We have been awarded the Wellbeing Award for Schools, the Quality in Careers Standard and the Gold Eco- Schools Green Flag Award. We deliver a guaranteed set of enrichment activities through and beyond the curriculum including through Yr7-13 student charters. Ten staff members are trained in ELSA and 2 qualified mental health practitioners are based on site. An excellent Everyone Matters (E1M) provision for years 7-13 ensures a coherent and broad personal development curriculum is in place. All students at Key Stage 3 are involved in social action projects through the timetabled curriculum. Student leadership is well established and students form part of the larger OAT regional and national Student Leadership Council in addition to a variety of CEC student-led committees.</p>		
Leadership and management	Good	
<p>“Leaders’ aspirations for pupils are uncompromising”; “Staff are exceptionally positive about working at this school and about the support that they receive” (Ofsted, March 2023). Leaders are highly ambitious and a clear vision for providing high-quality, inclusive education is realised through strong, shared values, policies and practices. The steady rise in KS4 and KS5 results over time, taking the school from below average to average, demonstrate that the academy’s work is well focused and impactful. The number of students successfully completing programmes of study at Key Stage 5 is above average, as is the number of students staying in education or entering employment at the end of both Key Stage 4 and 5. The academy has grown by over 17% in student numbers and is now the school of choice across the Island. We are the HISP Teaching School regional hub. Our annual workload staff survey shows positive outcomes against national benchmarking. Senior leaders are supported and held to account by governors and OAT through robust structures. Safeguarding is effective.</p>		
Sixth form provision	Good	
<p>“Pupils gain vital knowledge that prepares them well for a successful future life” (Ofsted, March 2023). Cowes Sixth form is ambitious for all its students and standards have risen significantly over time, with our average A Level grade currently sitting at a B-. We work closely with external providers and leaders ensure the sixth form curriculum is sequenced towards coherently planned skills and knowledge development to facilitate success with future learning and employment. The average grade achieved at A Level is a B- in 2024. Student destinations are diverse and ambitious including medicine, degree-level apprenticeships and seven consecutive years of Oxbridge success. An academy central attendance and sign in system, pastoral support and a weekly personal development and enrichment programme all ensure sixth form safeguarding and personal development is strong.</p>		
Outcome from previous Ofsted inspection	Good	March 2023

What does the academy need to do to improve further?

- Continue to work towards improving the curriculum further so that it leads to consistently high standards of teaching and learning across all subjects
- Ensure we return our attendance levels to pre-COVID levels
- Support teachers to ensure consistency of high expectations in the classroom
- Further enhance our careers provision by developing an Eco Futures curriculum
- Further develop the independent study skills of our KS5 students through the concept of the 10-hour study week



The quality of education

The quality of education

Good

External and in-house progress data shows that the majority of students are making good or better progress. High expectations are established for all learners regardless of their starting point. We have a clear whole school curriculum rationale which ensures that our students' experiences are as broad as possible for as long as possible, while also being aspirational, inclusive, relevant and enjoyable. Students study the full extent of the National Curriculum and through our charters, Maritime Futures curriculum and subject level breadth, students receive a curriculum which is broader than the National Curriculum. Students have excellent personal development guidance through our Everyone Matters (E1M) curriculum which runs from Yr7-13. Ofsted praised our work around the curriculum in March 2023 saying it is "well considered and academically rigorous". The report also assesses that "pupils with SEND learn well here" through our "ethos of inclusion".

Our Teaching and Learning Policy captures our expectations for all lessons which sit above extensive examples of practice and research. These are reinforced through staff briefings, meetings and training and are monitored through whole-school and departmental self-evaluation processes. We review our policy regularly in the light of ongoing work and engagement with research; it is very much a living document.

We prioritise the continuing professional development of all our staff in a number of ways:

- Having a Staff Charter with a full section on development and which guarantees a ring-fenced allocation of 75+ hours a year of development time for every teacher
- Supporting attendance of subject-specific/exam board external training
- Dedicating training days to high quality input and significant time for departmental development
- By being a HISP Teaching School sub-regional hub deliverer, providing a range of high-quality professional courses including our ITT, ECF, NPQ and EEF programmes
- Supporting all classroom-based staff in their exploration and discussion of various areas of pedagogy and action research through our directed time schedule, Teaching and Learning online library, PD targets, the production of our CPD journal
- Having a teaching and learning focus at weekly staff briefings
- Delivering a middle and senior leadership coaching programme
- Actively enabling staff to be external exam board markers
- Being active participants in OAT subject network meetings
- Appointing a dedicated Curriculum and Teacher Development Lead Practitioner
- Joining every department to Subject Professional Associations
- Ensuring that every member of staff and governor is a member of the National College

We provide a range of additional literacy support, particularly targeted at, but not restricted to, students joining us with lower than average prior attainment. A range of well thought through interventions enable students below age related expectations on entry to the academy to catch up rapidly while ensuring they still receive a broad and balanced curriculum. All students receive literacy support during form time. As a result of our effective literacy work, we have been confident enough in our students' literacy skills to increase our EBacc entry from 11% to 96%.

