

Oakdale Infants' School

Woodville Road, South Woodford, E18 1JU

Inspection dates

5–6 December 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 achieve well and increasing proportions of pupils are achieving the higher levels of attainment in mathematics, reading and writing by the end of Key Stage 1.
- Teaching over time is good because most activities are carefully planned to meet pupils' needs. Their work is regularly marked and teachers give helpful suggestions for improvement. The best teaching makes sure that rapid adjustments are made to tasks when pupil responses show that this is necessary.
- Governors are well informed and understand how well the school is doing. They are prepared to challenge as well as support school leaders.
- The headteacher and her leadership team understand what needs to be done to improve the school further. Staff and governors share her vision and ambition.
- Pupils speak very positively about their school, behave well and treat adults and each other with great courtesy.
- Provision in the school for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is not yet outstanding because more-able pupils are not always asked questions that make them think deeply about topics and support rapid progress.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to respond to teachers' marking in order to evaluate their own progress and fully understand how to improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 19 lessons or parts of lessons taught by 10 teachers. Additional activities included short visits to classrooms to look at the level of challenge for able pupils and interventions for those with specific needs. In addition, there were observations during break times and at a play rehearsal .
- Two lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher. The Early Years coordinator also observed lessons with an inspector, and the deputy headteacher accompanied an inspector on a series of short visits to classrooms to observe the impact of teaching on the more able pupils. Pupils' books were checked to see how well groups of pupils are now progressing in a range of subjects.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, a representative of the governing body, subject and school leaders as well as a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of 59 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as two letters and informal discussions with parents and carers. The views of the staff were taken into account through meetings and 16 responses to staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors listened to pupils read and discussed their choice of reading books.
- The school's own attainment records for the current as well as previous academic years were scrutinised in addition to published information on pupils' achievement. Planning documents were examined, as well as records relating to pupils' safety and welfare, including the school's single central record of security checks on staff, the behaviour logs and attendance records.

Inspection team

Patricia MacLachlan, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Susan Payne	Additional inspector
Kanwaljit Singh	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an above-average-sized infants' school. The Early Years Foundation Stage is provided in a Nursery and three Reception classes.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support from the pupil premium (extra money provided by the government for pupils eligible for free school meals, children in public care and from service families) is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above the national average. The largest single group of pupils is of White British heritage, with other sizeable groups having Other White, Pakistani, African, Caribbean or Mixed heritages. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is also above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is well below the national average. The proportions supported at school action plus and with statements of special educational needs are also below the national average.
- The school has received additional government sports funding.
- The school has, since the previous inspection, experienced some changes of leadership team with the appointment of a deputy headteacher.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that more is outstanding by:
 - allowing more time for pupils to respond to their teachers' marking so that they develop greater understanding of how to improve their work
 - ensuring that all teachers plan consistently challenging activities and open-ended investigations for more-able pupils.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment on entry to Nursery has been below that typical of three-year-olds nationally. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the trend is for pupils to make good progress, particularly in communication, language and literacy, and mathematics because they join Key Stage 1 at expected levels of achievement.
- There is a rigorous focus on phonics (letters and the sounds they make) that is sustained during the Key Stage 1 years because higher-than-average proportions of pupils in this school meet the standard in the phonics screening check.
- By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 2, there is a trend of attainment in mathematics and English that is above the national average because teaching is good and expectations are high.
- School records of current progress as well as scrutiny of pupils' English and mathematics books show that this trend is likely to continue because targets are ambitious. Achievement is not yet outstanding because pupils are not yet making consistently fast progress in all year groups and fewer pupils reach the higher Level 3 scores in English than mathematics.
- There is little difference in the progress made between pupils who speak English as an additional language, those from minority ethnic groups or disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and their classmates.
- The pupil-premium grant is used effectively to pay for small-group activities in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, many of the pupils supported by this funding are now achieving as well as or better in English and mathematics than their classmates. Although pupils in the current Year 2 are about two months behind their peers, the school has focused strategies that aim to narrow these gaps quickly and, last year, by the end of Year 2, eligible pupils had overtaken their classmates.
- Pupils of all ages enjoy reading and receive good guidance to help improve their skills. Pupils enjoy visiting their well-stocked and comfortable library to borrow books. Older pupils use reference books confidently in class and can discuss their favourite authors with shrewd observations about plot and character.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good because strong and supportive relationships are established between all adults and pupils in the classroom and pupils are consequently keen to learn. Well-planned and interesting tasks offer pupils good opportunities to make progress.
- In the best instances, for example during a Nursery session, where the task was re-shaped to take advantage of the windy day, children's number skills were developed by handling different shapes and lengths of string to make kites. Children learned about different measures because the task required them to handle equipment and discuss their actions. The teacher posed thought-provoking questions and pupils were delighted to test their ideas by comparing the different flight paths of their kites. As a consequence, all groups of pupils made rapid progress. However, not all teaching enthuses and stretches the more able pupils so skilfully.
- Pupils understand the accuracy of their answers because teachers mark their work regularly. However, teaching is good rather than outstanding because teachers are not consistently allowing sufficient time for pupils to respond to the marking, nor always helping pupils to understand how well they are doing or what they need to do next to reach their target levels.
- Where teaching is best, adults reshape tasks quickly if pupils are not succeeding, to help them to learn at their own pace. Skilled teaching assistants give extended support to pupils who need additional help to understand tasks.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage skilfully blends adult- and child-initiated activities to support confident self-expression. Adults provide a stimulating choice of indoor and outdoor

activities for the children and their careful questioning draws out descriptions or calculations from children while they are happily engaged in physical or creative tasks.

