

# Oaklands Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101637
<b>Local Authority</b>	Bromley
<b>Inspection number</b>	355044
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 December 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Robin Gaff

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	374
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Steve Teather
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anne Smith
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 February 2007
<b>School address</b>	Oaklands Lane Westerham TN16 3DN
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons, observing all 13 teachers present in the school during the inspection at least once. Inspectors held meetings with staff, pupils, members of the governing body, and parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at planning and evaluation documents. They scrutinised the school's own analysis of pupils' attainment and progress. A total of 82 questionnaires completed by parents and carers were received and analysed, as were questionnaires completed by pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- How successful is the school being in improving boys' progress, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2?
- To what extent is the school succeeding in improving pupils' writing skills?
- How successful is the school being in promoting all aspects of community cohesion?
- How successful has the school been in managing the transition to full primary school status?

## Information about the school

Oaklands is much larger than the average primary school. It extended its age-range to include pupils up to age 11 following the closure of the junior school on the same site, and was renamed to reflect this change, in April 2009. Most pupils are of White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who are learning English as an additional language is well below that found nationally. An above average proportion of pupils has special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those who have a statement of special needs. These cover a wide range of additional needs. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The headteacher is leaving the school at the end of December 2010 to take up another post. A permanent successor has been appointed, and will take up the position in January 2011. A privately managed nursery operates on the school premises. This provision is inspected separately.

**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: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Oaklands Primary is providing a good standard of education for pupils throughout the school. The headteacher and senior staff have successfully managed the transition from two separate schools into one. They have ensured that those areas which were most in need of improvement have benefited from the expertise provided by both new and existing members of staff. Leaders at all levels have focused relentlessly on raising pupils' attainment and accelerating their progress, particularly in the upper part of the school. In doing this, they have succeeded in improving boys' progress in Key Stage 2, which had been a priority. Leaders have acted decisively to improve the quality of teaching, which is now consistently good. The school has developed more effective systems for assessing pupils' progress. This has enabled staff to identify potential underachievement and to intervene swiftly to give extra support where it is needed. As a result, attainment has risen steadily and all groups of pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve well. Pupils make good progress in a range of subjects, including in mathematics and English, although their skills in writing are less well developed than in reading. The school is very much aware of and is addressing this issue, although the impact of measures they are taking, especially with regard to developing the curriculum, is yet to be fully embedded.

Teachers plan their lessons carefully to meet the needs of individuals and groups, and ensure that pupils remain focused and engaged. Pupils' positive attitudes and good behaviour make a good contribution to their learning, and classroom relationships are purposeful and productive. Sometimes progress is slower when teachers do not give pupils enough chances to work together or on their own. Teachers' marking is thorough and their comments on pupils' work are detailed and informative. They do not always check pupils' understanding and progress sufficiently thoroughly during lessons so that they can adapt the pace and nature of activities if necessary. Pupils benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum which includes a good range of enrichment activities and well-attended after-school clubs. It is enhanced by productive partnerships with local organisations including secondary schools. As yet, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to make links between different subject areas and to develop their writing skills through tasks based on their wider experience of learning.

Pupils feel well looked after in school. Several parents and carers commented on teachers' approachability and the way in which they have brought out the best in their children. The comment of one parent, who said that all her daughter's teachers 'have been fantastic at encouraging a positive approach and boosting her confidence,' was typical. Potentially vulnerable pupils receive well-targeted support which enables them to achieve at least as well as their peers. The school has introduced a variety of measures aimed at improving attendance, with the result that absence rates for the groups that have caused most concern have fallen.

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School leaders have an accurate view of the school's performance, including the quality of teaching and learning. They have correctly identified the areas in which the school needs to develop further. Middle leaders are expert in their subject areas and are increasingly successful in disseminating their expertise throughout the school. Together with their senior colleagues, and with good support from the governing body, they have a clear vision for the school's development. They have already begun to work with the headteacher designate to ensure that the current momentum is maintained. These factors demonstrate the school's good capacity for further improvement.