We conduct a thorough range of self-assessment activities to ensure that teaching and learning is consistently of a high quality. Lesson visits, student voice and work studies, alongside middle, senior leadership and Trust observations, monitor the quality throughout the year and enable a sharper focus on particular areas for enquiry or development within a department and inform our whole school priorities. Effective self-evaluation has enabled us to share better practice and to provide support for individuals and departments where needed.

What does the academy need to do to improve further?

- From the current strong position, we need to continue to work towards improving the curriculum further. Our ambition is not yet fully realised across the whole curriculum and in some subjects where building blocks of knowledge are less precisely identified, students are not taught as well as they could be. We must therefore ensure that the current work to adapt and refine the curriculum leads to consistently high standards of teaching and learning across all subjects.
- Build academic resilience and independent learning skills in our students
- Embed adaptive teaching consistently across all areas of the curriculum



Behaviour and attitudes

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Leaders at the academy have embedded a collective ethos amongst staff and students of Discipline with Dignity, where we have a no shouting culture and staff and students are safe, calm and actively enforce an orderly and positive environment in the school which directly impacts on the positive attitudes of students in lessons. We expect our students to be ready, respectful and safe. We focus on building strong relationships between staff and students and on promoting positive attitudes. Our most recent Ofsted report of March 2023 finds that students' attitudes are "mature and their conduct is courteous. They respond positively to well-established routines and expectations. The small proportion who find this difficult are supported well to learn from their mistakes and make better choices in the future".

We set high expectations for behaviour for students both inside and outside of the academy which staff and students are reminded about through staff briefings and assemblies. There are systems in place to tackle any low-level disruption or behaviours that stop teachers from teaching and learners from learning. The academy works in partnership with students involved with other agencies to ensure that behaviour expectations are upheld. Our Success Centre provides early help and interventions for students in need of support regarding their behaviour. The Quay, which opened September 2024, offers further support for students who present with challenging behaviour.

Bullying is rare. When it does occur, we deal with it quickly, consistently and effectively. The academy supports parents with online peer to peer issues whenever they occur. Students take an active role in supporting each other and regularly input into the academy anti-bullying policy. Our March 2023 Ofsted inspection found that "pupils feel safe and can learn...Adults respond swiftly and effectively to reports of bullying or inappropriate behaviour".

Leaders have created a rigorous strategy for student attendance and punctuality. There are clear and effective attendance systems embedded that are applied fairly across the academy. Pre-COVID, we saw an improvement in the attendance of all students and specific groups of students, for instance those with Education Health Care plans. Attendance of all year groups sat above the national average and the PA figure for the academy was significantly reduced and was better than the national average.

The academy continues to develop the use of alternative strategies to exclusion and takes account of any safeguarding risks to students who may be excluded. We have a clear strategy for reintegrating a student who returns to school following a fixed-term exclusion, providing a range of interventions to support the management of future behaviour. The school tracks exclusions to analyse any patterns that may be an indication of any unmet need and where necessary addresses this need through the Inclusion team at the academy or through the engagement of external services. Permanent exclusion is used as a last resort for students.

What does the academy need to do to improve further?

- Ensure we return our attendance levels to pre-COVID levels
- Support teachers to ensure consistency of high expectations in the classroom, using a rehearsal CPD model

Personal development

Personal development

Outstanding

The academy has been awarded the Wellbeing Award for Schools for the second time in July 2024. This recognises our work around wellbeing and mental health support for both staff and students. We have an ambitious careers strategy which we deliver well and have hosted best practice visits with both the Permanent Secretary for Education, the Careers and Enterprise Company and the Gatsby Foundation. The Principal has recently sat on a DfE Taskforce around careers and the academy has received funding from the Department for Transport to work across the four nations to support school careers development. Students receive a variety of career opportunities planned into the curriculum across Year 7-13. The academy has been awarded the Quality in Careers Standards Award in recognition of our excellent, holistic approach to careers which has seen us meeting 100% of the Gatsby benchmarks since 2021. Ofsted, March 2023, commented in our report that our careers work “is of a high quality”. Our NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) figures remain at 0%.

