

Oakhill Primary School

Alders Avenue, Woodford Green, Essex, IG8 9PY

Inspection dates

15–16 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils achieve very well. They make excellent progress in all year groups. Standards reached by the end of Year 6 are very high when compared with their peers' nationally.
- Outstanding teaching over time enables pupils to make good or better progress in all subjects.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They feel safe, are very friendly and eager to learn. Their behaviour is exemplary.
- Parents and carers agree that the school is a happy place where their children make 'very good progress'.
- Teaching assistants are highly skilled and provide excellent support for those pupils who need extra help.
- The school lives up to its mission statement of being 'a learning first community dedicated to achieving the highest standards of education for all'.
- The school's partnership provides an excellent resource for those teachers who are new to the profession to excel.
- The headteacher is an inspirational leader. He has considerable ambition for the school and a clear focus on improving already high standards.
- Governors are a real strength to the school and work closely with the headteacher. They ask searching questions about its work including the quality of teaching. Together with the headteacher, they set demanding targets to make sure that the school continues to improve.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes. They visited 17 lessons or parts of lessons, one of which was a joint observation with the headteacher. Inspectors attended an assembly, sampled pupils' work and listened to them read.
- They held meetings with leaders and managers, staff and pupils, members of the governing body, the headteacher of the school's partnership school and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors met informally with parents and carers at the beginning of the school day and took account of the 56 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- They observed the school's work and looked closely at a number of documents, including the school's information about pupils' progress, the development plan, the summary self-evaluation report, monitoring files, local authority reports, the sports funding action plan, policies and procedures for safeguarding pupils, attendance figures and information on the management of teachers' performance and the monitoring of teaching.
- The inspectors analysed 15 questionnaires from staff.

Inspection team

Gay Whent, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Kanwaljit Singh

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Oakhill is an average sized primary school which additionally provides specially resourced provision for six pupils with special educational needs. This is in the form of a unit for children with speech, language and communication needs of all ages from Reception to Year 6. There are currently three pupils attending the unit and all have a statement of special educational needs.
- The school is in partnership with a local school. A programme for supporting newly qualified teachers in the school is in place.
- The school has had a significant change in staffing since the end of the summer term with three teachers joining the school. The middle leadership team has been in place since September.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in the Reception class and part time in the Nursery.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average. At the time of the inspection, 15 groups are represented in the school.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding, which provides additional funding to be used for children in local authority care, children of service families and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is below the national 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?

- To develop leadership capacity throughout the school by enabling the new team of middle leaders to develop their confidence and skills in making judgements about teaching and learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Pupils' progress is good or better in all classes. High proportions of pupils, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, make exceptional progress.
- When children start school in the Nursery a significant number have skills below the levels expected for their age. In both the Nursery and Reception classes, children settle quickly and the focus on supporting their personal, social and emotional development is very effective. Children are able to choose from a wide range of stimulating activities both inside and outside. Whatever their starting point children make at least good progress and most leave Reception with skills expected for their age. This gives children a secure start to the next steps in their learning.
- Pupils enjoy reading. The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is very effective. The results of the phonics check are above average for both girls and boys. Reading is a high priority in the school and all pupils make at least good progress. They sound out unfamiliar words showing the impact of good or better phonic teaching over time. They celebrate books and authors and remember the visits to the school made by two children's authors especially.
- Evidence from pupils' work and lesson observations show that pupils make good and often outstanding progress in reading, writing and mathematics throughout both Key Stages 1 and 2. Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average by the end of Year 2 and has been improving year-on-year. By the end of Year 6 attainment is also above average in reading, writing and mathematics with almost all pupils making good or better progress in every subject. As a result pupils achieve exceptionally well, including the most able.
- Pupils who benefit from the pupil premium are making good progress overall as their needs are accurately identified and a range of very effective strategies have been put into place to improve their learning. All groups of pupils who benefit from the pupil premium reach similar or higher levels of attainment to other pupils in the school in reading, writing and mathematics as measured by their average points scores at the end of Key Stage 2 in July 2013.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good or better progress in reading, writing and mathematics which is leading to higher attainment. This is because teachers set their work at just the right level of difficulty and they and other adults in the classroom provide highly effective support and guidance whenever it is needed.
- Those pupils who attend the school's specialist resource provision for speech and language support are making rapid and sustained progress as a result of outstanding teaching. Pupils are set small, achievable targets which give them added confidence and a real sense of achievement.
- Pupils develop very good mathematical skills, due to consistency in teaching throughout the school and very clear guidance for both teachers and their assistants. Most able pupils in Year 6 animatedly investigate, discuss and analyse the relationship between circumference and diameter of circular shapes through careful measuring.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Teaching is never less than consistently good throughout the whole school. As a result of the relentless drive by the headteacher focusing on improving the quality of teaching, a high proportion is outstanding. This is a key factor in the very good progress made by pupils.
- Pupils say that they rate their teachers as having five stars! They enjoy their lessons, particularly the challenges they are given so that work is never too easy. The most able pupils in Year 5 discussed the ingredients they would need to make pumpkin pies for one of their classmates as it was his birthday. They used a recipe for 80 pies and applied their knowledge of ratio and proportion to work out how much of each ingredient they would need. The whole group was immersed in reasoning, discussion and application of their mathematical knowledge.

