

# Oakwood Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	135857
<b>Local Authority</b>	Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	360768
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 June 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Edwards

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>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	240
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Codell Ray
<b>Headteacher</b>	Charles Welsh
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 June 2011
<b>School address</b>	Clyde Crescent Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL52 5QH
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 11 teaching staff while visiting 12 lessons. Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, senior leaders, teaching staff and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, assessment and tracking information, minutes of governing body meetings, arrangements for safeguarding and pupils' work. Staff and pupil questionnaires were also scrutinised, along with 51 completed by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether boys attain as well as they should at Key Stage 1.
- The progress pupils make in their writing.
- How well girls progress at Key Stage 2.
- The progress of the more able pupils throughout the school.

## Information about the school

Oakwood is smaller than most primary schools. The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. Other pupils are mainly from other White backgrounds and very few are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above that seen nationally. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. The Early Years Foundation Stage caters for children in two Reception classes.

The school was formed in September 2009, following the amalgamation of two local schools. However, it continued to operate from the two existing sites until April 2010, when it moved to a single site. The school will move to a new purpose-built school in July 2011. The school was granted Trust status in April 2011. The headteacher was appointed at the time of the amalgamation and is also the headteacher of Gardner's Lane Primary School. A soft federation exists between the two schools.

**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?**

**3**

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

**2**

## Main findings

Oakwood Primary provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. However, the exceptional drive and determination by the headteacher has resulted in significant improvements so that there are many good aspects. For example, poor behaviour in the past had been a significant barrier to learning. As a result of a calm, well-structured approach, behaviour is now good, helping to create a tranquil learning environment where children enjoy their learning and feel safe.

Considerable improvement in the links with the children's centre which shares the site has resulted in the Reception teachers now making effective use of the assessment information it provides. This has resulted in much improved progress for children in the Reception classes. Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily, so that by the end of Year 6, their attainment is broadly average in mathematics and reading and below in writing, and this represents satisfactory progress overall. The leadership has been effective in narrowing the gap between the achievement of boys and girls, particularly in mathematics and reading. Pupils' writing skills for all groups are improving but the school rightly recognises there is more work to be done to accelerate the progress further, particularly that of the more able. Pastoral support for the high number of pupils with social and emotional difficulties is well deployed and effective. Consequently, these pupils progress well in those aspects of their development and, academically, they progress in line with their peers.

Staff know the pupils well and mark work so as to provide a clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve. They manage pupils well and provide them with a good range of interesting activities. Occasionally, teachers spend too long explaining tasks, limiting the amount of time for pupils to do their work. They also occasionally miss the opportunity to encourage the more able to move on to more challenging activities sooner and for all pupils to find things out for themselves and to develop their independent learning skills. The good curriculum is enhanced by a good range of enrichment activities. Pupils' enthusiasm for learning has been enhanced by the increased opportunities to develop their sporting and physical skills. The high participation in clubs and physical activities, and the pupils' healthy eating contribute effectively to their good understanding of what is needed to follow a healthy lifestyle. Pupils' enthusiasm for school is reflected in their attendance, which, although only average at this time, is improving, with a considerable reduction in persistent absenteeism. The safety and care of its pupils is a key priority for the school. Safeguarding procedures are excellent. Training for staff and governors in child protection procedures are well developed and the strong pastoral support ensures vulnerable pupils are well looked after.

The headteacher provides strong, resolute leadership and he is fully supported by staff and the governing body. The soft federation with Gardner's Lane Primary School is being used very well to provide coaching to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to

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enhance the range of curriculum opportunities for Oakwood School. Importantly, the links with its partners, as part of its Trust status, are being used very well to raise the aspirations of pupils. For example, links with the University of Gloucester, where students explained the courses and what they were studying, really enthused Year 6 pupils, particularly the girls, (and their parents), encouraging them to consider higher education as a viable option. Self-evaluation is rigorous and there is a determination to improve the quality of teaching further and to accelerate pupils' progress. The development of improved systems of tracking and assessment of pupils' progress enable early and systematic interventions to be implemented for pupils at risk of underachievement. The rigour of self-evaluation, continued improvements to teaching and learning and the establishment of a wide range of partnerships which contribute to the school's development all show the school is well placed to sustain further improvement.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Accelerate pupils' progress in writing by providing pupils with more opportunities to produce extended pieces of writing, both in literacy and other subject areas.
- Increase further the amount of good teaching by:
  - ensuring teachers provide a better balance between their input and the time provided for pupils to carry out their work.
  - allowing more able pupils the opportunity to undertake more challenging work sooner.
- Encourage pupils' independent learning by providing them with more opportunities to find things out for themselves.