## **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Raise pupils' attainment to above average and accelerate their progress, by ensuring that all teachers:
  - give pupils enough opportunities for independent learning
  - check pupils' learning regularly during the course of lessons in order to modify tasks when appropriate.
- Give pupils more opportunities to develop their writing skills in all subjects by engaging in more practically based activities.

## **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**2**

Pupils join the school with skill levels that are well below age-related expectations. Their attainment, as represented by the results of national tests taken at the end of Year 6, has been broadly average and has risen in recent years, particularly in mathematics. Pupils make good progress from their starting points. They are keen to volunteer their ideas in lessons, and they show the progress they have made through their perceptive comments and pertinent answers. They work well in groups and in paired activities, and are prepared to learn from one another as well as from their teachers. They learn especially well when their imagination is fired by activities which include practical tasks. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because teachers give them work which is well suited to their needs, and because of the good support these pupils receive from teaching assistants.

Pupils feel safe in school. They behave sensibly and safely in lessons and during playtimes, and have few concerns about bullying, which they say is dealt with well when it does occur. Pupils say they enjoy school because it is 'a friendly place' and 'like a family'. They show they understand what constitutes a healthy lifestyle through their good take-up of the balanced options provided by the school canteen as well as their participation in sporting and other physical activities. Many pupils take on positions of responsibility within the school, for example as members of the active school council, and by helping to organise playground activities. They make a good contribution to the wider community by raising money for a range of local and national charities, as well as to help their partner school in Malawi. The leadership opportunities from which many of them benefit, and their good participation in team-working and problem-solving activities in lessons, help to ensure that they are well prepared for future learning and employment. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They enjoy singing and respectfully observe moments for reflection in assembly, and pupils from different backgrounds and

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with different abilities relate well to one another. They show a good understanding of different cultures around the world and in the United Kingdom.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers have good working relationships with and high expectations of their pupils. They show a good knowledge of and expertise in the range of subjects they teach. Most lessons proceed at a brisk pace and include a range of activities which engage pupils with different levels of ability. In an outstanding mathematics lesson, pupils gained an excellent understanding of how to use decimal points because the teacher included a variety of interesting and enjoyable activities, including singing their own 'place value song'. In a few lessons, however, pupils do not have enough opportunities to learn for themselves and can become too passive. Pupils know their individual targets and what they need to do to reach them, because teachers mark their work regularly and give them detailed advice about the next steps they should take to improve it. However, teachers do not always make sufficient use of assessment during the course of lessons in order to ensure that pupils have completely understood and can fully benefit from the tasks they are undertaking.

The school has adapted its curriculum well to meet the needs of different groups of pupils, including those who have been identified as being gifted and talented. It has ensured greater continuity of learning between different key stages within the school, and has

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established good working relations with other local schools, including a specialist technology college. This has enabled pupils in general to benefit from a wider range of expertise, for example in science teaching, and Year 6 pupils in particular to be better prepared for the next stage of their education. The school is increasingly adopting a themed approach to teaching and learning, and enrichment activities, such as 'Arts week', when pupils develop their writing skills by learning about different artistic and literary traditions, reflect this. However, it is not yet systematically ensuring that pupils can improve their writing by means of activities drawn from a range of subject areas, including craft- and science-based activities.

The school works effectively with a wide range of outside agencies to ensure that pupils, especially those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, receive the support they need. The school can point to striking examples of how individuals, including potentially vulnerable pupils, have been helped to overcome significant barriers to their progress and development. It has put in place clear rewards and sanctions, which are understood by pupils and successfully promote good behaviour and encourage regular attendance. Staff work closely together, as well as with early years providers and secondary schools, so that transitions to, within and from the school are well managed. Parents and carers confirm that any concerns they may raise are dealt with promptly and efficaciously.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, ably supported by her senior staff, has successfully led the school through a period of transition and has instilled a sense of common purpose among the staff. She has ensured that teachers' expertise in particular areas is shared throughout the school. The most effective teachers have coached and mentored other, less expert, colleagues, with the result that the latter have improved their practice. This process has been closely overseen by the governing body, which has rigorously held leaders to account and set them challenging but realistic targets. Governors know their school well and bring a good range of expertise to enhance its work. They recognise, however, that a number of improvement initiatives have not yet had time to be fully embedded so as to have a measurable impact. The school has extended the ways in which it communicates with and consults parents and carers, for example by developing its website. As a result, parents and carers feel involved in the school's work, and well informed about their children's progress and development. The school has robust arrangements for safeguarding children, including vetting staff appointments and ensuring that they receive up-to-date training in child protection procedures. It fully meets requirements to promote