- Teachers have consistently high expectations of all pupils. They plan and teach lessons which result in good or better progress being made. This is also achieved by teachers constantly checking pupils' understanding through clever questioning about their learning.
- The teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is highly effective. Pupils in Year 2 apply their knowledge of phonics to their writing of poems about the Great Fire of London. They record 'the wind blows the glowing fire and everyone runs as fast as they can' and 'fight the fire, run fast, inside people screaming, the fire is vast.' A wide range of reference books supports their learning.
- Teaching assistants have a key role to play. They are highly skilled and provide excellent support to all groups of pupils.
- Teachers use information on pupils' progress well to establish what they have learnt. They set pupils' targets in reading, writing and mathematics from Year 1 through to Year 6 so that they are able to improve their work. Books display a high quantity of learning since the start of the term as well as very good quality and presentation. Targets give three explanations of what pupils need to do to attain the next level.
- Marking is of consistently high quality throughout the school. Written comments help pupils to understand their next steps in learning and are meaningful for pupils of all ages. Opportunities are given for pupils to respond to marking comments. These are also checked for understanding. Parents and carers agree wholeheartedly that the school sets appropriate homework. This is as a direct result of teachers' understanding of where children are in their learning and tapping into their interests to promote learning further. Pupils say that teachers at Oakhill go out of their way to give 'each pupil a chance to shine' whatever they are good at.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils consistently display a thirst for knowledge and a love of learning. They are very proud of their school. They behave very well in lessons and are enthusiastic learners. They say that typical behaviour in the school is good and when there are problems adults help children to make the right choices through very caring support and guidance.
- Whether in lessons or at lunch and playtimes, all staff work tirelessly to foster good relationships which are at the heart of the good and often outstanding behaviour.
- The school is a happy, friendly and very cohesive learning community. All adults promote equal opportunity and take every chance to tackle discrimination. The school actively embraces diversity. This is celebrated throughout the school in many classrooms.
- Parents and carers, staff and pupils are unreservedly positive about both behaviour and safety. They say they feel safe and that bullying is rare. They say that there is 'always an adult who is there to help us' if needed.
- Pupils enjoy playtimes whatever their age. They use the outdoor space very sensibly and line up immediately at the end of the playtime. They socialise well with their friends while they eat their lunch. They say that they have a very good choice of food and that it is healthy.
- Pupils are fully aware of different forms of bullying. They talk knowledgeably about cyber bullying and how to avoid it. They know how to keep safe when they use the internet as seen in an assembly. All groups of pupils say they feel very safe at school.
- Pupils' enjoyment of their school is evident. Attendance is average and improving. The vast majority of pupils love coming to the school and only illness keeps them away.
- Pupils enjoy the opportunity to take responsibility through activities such as the school council.
- Skilled and highly consistent behaviour management by all staff, excellently modelled by those in leadership positions, contributes to a very positive climate for learning.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher successfully leads an uncompromising and successful drive to improve the quality of teaching and to sustain the high levels of achievement over time. Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Leaders and teachers are highly ambitious for the pupils in the school and focus sharply on ensuring that all pupils fulfil their potential. An exemplary programme is firmly in place for those who are newly qualified in teaching. Outstanding teachers from the school's partner school work closely with the teachers they are mentoring, modelling high-quality teaching and learning on a weekly basis. Teachers apply what they have learnt to very good effect and this is having a direct impact on maintaining the quality of teaching at Oakhill.
- School self-evaluation is accurate, open and honest and focused on strengthening the leadership capacity of the school. School leaders are developing the new team of middle managers so that they are able to carry out their roles and responsibilities particularly in making judgements about the quality of teaching throughout the whole school.
- Leaders focus relentlessly on improving teaching and learning and provide focused training for all staff. This is underpinned by a rigorous performance management system.
- The range of subjects supports pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development very well. It is designed to increase the number and quality of learning opportunities for pupils. There are many opportunities for pupils to go on visits which support and enhance good learning throughout the school year. As an example of the range of activities planned for them, pupils in Year 3 visited a museum about Roman life while many pupils attended cycling training during the inspection. Displays in classrooms and around the school link well to current learning, particularly in pupils' writing and their mathematics.
- Safeguarding arrangements are thorough and fully in place.
- Systems to manage teachers' performance are robust and targets show the ambition for the school. Progress is reviewed frequently and teachers are positive about the process.
- The school is using and monitoring the impact of the new primary school sports funding so that there is a higher participation in sport across the school. An action plan has been put into place which emphasises school sport and includes long-term goals. The funding has already been utilised to enable pupils to develop healthier lifestyles.
- The local authority provides light touch support for this outstanding school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know Oakhill Primary School well. They have a very good knowledge of both the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils, and how they compare with those in other schools nationally. They are able to do this as a result of the clear presentation of school data which they receive on a termly basis so that they can effectively hold the school to account. Governors have created their own action plan with objectives for moving the school 'from good to great' and use this as a tool to support and strengthen school leadership. They know about the targets that are set for teachers to improve their performance and what the school does to reward good teaching and tackle any underperformance. They keep a tight rein on the finances and understand how the pupil premium is spent and its impact on the progress of those who are eligible. They are also fully aware of how the school makes best use of its finances through its links with the partner school, particularly in the training of new teachers. Governors are eager to learn and hone their skills and attend training which enables them to do this. Governance is strong, well informed and very well organised.

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	103069
Local authority	Waltham Forest
Inspection number	429479

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	280
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Debbie Strowbridge
Headteacher	Roddy Fairclough
Date of previous school inspection	20 January 2009
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