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

**3**

School information shows that over the past two years, children enter the school with skills and abilities that are well below those seen nationally. The key areas of language and mathematical skills are particularly weak for the boys. Improved provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage results in children making good progress from their starting points, although they enter Year 1 with attainment that is below average. Analysis of pupils' work throughout the rest of the school and analysis of data show that progress is satisfactory overall. A clear, structured approach to developing writing skills is helping pupils to become more confident writers. Boys say how much they like writing about history, for example the Romans. Opportunities to write in a range of styles and for different purposes are helping to increase skills. For example, Year 4 pupils wrote some good letters as they described their feelings about being evacuated as a child during the Second World War. They demonstrated improving skills in using adjectives to add colour to their writing. Although increasing, there are too few opportunities for the pupils to write at length and to write for 'real life' situations using appropriate vocabulary. Although there are differences in the attainment of boys and girls, the gap between them is reducing rapidly.

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Pupils enjoy school, say they feel safe and are keen to talk about the exciting activities and clubs. They were particularly enthusiastic about the residential visits and the opportunity to participate in the many clubs and sporting events on offer. Pupils are keen to take responsibility and they have relished the opportunity to offer suggestions and views for the new school. Older pupils take on the role of playground leaders, helping to ensure good behaviour around the school. Pupils have a satisfactory awareness of different cultures and religions, but have had limited opportunity to establish links with schools beyond their local area. Pupils' improving basic skills and attendance provide them with a satisfactory foundation for the next stage of education.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

Teaching observed during the inspection was never less than satisfactory and there was evidence of good practice throughout the school. However, it is not yet consistently good in all year groups to ensure that pupils' progress is accelerated and that gaps in their prior learning are filled. In the best lessons, a good pace ensures there is no wasted time and pupils of all abilities are challenged to do their best. For example, in a good Year 6 lesson, the teacher provided pupils with the opportunity to reflect on the previous day's learning and ensured activities were well matched to the pupils' prior learning, and more able pupils were encouraged to quickly move on to more challenging work. Pupils made good progress in their ability to solve a range of multiplication problems. Teachers have a good

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rapport with pupils and they work hard to enthuse and inspire them. They generally have a good awareness of the different ability groups within the class and work is usually planned accordingly. However, opportunities are missed to ensure more able pupils are challenged sufficiently. Occasionally, teachers give more able pupils too much information, missing the opportunity to allow them to determine how they will work things out for themselves.

The creative curriculum provides a good range of activities for pupils. There are good opportunities for pupils to enhance their information and communication technology (ICT) skills through a range of writing, mathematical and research activities. Effective partnerships within the cluster provide good opportunities for pupils to improve their skills in a range of areas. For example, pupils learn Spanish across the school. Cross-school sporting activities, including tennis and cricket, enhance pupils' physical skills and health awareness. The school makes good use of outside expertise. For example, an artist has been working with the pupils on a sculpture that will take pride of place in the new school. Pupils' awareness of people from other cultures is underdeveloped but the school has clear plans in place to establish links with other schools in this country and abroad. Transition arrangements both in and out of the school are good, with the secondary schools many children move on to being part of the Trust partnership. Pupils are very well known to the staff, provided with good support and very well looked after. Vulnerable pupils are provided with excellent pastoral support, ensuring they are extremely well cared for. Intervention strategies ensure that pupils who are at risk of falling behind, or who are finding work difficult, are provided with additional support, enabling them to progress in line with their peers. The breakfast club, managed by the governing body, provides pupils with a good range of activities and ensures they are well looked after.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<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?