We have developed a guaranteed set of enrichment activities and track attendance at clubs from across the academy. This enables us to target student groups who are underrepresented regarding enrichment buy in. A wide range of enrichment activities exist for students within and beyond the timetabled day and a large-scale annual enrichment fayre ensures our club offer is high profile with all students. Our student charters run from Year 7-13 and provide students with a guaranteed set of age-related experiences which build character and level the playing field culturally and socially for our students. Students have the opportunity to further develop their character and resilience through the CCF and DoE schemes and 100% of students who participate in the DoE scheme say they will continue to do a physical activity after their award. A Year 9 graduation event enables us to assess our students’ character development in the round as they move into Key Stage 4, celebrate this and provide interventions where needed. In our March 2023 Ofsted inspection, inspectors found that “leaders give careful thought to the whole curriculum, not just the academic subjects that pupils learn. They strive to expand pupils’ horizons way beyond their local community through a rich diet of carefully planned experiences that are captured in the school’s enrichment charter”.

Inclusion support has ensured that students have access to a wide range of interventions and programmes to support across a wide variety of needs. We have invested significantly in our pastoral support structures and Educational Psychologist time, also training ten staff members as ELSAs (Emotional Literacy Support Assistants) to further strengthen student emotional support. Our Success Centre delivers early help behaviour interventions to students and has three Mental Health Practitioners and two full time intervention leads who deliver social and emotional health support and interventions.

An excellent Everyone Matters (E1M) provision for years 7-13 ensures a coherent and broad personal development curriculum is in place for all students and this is delivered through Science and Healthy Living at KS3. All students at KS3 are involved in social action projects through the timetabled curriculum which enable students to develop character and independence along with a clear sense of what it is to be a good citizen. Assemblies are well linked to an overarching personal development offer and enable students to develop their cultural capital and reflect on key issues in our global world. A considerable number of assemblies are student delivered and this number grows year on year. Ofsted wrote of this provision in March 2023, “Together, the ‘Everyone Matters’ programme and religious education curriculum help pupils understand the complexities of the world they live in. This knowledge places them well to navigate the risks and opportunities they are exposed to as part of everyday life”.

Student leadership is delivered through the whole school student leadership team. There are a range of student led committees where students directly review policies in practice and input into the development of the academy. An eco-council, for instance, actively works to develop the academy’s sustainability and received the Gold Eco-Schools Green Flag Award for their work and an equality and diversity committee meet to ensure that the academy is fully inclusive. Student leadership is also well established at a wider level and students are active participants of the OAT National and Regional Student Leadership Council.

What does the academy need to do to improve further?

- Further enhance our careers provision by developing eco and creative futures curriculums
- Develop a strong sense of education gratitude in our students

Leadership and management

Leadership and management

Good

Leaders are highly ambitious for the academy and are uncompromising in their drive to improve achievement. A clear vision for providing high-quality, inclusive education to all students exists and this is realised through strong, shared values, policies and practices. Our four-year Strategy (2023-27) is ambitious and was collegiately written across all stakeholders. The Academy Development Plan drives the strategy on an annual basis and is well-focused and consistently communicates our ambitions. Performance Development targets link to both Subject Improvement Plans and the Academy Development Plan and the professional development strategy for the year ensures staff are equipped to meet these plans and targets. Appraisal systems are strong and staff report that performance development target setting is a key strength of leadership and management. An ACE (Annual Curriculum Evaluation) conference enables middle leaders to work with the senior team to develop shared priorities based on self-evaluation and as a result Subject Improvement Plans are well linked to the overall Academy Development Plan.

The steady rise in KS4 and KS5 results over time, taking the school from below average to average, demonstrate that the academy's work is well focused and having impact. Over this time period the academy has also seen a significant rise in student numbers into Year 7 and Year 12 and is now the school of choice across the Island with a large first choice waiting list. The academy delivers education efficiently in terms of its resourcing.

Through effective leadership and management, standards in the classroom continue to improve. Quality training for teachers is in place, along with supportive procedures for tackling underperformance. There has been a key focus on introducing effective collaborative planning and teachers regularly carry out academic research which they share across the whole staff body. In addition to our strong internal CPD programme, we are the HISP Teaching School sub-regional hub deliverers for courses such as NPQs and ECFs.

Leaders have developed a curriculum which is coherent, broad and balanced and meets students' differing abilities and interests. The academy has clear sighted intent behind its curriculum both within and beyond the school day. The number of students successfully completing programmes of study at KS5 is above average and the number of students staying in education or entering employment is also above average at the end of both KS4 and 5.

Student leadership is driven by the sixth form student leadership team and we annually consult students about key policies. Stakeholder voice is positive, with 9 out of 10 parents saying they would recommend the school to others. Staff tell us that the clarity and relevance of the vision of the principal is a strength. Our annual workload staff survey tells us that colleagues are 20% more likely than national benchmarks to recommend CEC to parents as a good place for their children to study and 7% more of our colleagues than national benchmarks consider that the time they spend on data input and administrative tasks is reasonable, with 7% more colleagues saying our meeting time is well spent than national benchmarks.