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community cohesion. Leaders have carried out a careful audit of the school's situation in the local and wider community, and put in place measures to address the needs that have been identified. Pupils gain a good knowledge and understanding of different faiths and traditions in the United Kingdom and elsewhere. The school is a happy and harmonious community in which all pupils can achieve equally well. It promotes diversity and equality of opportunity effectively and there is no evidence of any discrimination. Leaders' careful stewardship of the school's resources, as well as the quality of outcomes for pupils, indicates that it provides good value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children's attainment by the time they complete the Early Years Foundation Stage is below age-related expectations. This represents good progress from their starting points, which are well below those found nationally. Children enjoy their time in the Reception class. Their development of social skills is good as they learn to play safely and harmoniously together. They grow in confidence, in no small part because older children help them to participate fully in activities such as the Christmas play. They make good progress in developing their emergent writing skills. However, activities designed to promote these skills, particularly in the indoor area, are not always sufficiently well adapted to meet the needs of boys as well as of girls. The school is aware of this, and is implementing improvements which have not yet had time to have their full effect. Adults have successfully created a safe and welcoming environment in which children feel valued and secure. Several parents and carers commented on how well their children were helped to settle quickly when they started school. Staff make good use of observations to monitor children's progress and to plan activities which will help them further develop their skills. Adults in the setting work closely in partnership with parents and carers, ensuring that



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they know what they can do to support their children's learning and development at home.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Inspectors' judgements support the views of parents and carers. Most of those who responded to the questionnaire are happy with their children's experience at the school. An overwhelming majority say their children enjoy school, and believe that it keeps them safe and helps them to have a healthy lifestyle. A very large majority of parents and carers believe that the school is well led and managed, that teaching is good and that their children are making sufficient progress and are well prepared for the future. Most are pleased with the quality and frequency of communication from the school, including concerning their children's progress, and believe that the school helps them to support their child's learning and takes account of their suggestions and concerns. A very small minority do not believe that the school deals effectively with poor behaviour, or that it meets their children's particular needs. A few parents and carers expressed concern about specific issues, including the availability of extra-curricular clubs. Inspectors discussed these concerns with school leaders.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Oaklands Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 82 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 374 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	47	57	33	40	0	0	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	49	60	32	39	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	34	41	44	54	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	49	36	44	4	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	47	57	33	40	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	41	50	35	43	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	35	43	44	54	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	30	37	44	54	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	36	44	39	48	3	4	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	35	46	56	2	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	37	45	55	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	39	48	39	48	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	45	55	32	39	2	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.

**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.**



13 December 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Oaklands Primary School, Biggin Hill TN16 3DN**

Thank you for the warm reception you gave the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We all enjoyed meeting you and listening to what you had to say.

Yours is a good school. You say you like school because it is a friendly place and you know the adults are there to help you. You feel safe there and you know how to stay healthy. You behave well in lessons and at playtime, and many of you help the school through the school council or in the playground. You get on well with one another and you learn to respect and value each other's differences. You are well prepared for the next stage of your education. You learn a lot about people's lifestyles in other parts of the United Kingdom and the wider world. We enjoyed hearing you singing in assembly and in play rehearsals.

You make a good contribution to lessons, and good progress in reaching the levels expected of you, including those of you who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This is because teachers give you a good range of things to do in lessons and make sure you know what to do to improve your work. You have a good range of out-of-school clubs and special events. Your teachers and other staff keep you safe and look after you well.

The headteacher and all the staff, as well as the governors, are working hard to make the school even better. To help them to do this we have asked them to do the following things.

- Make sure all the teachers give you chances to learn by working together and on your own, and check how well you are doing during lessons.
- Help you improve your writing by giving you interesting tasks based on what you have learned in different lessons.

We wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Robin Gaff

Lead inspector

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