

Oak Green School

Oak Green, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, HP21 8LJ

Inspection dates 23 May 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils learn well and make good and continuing progress due to the good teaching and well-focused support from other adults.
- Teaching is good. Improvements in the quality of teaching have been due to the strong leadership in the school. Senior leaders have used accurate observations, assessment information, and checking of pupils' work to tell teachers how to improve.
- School leaders are relentless at driving up the standards. They make sure teachers accurately measure the pupils' skills and knowledge. This information is used to help every pupil learn.
- Well-planned courses have been successfully introduced and have increased the pupils' enjoyment. This has resulted in pupils learning more quickly in writing and mathematics.
- Lessons are well planned and taught at a brisk pace, with a variety of activities to interest the children. Marking clearly shows pupils how to improve their work.
- Behaviour is good and the pupils want to learn. They get on well together and help each other. They feel safe and are respectful towards each other and adults.
- Parents, carers and staff are very supportive of the school.
- The curriculum links to the pupils' interests and celebrates the many different cultures represented in the school.
- Governors have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. They are well informed about the quality of teaching and are aware of the improvements that have been made.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Although the pupils' progress in writing has rapidly improved, it is not as strong as in reading and mathematics; not enough opportunities are given for pupils to improve their writing in all subjects.
- Although teaching is good overall, it is not of a consistently high quality to bring about outstanding achievement. More-able pupils do not always receive challenging work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 25 lessons, some of which were observed jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, inspectors looked at pupils' work and listened to some pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and one other governor, a representative from the local authority, and other managers in the school.
- There were 17 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), and the inspectors talked to some parents and carers at the beginning of the school day. They also took into account the 55 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to pupils' behaviour, attendance and safeguarding and the performance management of teachers.

Inspection team

John Taylor, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Rob Isaac

Additional Inspector

Patricia Wright

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional funding given for children who are looked after, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children of service families, is above average. There are three pupils who are looked after by the local authority and no pupils from service families.
- The majority of pupils are of White British or Pakistani heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, supported through school action, is above average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The school has specialist provision for six pupils who have autism.
- There is Early Years Foundation Stage provision in two Nursery and two Reception classes.
- About one in four pupils joins or leaves the school at times other than the usual for admission.
- 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 rate of pupils' progress in writing so they exceed national expectations by:
 - providing inspirational experiences for pupils to use as a basis for their writing
 - training teachers and other adults to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills across all subjects
 - giving pupils more opportunities to respond to the teachers' helpful comments on how their writing can be improved in all subjects.
- Ensure all teaching is good or outstanding by:
 - making sure work is accurately matched to the pupils' needs and extends the more able pupils' learning in all lessons
 - focusing feedback to teachers, from lesson observations, on how to improve pupils' learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children's skills on entry to the Nursery are well below the levels expected for their age. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes due to the good range of adult-led activities that interest the children. These activities are based on what the children already know and enable the children to quickly develop their language skills. The progress pupils make during Key Stage 1 has rapidly improved due to the higher quality of teaching. Starting in Year 1 with levels below those expected for their age, pupils leave Year 2 at levels broadly in line with the national average.
- Improved teaching has resulted in swift improvements in the progress that pupils make in all years in Key Stage 2. Faster learning in mathematics is due to the well-planned introduction of a new course. The pupils enjoy the new way of teaching mathematics and they find it easier to learn because of the practical activities.
- Pupils enjoy reading. Younger pupils are well taught about letters and sounds; the teachers and other adults are skilful when correcting their errors, so the pupils make good progress. Trained adults play an effective part in teaching reading skills to the weaker readers, helping them catch up with their classmates.
- In the older pupils' reading lessons, a variety of interesting and well-focused activities results in good, and sometimes outstanding, progress. These pupils talk confidently about the books by different authors they have read and liked. Most of them read at home. Throughout the school, pupils are making rapid progress in reading.
- The average points scores of the pupils' eligible for free school meals show that the gap in attainment, in English and mathematics, between these pupils and others has reduced and is now very small. Their progress is similar to that of the other pupils in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2 and faster than them in Key Stage 1. This is because of effective actions taken by the school to provide a range of support for learning and reflects the school's strong commitment to promoting equality of opportunity.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress due to the monitoring of their learning, which is used to plan and focus the well-targeted support. In the autistic unit, cleverly planned and stimulating resources, along with high levels of challenge, keep the pupils' attention focused on the activity. Helpful support from other adults ensures that these pupils and those who join the school after the normal admission date make good progress.
- Regular and accurate monitoring of pupils' attainment is used, by the senior leaders, to hold teachers to account for the progress of their classes. Regular meetings are used to discuss how individual pupils' progress can be improved and how any pupils falling behind can catch up. The effectiveness of any additional help is monitored to make sure it is appropriate and increasing the rate at which the pupils learn. This demonstrates the school's commitment to tackling discrimination of all sorts and ensuring that all pupils make the best possible academic progress.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers regularly and accurately mark the pupils' work and show them how to improve. Pupils respond to this by writing a comment in their books or acting on the advice. This helps the pupils think about their work and learn at a faster rate.
- Most lessons are at a brisk pace. There is a good variety of activities which are well matched to the pupils' needs. Pupils enjoy the lessons; they are kept interested in and focused on their work. In some lessons, they make exceptional progress.
- Teachers are skilful at using questioning to help pupils learn. Often the questions are probing and extend the pupils' understanding and guide their learning.
- Teaching assistants are used well. They help children learn by correcting their misunderstandings and keeping them focused on their work. They are especially effective in

supporting children with special educational needs.