In the two years since the school has been established, the leadership team has achieved much, including bringing together two disparate school communities. Considerable work has gone into finding suitable partners to enable the school to acquire Trust status. These partners are adding considerably to the quality of education provided, for example through foreign language teaching, coaching of teaching and the raising of pupil aspirations. All staff aspire to provide the best for their pupils. As a result of systematic and regular monitoring of lessons, the quality of teaching is rising. Pupils' attainment in the core areas of English and mathematics is improving and significant underachievement has been addressed. Middle leaders are participating in training activities with their partner schools, enabling them to become more effective in monitoring the quality of subject provision.

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The detailed tracking information is used well to ensure the difference in attainment between boys and girls is narrowed. It ensures equality of opportunity through the careful monitoring of participation rates in out-of-school activities. Subsidies are provided, enabling pupils from all backgrounds to participate in trips and residential journeys.

Governance is good. The governing body has worked well with senior leaders to drive forward the move to Trust status. They are challenging, ensuring that it is to the benefit of the pupils. They are conversant with progress data and know where strengths and weaknesses lie. Community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily although plans to develop this have not been fully evaluated. At the time of the inspection, all safeguarding procedures were outstanding, with child protection procedures and health and safety requirements rigorously implemented. There are strong partnerships with support agencies to ensure the wellbeing of vulnerable pupils. Links with parents and carers to support their children's learning are good and the leadership team continues to look for opportunities to involve them even further.

*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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

As a result of the good links with the children's centre, children settle quickly to class routines. Teachers plan work that is well matched to the pupils' maturity and abilities. As a result, children make good progress in all areas of learning, particularly their social and emotional development. The Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator provides good leadership. Assessment information is detailed and informative, providing staff and parents and carers with a clear picture of how the children are progressing. This enables staff to provide learning activities that are closely tailored to individual needs. The record of their progress in the children's profiles gives a clear picture of the good progress in all areas of learning.



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Children enjoy learning, and well-planned activities ensure they make good progress in all key areas. A good emphasis on the acquisition of learning letter sounds in the regular phonic sessions ensures they make good progress in their reading and writing. Children's enthusiasm for learning is promoted through a good range of activities, such as that involving Jack and the Beanstalk. Children enjoyed making masks and acting out the story. Teaching assistants provide good support for the children, helping them to settle quickly and supporting those who need extra help and guidance. The outside learning environment is used effectively to promote physical and creative development but the coordinator recognises the need to extend opportunities for all aspects of learning.

*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

Most parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire were positive about all aspects of the school. A small number expressed concern regarding the behaviour of pupils. The inspection team found that behaviour was good overall and that incidents of poor behaviour were dealt with effectively.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Oakwood 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 51 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 240 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	28	55	22	43	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	26	51	23	45	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	22	43	27	53	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	51	23	45	2	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	30	59	20	39	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	47	24	47	3	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	41	30	59	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)	23	45	25	49	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	43	25	49	3	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	43	25	49	4	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	19	37	31	61	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	25	49	26	51	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	28	55	21	41	0	0	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

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

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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.**



10 June 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Oakwood Primary School, Cheltenham GL52 5QH**

Thank you very much for welcoming us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and watching you learn. We enjoyed looking at the work on the Romans and the Second World War that some of you produced. I am sure you are looking forward to moving to your brand new school building in July. This letter is to tell you what we found out about your school and what we have asked the school to do to become even better.

- Your school provides you with a satisfactory education.
- Children in the Reception classes are provided with a good start to their schooling.
- You say you enjoy school, and we saw that in your enthusiasm and in your good behaviour. Your attendance is improving.
- You have a good understanding of what you need to do to keep healthy and fit.
- There is a good curriculum, with many clubs, activities, visits and visitors that make your work more interesting.
- The teachers and staff look after you well. They give those of you who find learning difficult considerable help and support.
- Those in charge of the school provide good leadership and know what to do to make it even better.

In order to improve your school further, we have asked your headteacher and staff to do the following.

- Help you to improve your writing skills.
- Make sure there is more good teaching, so that you are able to learn more quickly.
- Give you more opportunities to find things out for yourselves.

All of you can help by trying really hard with your writing.

Yours sincerely

Paul Edwards

Lead inspector

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