

Oak Hill First School

Wirehill Drive, Lodge Park, Redditch, B98 7JU

Inspection dates 7–8 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching, although improving, is not yet consistently good throughout the school. This is because the work given to pupils is not always hard enough and the progress of pupils working independently is not always closely checked.
- Pupils' progress is uneven between year groups.
- Leaders do not monitor teaching and learning with sufficient frequency.
- Marking does not always make it clear to pupils how they can improve their work. Teachers do not make sure that pupils have acted on their advice.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, planning often focuses on activities rather than skills. Children's choices of activities are not always recorded. Therefore, written checks of achievement often describe what children have done rather than what they have learnt.

The school has the following strengths

- The staff team share the headteacher's vision and are fully committed to further improving teaching and learning.
- In the best lessons, pupils practise their skills in lots of new ways and extend their learning and thinking well.
- Pupils feel safe and happy at school. Their behaviour is typically good.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The school has developed a good partnership with parents and carers.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes and observed teaching in 25 lessons. The headteacher and deputy headteacher were invited to accompany inspectors during observations and did so on six occasions. Additionally, inspectors undertook a number of observations of school clubs, assemblies, playtimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors took account of questionnaires completed by 49 members of staff, alongside 34 responses submitted by parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and other forms of parental feedback.
- Inspectors looked at data about pupils' achievement. They scrutinised the work in pupils' books, heard a sample of pupils read and held discussions with pupils about their learning and experience of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior members of staff, teaching assistants, the Chair of the Governing Body and a staff governor. The lead inspector also met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including the school's evaluation of its own effectiveness, the school improvement plan, minutes of meetings of the governing body, records of the monitoring of teaching and learning, behaviour records and safeguarding checks.

Inspection team

Lynda Smith, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Mike Thompson

Additional Inspector

Philip Winch

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British. A small number are from a range of other ethnic heritages.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding (additional government funding for children in local authority care, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils from service families) is above average.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the quality of teaching to consistently good or better and raise pupils' achievement in Key Stages 1 and 2 by March 2014 through ensuring that all teachers:
 - have equally high expectations of what pupils can achieve by always providing activities matched to pupils' different learning needs in reading, writing and mathematics
 - closely check on pupils who are not in adult-led groups to make sure that success criteria are clear and work is challenging enough for them to make good progress whilst working independently
 - mark pupils' work in a way that not only shows what is right or wrong, but also helps them to understand what they can do better next time and ensures that they respond to teachers' comments
 - have opportunities to share or learn from the good and better practice within the school.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching and learning through the Early Years Foundation Stage by March 2014 through:
 - ensuring that planning is revised and focused on intended learning outcomes rather than on activities
 - enhancing the quality and consistency of written assessments so that these are more evaluative and support staff in deciding what each child needs to learn next
 - ensuring that children's choices, particularly in the outdoor area, are tracked more carefully so that there is a balance of activities and greater opportunities for extending children's literacy and numeracy skills.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management on the quality of teaching through more frequent monitoring of lessons to identify for teachers how they can improve their effectiveness and so accelerate pupils' learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because they have not consistently made good progress over a sustained period.
- Pupils' achievement across the school is variable, but overall is generally in line with what might be expected of pupils nationally. Although there is evidence of improvement, this is not yet secure across all year groups. For some classes, good progress is balancing out the slow progress of previous years.
- The large majority of children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge below those expected for their age. They make the progress they should in the Nursery and generally good gains in their learning in the Reception class to reach levels of attainment broadly in line with what is expected nationally by the time they move to Year 1.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' overall attainment is generally in line with the national average for reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils enjoy a range of books at school. Even those pupils who are not yet confident in using simple strategies to help them to read independently say they love stories and are eager to try to read out loud. In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, there is an effective programme for the teaching of the sounds made by letters (phonics). This is securely supporting achievement in reading. In the Year 1 phonics screening, the majority of pupils met the expected standard.
- By the end of 2012, teacher assessments show Year 4 pupils' overall attainment as similar to what might be expected for their age. This was an improvement on the previous year's outcomes, particularly in writing. To sustain these improvements the school continues to make the teaching of letters and sounds to older pupils a priority, as Key Stage 2 pupils are less familiar with this skill.
- Pupil premium funding is used to support additional small-group activities and 'Family Worker' time. School evidence for eligible pupils shows that improvements in provision mean they are now making similar progress to their classmates and so beginning to narrow the gap in attainment. In 2012, in the Year 2 assessments, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals were the equivalent of around six months behind their classmates in mathematics. They were more than two terms behind in reading and writing.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are increasingly well supported. As with their classmates, achievement is variable, particularly in mathematics. However, there is strong evidence that many pupils have more recently been making good progress.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Over time, there has not been sufficiently good teaching to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress. Nevertheless, although teaching quality is still variable, there are measurable improvements and increasing examples of good and better practice.
- Not all teachers have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. The tasks set for pupils are sometimes too easy and not matched well enough to different needs. However, the

best teaching builds on pupils' prior learning, encourages pupils to use a range of skills in different ways and uses resources effectively.