- The introduction of new ways of teaching writing and mathematics has been fully supported by the teachers and resulted in the improved quality of teaching. Pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress in these areas.
- The school leaders accurately monitor the quality of teaching by observing lessons and looking at the pupils' work and the progress they make in the lessons. They tell the teachers how they can improve and revisit the lessons to check teachers are using this advice to improve their teaching.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. The school has made sure training has been used to successfully introduce new courses in mathematics and writing. Training is matched to individual needs and has resulted in improved teaching.
- In most lessons, the work is well matched to the pupils' needs. Pupils know what they are going to learn in the lesson and how to be successful.
- Pupils enjoy learning. They have a good attitude to work and are eager to help each other. Older pupils are able to suggest in a sensitive manner how their classmates' work can be improved.
- Good support is given to pupils who are in danger of falling behind. The effectiveness of this support is regularly measured and adapted to suit their individual needs.
- Further training of some teaching assistants is needed so they can accurately demonstrate the sounds that letters make to the pupils.
- In some lessons, pupils' progress needs to be improved by teachers making sure that the work they give to different groups of pupils is more closely matched to their needs, particularly for the more able.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils have a positive attitude to learning; they often want to help each other in lessons. In the majority of lessons they pay attention and move smoothly from one activity to another so a brisk pace of learning is maintained.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They work cooperatively in groups and are able to work independently. This lets the teachers and teaching assistants concentrate on guiding the learning. In one lesson, an inspector saw a group of children who were extremely eager to help another group read. The children are enthusiastic and willing to answer the teacher's questions to show the teacher how well they have understood their work.
- Pupils have been involved in the review of the behaviour policy. School records show that the school's consistent use of this policy has fostered good relationships between pupils and as a result behaviour has quickly improved. The policy has clear rules and an emphasis on positive praise. It is well understood by the pupils. Around the school the pupils move calmly and swiftly, and show respect for each other and adults.
- Older pupils, who have had difficulties in behaving and have improved, are used to mentor younger pupils who have similar issues. This is effective at both maintaining the good behaviour of the older pupils and improving the behaviour of the younger ones.
- The views of the parents, carers and the school staff are very positive about the behaviour and the way it is managed in the school. Parents, carers and pupils talk about the teachers effectively dealing with the infrequent incidents of bullying. Pupils have a good understanding of e-safety issues.
- Attendance has improved and is just below average. The school enters all the names of all pupils who have 100% attendance into a prize draw. The governors have supported the school in its drive to improve attendance by writing to all parents and carers.

The leadership and management are good

- The strong leadership of the headteacher has led to swift improvements throughout the school. A clear vision, based on an accurate analysis of the information, shared with staff has guided improvements. Her skilful way in leading others to manage change has brought about better teaching and behaviour. A clear set of well-planned priorities has resulted in the rapid and sustained improvement in pupils' progress throughout the school.
- There is a robust system for managing teachers' performance, linked to pay increases. Setting targets for teachers to improve their work has been clearly linked to improving their teaching and the pupils' learning. Appropriate training is used so teachers develop their teaching skills. There is clear evidence that this has resulted in speedy and persistent improvement in the quality of teaching.
- The curriculum provides well-organised and effective opportunities for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs. This has led to improved standards and progress, especially in reading and writing. The revised themes, linked to pupils' interests, provide good opportunities for a wide range of reading. The many different cultures and languages represented by the pupils are used and celebrated in the topics studied. There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness.
- The views expressed by the parents, carers and staff are very supportive of the headteacher and other senior colleagues and staff.
- The local authority has provided effective support, mainly through the Aspire project. This links eight local schools in similar circumstances, and provides relevant advice and training opportunities, resulting in the increased enthusiasm of the teachers and improved quality of teaching.
- The governance of the school:
 - The governing body has a good knowledge of the strengths of the school. Governors are aware of the areas that need developing and have made sure that these are monitored. They have an accurate picture of the quality of teaching, and are well informed about the pupils' progress. They use this knowledge to inform their understanding of the school's systems for promoting improvements in teaching through appraisal and management of staff performance. They ensure the pupil premium is effectively spent so that it is used well to improve the standards in English and mathematics.
 - Governors have a clear understanding of how the school is performing and how this compares to the performance of other schools nationally.
 - The governor responsible for governor development has ensured appropriate training is undertaken to strengthen governors' ability to provide support and challenge to the headteacher.
 - Governors ensure the school's finances are well managed and that the school meets the statutory safeguarding requirements.

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	110202
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	411925

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	11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	450
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Newling
Headteacher	Elaine Barry
Date of previous school inspection	13 14 July 2010
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