

Oakfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	115993
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	379184
Inspection dates	7–8 March 2012
Lead inspector	Phillip Minns

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	192
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andy Sutton
Headteacher	Elizabeth Smith
Date of previous school inspection	8 July 2009
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Phillip Minns

Additional inspector

Elizabeth Cole

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Parts of 16 lessons were observed and all seven teachers were seen teaching. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, a representative from the local authority, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including school improvement planning, assessment information, lesson planning, the school's monitoring information and school policies. Inspectors scrutinised questionnaires completed by 43 parents and carers, two staff and 94 pupils.

Information about the school

The school is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage and all pupils have English as their first language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils who have disabilities or special educational needs is average whilst the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is lower than average. The majority of pupils with special educational needs have moderate learning difficulties. There is onsite before- and after-school childcare provision that is not managed by the school and is subject to a separate inspection. The school met the government's current floor standards, which is the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.

Since the last inspection, there have been significant staff changes and almost all teachers have been appointed since that time. There have been a number of appointments to the school's leadership team, including a new deputy headteacher and leaders of Key Stage 1 and the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. The school is moving forward securely on several fronts. Past underachievement in Key Stage 1 is being addressed and all pupils are now making better progress and are on track to achieve average levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Overall effectiveness is satisfactory rather than good because pupils' progress, particularly at Key Stage 1, is not consistently good and the proportion of good and outstanding teaching is not yet high enough.
- Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress during their time in the school and by the end of Year 6 attain broadly average standards in English and mathematics. Historically, rates of progress have been inconsistent but current assessment information confirms that most pupils are now making good progress. Although such improvement is encouraging, it is not yet securely embedded or consistent enough, especially for more able pupils in Key Stage 1.
- Although teaching is satisfactory, there is a growing proportion of good teaching. When teaching is at its best, pupils are actively engaged in their learning and teachers accelerate progress with good questioning as a result of strong subject knowledge but such good practice is not consistent across the school.
- Behaviour and safety is satisfactory. Where teaching is the most effective, behaviour is good because pupils are clear about the purpose of the task and understand how it will help them to improve. However, this is not a consistent picture.
- There is strength in the senior leadership team, evident in recent developments that have led to an increase in the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. Staff performance is managed satisfactorily. Although senior leaders have a good awareness of the schools' strengths and weaknesses, governors' understanding of progress and performance data over time is less well developed. This limits the contribution they can make to strategic planning.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the rate of pupil progress, particularly for more able pupils in Key Stage 1, by ensuring that pupils are fully engaged in their learning through:
 - ensuring that all activities have a clear learning purpose that pupils understand.
 - ensuring that pupils are given feedback both verbally and in their books so they know what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve
 - ensuring that pupils develop a pride in their work by establishing consistently high expectations of the quality, quantity and presentation of their work.
- Build on the success of the initiatives designed to raise pupils' achievement by improving the quality of teaching so that all lessons are good or better by:
 - ensuring that leaders at all levels establish a more rigorous approach to monitoring the quality of learning so that the resulting areas for development are acted upon swiftly
 - ensuring that all assessment data is robust and analysis is used to improve practice and provision, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in provision for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs.
- Ensuring the governing body secures the long-term strategic success of the school through the use of challenging targets based on key internal and external assessment information about pupil achievement.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Currently pupils enter the school with skills that are in line with age-related expectations and make satisfactory progress during their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The proportion of pupils leaving the Early Years Foundation Stage with the expected level of skills is in line with national averages and this has been steadily improving over recent years. However, the analysis of assessment data in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not sufficiently robust and does not yet sufficiently inform practice to promote consistently good progress. For the past three years, standards by the end of Year 2 have declined because progress has not been sufficient in Years 1 and 2, particularly for more able pupils. This has resulted in fewer pupils achieving the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1 than in other schools. While the school has taken steps to address this, these actions are too recent to have impacted on published standards. However, inspection evidence confirms that staff are addressing past weaknesses. Pupils now make good progress in Key Stage 2 and achieve results that are broadly in line with national averages by the end of Year 6, with some pupils doing particularly well in achieving the higher levels in mathematics.

Most parent and carers who returned the questionnaires were satisfied with the progress their child is making, but the inspectors found that pupils' rates of progress varied across the school.

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During the inspection, pupils in Years 1 and 2 were seen drawing successfully on their knowledge of letters and sounds in their reading and writing. However, less able pupils were not as confident when dealing with common irregular words. In recent years, attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 has been below average, but the school's tracking information shows that pupils currently in Key Stage 1 are on track to attain levels similar to those of pupils in other schools. By the time pupils reach Year 6, they are reading at levels expected for their age. In lessons, pupils work well in groups and show that they listen and value the opinions of others. Whilst there are examples of good presentation in books, expectations are not always high enough and poor presentation often limits pupils' progress.

Different groups of pupils make similar rates of progress. The quality of learning for pupils with disabilities and special educational needs is satisfactory because regular assessments lead to a variety of additional support programmes for them. However, although assessment information is beginning to be used to measure the impact of these programmes, it is not yet being used to evaluate the success of support and interventions to ensure consistently good progress.