Senior leaders report to governors and the Ormiston Academies Trust through robust structures. Governors hold the principal and senior leadership team to account through rigorous progress boards, LGB meetings, link visits, RAP meetings, audits and reviews and attendance at further committees. The four-year Strategy and Academy Development Plan are presented to governors on a regular basis and leaders are held to account for the quality of education, effective resource management and the academy's strategy and vision.

Safeguarding is an effective and key part of our work. We have robust systems and processes and ensure issues are identified swiftly and addressed with impact. In addition to a successful OAT audit, staff voice cites child protection procedures, security and the control of bullying as the strongest areas of the academy. The culture of safeguarding facilitates effective identification and help of students. Safe recruitment best policy is in place and allegations against adults are managed effectively in liaison with the LADO.

What does the academy need to do to improve further?

- In addition to the NPQ and associated courses we deliver, develop our own home-grown leadership development
- Reduce our carbon footprint while improving financial efficiency



Sixth Form provision

Sixth Form provision	Good
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Cowes Sixth Form is ambitious for all its students. The students in our growing sixth form leave us ready for their next stage through rising aspirations and attainment, through a strong and well delivered curriculum, excellent careers support, the building of cultural capital and broadening of experiences through bespoke charter opportunities.

We work closely with external providers such as Solent LEP and Southampton University to access a range of intervention and support for disadvantaged students. Our Careers Strategy promotes study programmes designed to include employment skills development and work place visits embedded into the curriculum as well as highly supportive preparation for university applications. Timetabled charter activities focus on developing independent living skills such as budgeting, personal finance and employment law. The KS5 E1M personal development programme includes core topics such as safety, health, nutrition and living away from home. An academy central attendance and sign in system for sixth form students ensures strong safeguarding sixth form procedures.

Leaders ensure the sixth form curriculum is sequenced towards coherently planned skills and knowledge development to facilitate success with future learning and employment including bespoke university and apprenticeship application training, effective contact with careers leaders and meaningful encounters with employers, university school liaison teams, volunteering and apprenticeship providers.

Programmes of study have appropriate allocation of teaching contact time and there is dedicated supported study for each subject area. Through quality assurance and co-planning, leaders and teachers ensure that learning tasks presented to students are demanding and promote challenge. Careful sequencing of learning schemes focuses on building knowledge and developing skills. Teachers design and use learning activities to help students remember the content they have been taught in the longer term and to develop independent learning skills.

Leaders ensure subject specific vocabulary is a key feature of co-planning discussions to reflect our academy wide focus on literacy. SEND provision for KS5 students is fully supported through the Academy SEND team and through subject based intervention.

Teachers continue to ensure that students are developing increasingly detailed knowledge across the curriculum. Key Stage 5 results have followed an improving trend and our average A Level grade currently sits at a B- with continued improvement projected. Student destinations are diverse and ambitious, and include Europe and America, Oxbridge and medical and veterinary school as university destinations.

The academy has enjoyed success in supporting students in gaining placements to degree-level apprenticeships. In 2018 the academy had its first successes for Oxbridge and medical students in the history of the Academy followed by seven more consecutive years of Oxbridge progression. The academy's 'aspire' programmes and university visits enable such success.

What does the academy need to do to improve further?

- Continue to work towards improving the KS5 curriculum further so that it leads to consistently high standards of teaching and learning across all subjects
- Further develop the independent study skills of our KS5 students through the concept of the 10-hour study week
- Instil academic resilience through structured pre-learning and the use of rigorous academic texts



Our values

Cowes Enterprise College is proud to adopt the values of the Ormiston Academies Trust. They reflect our aspirations for our culture:



Our values:

- ✓ Should apply equally to students, to our staff and to how we treat people outside our organisation.
- ✓ Should be reflected in how we recruit, reward and manage staff.
- ✓ Should be part of how we are held to account by our trust and our local governing body.

Governance arrangements

OAT's Trustees are personally responsible for the actions of OAT and the academies. The main delegation from the Trust Board at the local level of governance includes a Local Governing Body which comprises parents, staff, community members and the OAT Educational Director. The Local Governing Body is responsible for elements of the Trustee Board's role of strategic direction and oversight at a local level. Each local governing body is accountable to the Trust Board in relation to any matter delegated to it. The duties, responsibilities and authorities of local governing bodies are outlined in the Decision-Making Framework and LGB Terms of Reference.

Every academy also has a Strategic Progress Board which is chaired by the Education Director as a key member of that committee. The purpose of these boards is to support the local members of the LGB in monitoring the quality of education and school improvement, it also provides training opportunities for LGB members who are not education specialists. The Education Director is also responsible for the line management of the Principal and will work in collaboration with the Chair of the Local Governing Body to ensure support and accountability.

OATs Articles, Scheme of Delegation, Decision Making Framework and LGB Terms of Reference can be found on the OAT website in the 'other' documents tab here: [Ormiston Academies Trust – Documents and policies](#)





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