

# The Oaks Community Primary School

Aster Road, Ipswich, IP2 0NR

**Inspection dates** 20–21 September 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The headteacher, staff and governing body work extremely effectively as a team. Teachers' performance is managed very well.
- Teaching is good and some is outstanding. Sharing of best practice is well established and this has contributed strongly to the rapid and significant improvement since the previous inspection.
- Pupils achieve well. Standards are continuing to rise and attainment is now average by the time pupils leave. Although progress is slower in writing, rates of progress are good and improving in all key stages and across all subjects.
- Behaviour is excellent and pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They get on very well with each other and work particularly well together. Pupils feel safe and their parents agree that the school looks after them very well.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy extensive opportunities to participate in clubs and other activities outside school.
- Thorough marking, much of it exemplary, and good assessment procedures ensure that pupils are clear about how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is some variation in the quality of teaching, particularly where less experienced teachers are still learning their craft at this stage in the school year.
- Progress is slower in writing than in other subjects.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes. They visited 25 lessons.
- Inspectors met with the Chair of the Governing Body, the headteacher, deputy headteachers, subject leaders, the special education needs coordinator, the Pupil and Family Support Team the attendance officer, the business manager and a representative from the local authority.
- The views of nine parents were analysed through the Parent View website. Other parents' views were sought at the beginning of each day. A letter received from a parent and a summary of the most recent parent questionnaire were also looked at.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including the school improvement plan and the school's self-evaluation. They also examined work in pupils' books and on displays.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read in Year 1 and Year 6.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils, including representatives of the school council.

## Inspection team

Nichola Perry, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
James McAtear	Additional inspector
Emily Simpson	Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than average.
- There are more girls than boys.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and for whom the school receives additional income (the pupil premium) is more than twice the national average.
- Most pupils are White British. There are fewer pupils from minority ethnic groups than in most schools of this size.
- The percentage of pupils who are supported at school action is broadly average.
- The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching, with at least 50% outstanding by July 2013, by:
  - encouraging the best teachers to incorporate more dynamic approaches into their teaching and sharing this as best practice
  - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils in all year groups can do so as to ensure that all pupils continue to make rapid progress year on year.
- Improve the teaching of writing so as to increase the rate of pupils' progress to at least in line with the expected level for the great majority of pupils, and to ensure those who are more able reach the higher levels at the end of Year 6, by:
  - adopting a more focused approach to the teaching of writing which ensures that pupils fully understand the link between the specific basic skills they are taught and their own writing
  - extending the time and opportunities given to pupils for writing independently and at length so that they can practise their skills
  - setting more demanding work for more-able pupils in all year groups.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Attainment on entry to the Nursery is exceptionally low. Children settle well and make good progress in their early personal, social and emotional development and in their communication and language skills. Good progress continues in the Reception class because teaching is well focused and resourced. In the past, children have joined Year 1 with well below average skills but they are now leaving Reception with attainment closer to expected levels in most areas of learning, though slightly weaker in communication, language and literacy.
- Significant improvements in teaching since the previous inspection are leading to faster rates of progress in all year groups and subjects. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are now making good progress and attainment at the end of Year 2 is rising. Current assessments show that standards are now closer to those expected in both year groups and this is supported by inspection evidence. Year 1 pupils achieved in line with expected levels in the recent national reading test.
- Recent progress for pupils in Years 3 to 6 shows that, increasingly, pupils are exceeding expectations in reading and mathematics, although progress is slower in writing. The trend over time is upwards, with significant improvement in the 2012 end-of year assessments for pupils in Year 6. Attainment is now broadly average in all subjects. There have in the past been inconsistencies in progress across the school, but this is now more often good and standards are rising rapidly.
- Pupils develop into confident readers because reading is taught effectively. Pupils use their knowledge of letters and sounds (phonics) well to interpret tricky words so that they become increasingly fluent as they move through the school. There is good evidence that pupils read regularly in school and to family members, often supplemented by additional, well-focused work at home. Books chosen reflect pupils' abilities and interests and help to lead all pupils into improved writing. The school library is an excellent resource and very well managed by the librarian. Pupils are highly motivated to visit the library often and take part in the wide range of activities and competitions run to encourage a life-long interest in reading.
- Pupils make good progress in most lessons. This is because they enjoy school and are engaged by interesting approaches to topics and themes. Whole-class and independent work are carefully balanced and expectations are high in the best lessons to ensure that progress is increasingly rapid over time. Pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) confidently to support and enhance their learning in and out of class. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the progress their children are making.
- Pupil premium funding, enhanced by high levels of additional school funding, is used exceptionally well to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. High levels of adult support, wide-ranging interventions and additional activities within the community, such as working with the local theatre, ensure that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress that is similar to, and sometimes better than, their fellow pupils.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good and there are examples of outstanding teaching. Relationships between adults and pupils are excellent.