- Pupils, particularly the more able, are given extension tasks but these do not always include open-ended challenges or targeted questions that support deep and extended thinking.
- Pupils enjoy applying their reading, writing and mathematical skills to well-planned science and history topics and the school has identified ways in which extended writing can be incorporated into science investigations.
- The majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View believe that their children are well taught and receive appropriate homework.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. This is because pupils work very cooperatively with each other, sharing resources and concentrating to complete tasks.
- Pupils believe that they are well looked after by the adults around them. The climate of friendship and positive support from adults lead to pupils acting considerately and respectfully towards each other and to adults.
- Pupils understand about different types of bullying and how to keep themselves safe. They assert that bullying is very rare and has been dealt with effectively. Adults express satisfaction with the school's good management of behaviour.
- Pupils behave very well outside lessons, interacting politely with adult helpers in the dining room and playground. They act responsibly and share the exciting playground areas like the castle and the ship sensibly and safely.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy strong relationships in a secure environment and follow well-established routines, supervised by staff who are trained well to cope with minor mishaps.
- Behaviour is good rather than outstanding because pupils are not always able to identify what they need to do next to improve their work and, as a consequence, are not always able to demonstrate exemplary attitudes to learning.
- Attendance is improving because effective strategies are used to encourage good attendance and punctuality among the small number of families that find this difficult.
- Parents and carers believe that the school provides a safe and caring environment, and inspectors agree. Pupils enjoy coming to school and; one remarked, 'We like learning interesting things... there are adults to help us.'
- Pupils know right from wrong and have opportunities to serve as role models to the younger children when they act as mentors who welcome and guide newly arrived children. These interactions reinforce moral and social development well.

The leadership and management are good

- The committed headteacher and her deputy together make a capable team that has successfully addressed the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection. They have brought about improvements to the quality of teaching that have resulted in rising achievement.
- This dedicated leadership team has developed a robust system for checking teaching, sharing lesson observations and the scrutiny of pupils' books so that teachers' classroom practice has improved. The performance management system ensures that only those teachers who meet required standards move up the salary scale. The headteacher does not avoid difficult conversations about teaching performance if these are necessary.
- Leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage are good because rigorous assessment procedures are followed to ensure that children's needs and interests are well met

and helpful information is given to parents so that they can help their children to learn outside school hours. This has resulted in good progress, particularly in reading and numeracy. Arrangements for transition to the school setting and for teaching in the outdoor area are good.

- Leadership and management are not yet outstanding because the pace of progress is not yet consistently rapid among all year and ability groups.
- Provision to encourage spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils reflect on the differences between right and wrong in assemblies and religious or social education lessons. Opportunities to experience whole-school performances twice a year are well received, as are visits to places of interest such as the Museum of Childhood and the town's Christmas decorations. These experiences all help to widen pupils' social and cultural horizons. In addition, celebrations such as releasing butterflies supplement the festivals of different faiths and extend pupils' spiritual understanding.
- Physical education classes are supplemented with a wide range of games and stimulating activities at break times. The primary school sport funding is being used to hire sports coaches who are training the class teachers to improve their skills to support all pupils to develop healthy lifestyles. It is too early to see the impact of this work yet.
- Effective safeguarding systems meet statutory requirements and policies are scrupulously applied, with governors taking an active role in training for safer recruitment. Leaders promote equal opportunities and are assiduous in tackling any discrimination that may arise.
- The local authority has provided 'light-touch' support to this strong school by offering additional training for subject leaders and supporting them in leading networks of teachers in the district.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body knows the standards of achievement and teaching in the school because the headteacher's regular summary reports provide clear information that is subject to challenging questions in meetings. Governors have an accurate understanding of how pupils are performing compared with national standards because they use the 'data dashboard' reports and receive information comparing pupils' progress in the school with national figures. Governors understand the link between teachers' pay progression and pupils' progress because they have revised the pay policy and receive summaries of teachers' performance from the headteacher. They know what the school is doing to tackle any underperformance. Checks are made that the pupil-premium funds are spent on the intended groups and oversight of safeguarding is scrupulous. The governing body makes sure that the budget is very carefully managed.

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	133932
Local authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	425625

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	335
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Stevens
Headteacher	Hillary Hunwicks
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 November 2008
Telephone number	020 8989 7895
Fax number	020 8532 9920
Email address	admin@oakdale.redbridge.gov.uk

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