- Pupils working independently of teachers in lessons do not always have clear guidance of what they are expected to do and, because this is not always checked frequently enough during lessons, pupils' learning slows.
- Marking gives praise and shows pupils what is right and wrong in their work, but gives little guidance on how to improve. Pupils do not always have time to read and respond to teachers' comments and so sometimes repeat the same errors. There are examples of good practice in the school in relation to marking, but this is not yet sufficiently shared.
- Teachers' management of behaviour is good in almost all lessons and relationships are positive amongst pupils and adults.
- Teaching assistants are trained well and give mostly effective support across a wide range of ability groups, including to pupils who need extra help.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, good routines and caring staff means children are happy, mix well with each other and are keen to learn. Because the children feel secure, they have the confidence to make choices about their independent learning. However, these choices are not always monitored closely enough by staff to ensure that children try a range of activities and show what they can do.
- Activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage, especially outdoors, are often too focused on creative and physical learning, missing opportunities to extend children's language and mathematical development. Consequently, written assessments often describe what has happened rather than what the children have learnt. The staff are aware of these issues and are already starting to revise practice.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour is almost always good around the whole school and in the playground. Pupils agree and say that any minor misbehaviour is quickly dealt with. This is as a result of a clear behaviour policy which pupils helped to write and which even the youngest Key Stage 1 pupils can explain.
- There have been no exclusions and evidence shows bullying or incidents of poor behaviour are rare and are dealt with effectively. Pupils spoken to were confident that if they had any problems other pupils as well as the staff would help them.
- Pupils of all ages enjoy coming to school, they get on well with one another and are thoughtful and considerate towards each other. They say they feel well cared for and are taught to understand how to keep themselves safe. Parents overwhelmingly agree that their children feel safe and enjoy school.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are invariably good. They are very proud when they or their classmates win awards at the 'Golden Book' assembly for good work, good behaviour or for being playground 'superstars'.
- Attendance and punctuality are managed well by the school. Attendance has improved as a result and is in line with the national average.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because, despite the improvements that have been made, there remain variations in the quality of teaching across the school that prevent all pupils from making good progress.
- The headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher, are committed to further improve the school's work. They have created a safe, happy environment where both pupils and staff feel valued.
- Leaders at all levels are working to improve teaching and pupils' outcomes. There have been many changes and there is now a better understanding of what is needed to bring about consistently good provision. The school has focused short-term plans for raising achievement further and they have set clear priorities.
- Leaders' monitoring of teaching and areas for improvement are mostly accurate, but are not sufficiently frequent and do not focus in enough depth on how well pupils are learning and on identifying for teachers what they need to do to improve the effectiveness of their lessons.
- The school monitors pupils' progress closely and identifies any underperformance. This, together with the improving support of vulnerable groups of pupils to close any gaps in attainment, demonstrates that leaders are committed to equality of opportunity.
- The curriculum is well organised to link subjects and skills, and to broaden pupils' experiences through visits and visitors to the school. The extensive range of activities provided outside of lesson time enriches pupils' opportunities to learn and have fun. Assemblies also provide valuable time for pupils to reflect on their own beliefs and attitudes and celebrate each other's success. These opportunities, alongside residential trips and local and international school links, support pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school's communication with parents and carers has greatly improved since the last inspection. The school's informative website, newsletters and the texting service have kept parents and carers up to date with school information. There are many events and regular opportunities organised to involve and support parents and carers, and sometimes extended family members, in the children's learning and the life of the school. For example, the home-school logs which are well used by many and the 'Tea Days' proudly organised by Year 4 pupils.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements.
- Where the local authority has been able to give support and advice, this has been effective in supporting leadership, improving teaching and pupils' progress.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is developing increasingly clear procedures and asking the right questions to hold the school to account, but it has not recorded these in sufficient detail. Governors make sure that statutory duties are met and safeguarding procedures followed. They ensure that systems to set targets for teachers' performance are robust and they have a clear picture of how each teacher's salary is linked to their performance. As a result, staff are only financially rewarded when targets have been met. The governing body knows how the pupil premium funding is best spent and reviews reports of the impact on eligible pupils' progress. It uses data increasingly well to develop a secure overview of the strengths and areas for development in pupils' achievement and governors meet with leaders in school to discuss subject areas and see

pupils at work. The governing body monitors school expenditure through employing an external finance manager. If requests for additional resources are made, then representatives of the governing body visit the school to understand why and question the purpose. For example, a budget was approved to fund extra equipment after governors observed first hand the difference this purchase would make to pupils' learning opportunities.

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

Unique reference number	132820
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	406497

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	3–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	
Number of pupils on the school roll	505
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	
Number of boarders on roll	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dawn Martin
Headteacher	Lynn Kelly
Date of previous school inspection	21 June 2011
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