- The consolidation of reading and other skills as pupils' progress through the school is mostly very good. In an excellent Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils were given an extremely challenging text to demonstrate the level of language they might use in their own writing. The teacher emphasised pronunciation, including sounds, of unfamiliar words so that pupils very quickly found that they could understand the text. Where teachers do not make these strong links between the skills pupils are being taught and the writing they are producing, learning becomes disjointed and opportunities are missed for pupils to extend their writing.
- Teachers continuously assess how well pupils are performing. Comments both encourage pupils' efforts and indicate ways in which pupils might reach the next steps in their learning. Teachers make expert use of questioning and ICT to extend pupils' learning. Lots of opportunities are provided for pupils of all ages to make choices, for example, 'Is that the best place for you to sit to learn?'
- Planning is good and effectively incorporates aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Improved assessment practices now ensure that data provides a more accurate overview of progress year on year. This is helping teachers to raise their expectations of what pupils can actually do, but not all teachers expect enough of their pupils.
- Marking is positive, encouraging and thorough. Increasingly, teachers are extending marking in literacy and mathematics to provide extra challenge, consolidation or support for pupils. Such marking is building an excellent dialogue with pupils and, in so doing, involving them further in their own learning and assessment of their own performance. There are good opportunities for pupils to mark each other's work which helps them to understand better what is expected in their own work.
- The school is working consistently to ensure that outstanding and good teaching are the norm. Sharing of best practice is well established so as to extend teachers' skills and develop their confidence. There are some teachers, who consistently produce good lessons, who still lack the confidence to try different and more exciting approaches to their teaching. Less experienced teachers, new to the school, are already being coached by subject leaders to help them develop effective practice. These teachers do not always ensure that the level of work is sufficiently demanding for more-able pupils and that sufficient time is given to structured writing tasks to enable pupils to check their work against their writing targets for the lesson.
- The teaching of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is good. Carefully focused additional support ensures that all pupils make at least equally good progress. Additional sessions to help those who find learning difficult or who fall behind in some respect are very effective in helping pupils fill gaps in their prior learning. Monitoring of the progress of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable is excellent and has led to rapid improvement in these pupils' attainment and attendance.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- Pupils are extremely well behaved and polite. They are welcoming and confident. The school has focused strongly on developing pupils' contribution to behaviour management and has enjoyed considerable success in this. Pupils are very proud of their school and enjoy contributing to good playground behaviour when ensuring that younger pupils behave well and are safe.