Quality of teaching

Most parents and carers consider their children to be well taught and, although inspectors found that some teaching was good, overall teaching is satisfactory because it is not resulting in consistently good progress for all pupils.

Where teaching is good, activities closely match pupils' levels of ability and teachers' questioning challenges pupils to think more carefully. Good lessons feature activities that are well linked to the current topic, have a brisk pace and a clear focus on the skill that is being learnt or practised. For example, in a Key Stage 1 literacy lesson, the teacher used a variety of strategies to ensure that pupils were enthusiastically focused throughout a writing task based on *Oliver Twist*. As a result, pupils were working hard and were well motivated and made good progress. This emphasis on learning and focus on rapid pace is only evident in a minority of lessons. Some lessons observed during the inspection were insufficiently engaging and, consequently, some pupils did not work as hard as they could because they were not always clear about what was expected of them. In such lessons, teachers and other adults tended to focus too much on pupils' conduct and not sufficiently on their learning.

Work in pupils' books covers a range of subjects and there is good evidence of writing across the curriculum. However, expectations of standards of presentation are not consistent and this sometimes results work that is untidy and poorly presented. Some marking provides teachers with useful information about pupils' progress and informs pupils about how well they are doing and what they needed to do to improve. However, this is inconsistent across the school and, where pupils do not receive sufficient guidance on how well they are doing, progress is slower.

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The curriculum is broad and well balanced, with an emphasis on developing skills in English and mathematics. For example, as part of a Key Stage 2 topic on the Victorians, pupils wrote diary entries for children in the workhouse, whilst in Key Stage 1, pupils wrote letters as part of their work on Florence Nightingale. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is effectively promoted through teaching across the school.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour is satisfactory. A small minority of parents and carers expressed concerns about the management of behaviour in school. Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school and demonstrated a sound awareness of the different forms of bullying, including name-calling, physical bullying and cyber-bullying. Pupils believe that behaviour is good overall and are confident that staff take good care of them. Inspection findings indicate that the school's effective strategies for managing behaviour are implemented consistently and that improvements to the quality of teaching are having a positive impact on the behaviour of pupils in lessons. However, where teaching did not engage pupils, some low-level disruption and 'off task' behaviour slowed learning and this resulted in unnecessary interruptions to learning.

Behaviour is not yet good because pupils are not being expected to manage their own behaviour sufficiently so that they make a very positive contribution to a well-ordered school. In addition to this, levels of pupil engagement are not yet sufficient for all lessons to run smoothly. Effective action has raised attendance to above average, with no pupils being persistently absent.

Leadership and management

The headteacher, ably assisted by the deputy headteacher and other leaders in the school, has established a clear vision for the school based on high expectations for pupil progress. The impact of this can already be seen in the good progress pupils have made so far this year. Although actions have been taken to address the issues identified in the previous inspection report, significant staff changes have slowed the school's progress and this has resulted in some decline in pupil achievement in Key Stage 1. However, there is sufficiently secure evidence to indicate that this decline is now being reversed.

The school has a satisfactory capacity for improvement that is evident in the strength of the senior leadership's actions in addressing current levels of underachievement. The schools' Rapid Action Plan shows a concerted approach to school improvement and has a high profile in the school. It appropriately focuses on raising achievement through improving the quality of teaching and learning. The plan has clear timescales and is underpinned by high expectations of pupil achievement at the end of Year 6. The impact of this can already be seen in the good rates of progress now being achieved by many pupils.

The school has appropriate systems to keep children safe and the school's arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements. The school promotes

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equality and tackles discrimination effectively, as is evident in the rapidly closing gaps in the performance of pupils in Key Stage 2 against similar groups nationally. The curriculum is broad and balanced and effectively promotes pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development.

There are regular lesson observations to check the quality of teaching. However, monitoring is currently focused on what teachers do and not sharply enough on what pupils learn. This is particularly the case for pupils engaged in independent activities and those working with teaching assistants. The governing body is committed to raising standards in the school and has a detailed knowledge of the school's rapid action plan. However, the governing body does not yet communicate sufficiently high expectations and ambition because targets are not challenging enough and not used with sufficient rigour to hold senior leaders to account.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



9 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Oakfield Primary School, Southampton SO40 3LN

Thank you for your friendly welcome when we inspected your school and for telling us what you think about your school. We enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work. I thought you would like to know what we found out. You go to a satisfactory but improving school. Here are some of the things we found out.

- You are starting to make better progress in lessons and more of you are reaching the levels expected for your age.
- Your headteacher and the staff are working hard to make your lessons better so that you learn more.
- You told us you feel safe and that the staff take good care of you.

This is what we have asked the headteacher, governing body and teachers to do to make your school even better.

- Help you make even more progress by making sure you know how well you are doing and that you understand what you need to do to improve your work.
- Making sure that you always do your best work in books so you can be proud of your work.
- Make sure that leaders know as much as possible about how well you are doing in your learning so that you can make the best possible progress.
- Make sure your governors have high expectations for your progress and that they make sure you all do well.

I wish you all the best and you can help by trying hard, enjoying your learning and taking pride in your work.

Yours sincerely

Phillip Minns
Lead inspector

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