- Discussions with pupils demonstrate their ability to compare the school now to how it was in the past. Pupils say, 'The headteacher persuades children to be well behaved.' Discussions also show the very high standards that pupils bring to judge their own and each other's behaviour and their keen sense of right and wrong. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the improvement in pupils' behaviour at the school.
- Records show that bullying of any sort, such as name-calling or racist comments, is extremely rare. Exclusions are also rare.
- The excellent work of the school's Pupil and Family Support Team provides very effective support for pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable and for families. The school excels at giving pupils a fresh start where they may have experienced difficulties elsewhere. Through the Nurture Group, any potential behaviour issues are addressed before they become an issue. Case studies are monitored continuously to pre-empt any further problems.
- Attendance is broadly average and improving steadily. The rate of persistent absence is falling. The Pupil and Family Support Team work closely with a number of families to encourage regular attendance.
- Parents feel very confident that their children are safe in school. Pupils show an excellent knowledge of how to keep themselves safe, including e-safety. Good safety procedures were illustrated during the inspection by the excellent care taken to ensure the safety of the smallest children when working outside.

### **The leadership and management are outstanding**

- Leadership and management are excellent. The dynamic and visionary leadership of the headteacher has engendered a sense of pride and commitment in all who are involved in the school, including parents and the wider community. The school is a vibrant and exciting place to be and has very good capacity to improve further. Pupils love coming to this school and say that 'everything here has something to do with fun' and 'everyone will be a good friend to you'.
- Senior leaders are highly trained and skilled in ensuring that there are appropriate structures to enable others to perform to high levels. Whole-school monitoring procedures are very well managed, with all staff held to account for improvements. Performance management and staff training are used rigorously to ensure rapid improvement in teaching. The feedback given to teachers on their lessons greatly helps them to improve their effectiveness. Necessary messages, including those which may feel uncomfortable, are given and received professionally. The many changes of staff since the previous inspection have impeded faster progress in improving teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Pupil progress meetings are well established and clear objectives are agreed for improvement. Development planning focuses very clearly on continued improvement and raising standards. Self-evaluation is accurate and improvement since the last inspection has been good in all areas.
- All aspects of safeguarding meet requirements.
- Leadership and management of English and mathematics are excellent and totally focused on improvement for both teaching and support staff as well as the pupils. Leaders are knowledgeable and innovative in their leadership and ensure that learning is made ever

relevant to the pupils' own experiences. Monitoring of progress is at the heart of the work they do with teachers to ensure progress rates continue to rise and pupils perform as well as they can. Staff have a secure understanding of the use of data which ensures the best match of activities to pupils' learning needs.

- Leadership of special educational needs is also strong. The wide range of additional support programmes is successful in enabling pupils to achieve well from their starting points. Pupils' progress is monitored very closely, as is the impact of the programmes. Effective support staff contribute strongly to the good progress made by pupils.
  - Good leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is ensuring that assessment procedures are now timely and accurate so that children get off to a good start and achieve well.
  - The school's strong focus on basic skills in reading, writing, ICT and mathematics is linked to the very effective curriculum, via topics and themes which cover several subjects. Music, dance and art are all strongly represented, with clear impact resulting from involvement with a range of external partnerships. The practice of taking learning beyond the individual subject serves to make spiritual, moral, social and cultural development a strength of the school. Pupil engagement is obvious from the stimulating displays which link different subjects through varied approaches that ensure that all groups of learners have equal access to learning and that there is no discrimination.
  - The local authority has provided effective support since the previous inspection. Most recently, focused work on the accuracy of assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage has been successful in ensuring that more accurate data is now being used so that measures of progress across the school are also now more reliable.
- **The governance of the school:**
- is effective because there is strong support and challenge from a highly articulate governing body
  - is kept very well informed about achievement and attainment and is fully involved in evaluation and strategic planning for the school
  - is involved in regular visits to classrooms and meetings with teachers and subject leaders
  - ensures that funding is used to good effect.
- Partnerships with parents are excellent. The comprehensive school website keeps parents fully informed about school matters and provides good guidance on how they can help their children at home. Adult learning courses, leading to qualifications, are run for parents, for example in ICT.
-

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	134733
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	402632

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	400
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Chris Matthews
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jeremy Pentreath
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 October 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01473 684994
<b>Fax number</b>	01473 692253
<b>Email address</b>	admin@theoaks-pri.suffolk.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2012

