

Oakridge Junior School

Oakridge Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG21 5RR

Inspection dates 4–5 June 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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.

- The headteacher provides strong, determined leadership. The deputy headteacher, other leaders and governors share her ambitious vision, which has led to improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement.
- The great majority of parents agree that they would recommend the school to other parents.
- The achievement of pupils has improved considerably in the last two years.
- Pupils make good progress in all their learning, and especially in reading and mathematics.
- Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 has improved in all subjects from below average in 2011 to well above average in 2013. School information indicates that current Year 6 pupils are on track to do just as well in 2014.
- The good quality of teaching results in pupils' good progress.
- Teachers create good working relationships with their pupils and set high expectations.
- Teachers' assessment of pupils' work is a strength of the school. Marking provides pupils with highly detailed feedback. Teachers make good use of assessment information to decide the next steps in learning for pupils.
- In mathematics, teachers' planning enables them to attend to the learning needs of different pupils particularly effectively.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive. Behaviour is good. Pupils feel safe in school. Their attendance is above average.
- Leaders check pupils' progress and the quality of teaching regularly. Accurate self-evaluation leads to good quality improvement planning.
- Governors have improved their capacity to hold the school to account, and to set targets for the headteacher.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress in writing, although good, is not as rapid as in reading and mathematics.
- Not all teaching assistants have the knowledge necessary to help pupils improve their writing.
- Pupils are not always clear about teachers' expectations for successful work before they undertake writing tasks.
- Pupils are not as consistently productive as they could be in their writing tasks because they do not always know in advance how much time is available for completion.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 16 lessons, of which three were joint observations with the headteacher. Inspectors also scrutinised a sample of pupils' English work. They heard a sample of pupils in Years 3 and 4 read.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the school's staff, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body and two other members, and also a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors analysed the 33 responses that were recorded on the online survey (Parent View) by the end of the inspection, and spoke with small numbers of parents accompanying their children to school.
- Inspectors took account of the 19 responses to the questionnaire for school staff.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents. These included the school's own data on pupils' current attainment and progress, planning documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding, performance management, the pupil premium, the primary sports funding and the curriculum.

Inspection team

Chris Grove, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Linda Rowley

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a junior school that is smaller than average in size.
- The school serves a community on the eastern side of the town of Basingstoke in Hampshire.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (which in this school provides additional funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher is currently acting as executive headteacher to Hatch Warren Junior School.
- Among the school's accreditations are the International School (Intermediate level) and Healthy School awards, and the ICT mark.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress in writing, in order to match their more rapid progress in reading and mathematics, by:
 - improving the subject knowledge of teaching assistants so that they contribute more effectively to ensuring pupils' achievement in writing
 - making sure that pupils are always clear about teachers' expectations for successful work before they undertake writing tasks
 - ensuring that pupils are consistently as productive as possible in their writing tasks through knowing in advance how much time is available for completion.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' achievement has improved considerably in the last two years.
- From starting points that are typically above average, pupils in all year groups make good progress in their learning. However, although their progress in writing is consistently good, it is not as rapid as in reading and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and those whom are more able, also make good progress, because teachers give pupils work that challenges them appropriately.
- Over recent years, pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 has risen considerably. In 2011, attainment in national tests in reading, writing and mathematics was below average in each case. In the following year, attainment improved sharply, especially in reading and writing. In 2013, pupils' attainment was well above average in all three subjects, and also in the new assessments in English grammar, punctuation and spelling. The school's information indicates that pupils in the current Year 6 are on track to reach attainment which will again be well above average in reading, writing and mathematics in 2014.
- Pupils participate keenly in physical activities including sports. Pupils in Year 5, for example, took part enthusiastically in an athletics lesson in which they made good progress in improving their performance of standing jumps.
- In national assessments at the end of Year 6 in 2013, the gap in attainment between those supported by the pupil premium and other pupils narrowed in reading, when compared with the previous year. This represented a gap of about half a term's work. In writing in 2012, pupils eligible for the premium performed slightly better than others, but a small gap of about half a term's work between eligible pupils and others opened up in 2013. In the case of mathematics in 2012, also, the attainment of eligible pupils was higher than that of other pupils, and by a considerable margin. However, as in writing, there was a gap in performance in 2013, equating to about three quarters of a term. These gaps were in each case much smaller than those found nationally.
- Inspection evidence shows that those pupils currently eligible for the premium are making the same good progress in all subjects as other pupils.
- Leaders refer explicitly to their aim of using the additional funding to promote equal opportunities for pupils, and to tackle discrimination. The school has used the funding principally to provide additional teaching assistants offering pupils support with particular aspects of literacy and mathematics. The funding has also enabled the school to make other provision, for example to employ a behaviour support mentor, and to subsidise educational visits for eligible pupils and to allow their participation in extra-curricular clubs.

The quality of teaching is good

- The good quality of teaching, including the teaching of literacy and mathematics, results in pupils' good progress. The very great majority of parents who took part in the online survey agreed that their children are taught well, and that they make good progress.
- The especially good relationships between pupils and their teachers and teaching assistants, and between the pupils themselves, lead to the school's warm climate for learning. Senior leaders and teachers set high expectations for pupils' behaviour. As a result, pupils pay close attention in class, work willingly and are ready to learn. Teachers only rarely need to manage pupils' behaviour because pupils are keen to work and expectations are well set across the school.
- The approach to assessing pupils' work is a particular strength of the school. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is exceptionally good, and includes highly detailed feedback on each aspect of the task set. Teachers give pupils clear advice about improvement, and provide them with opportunities to put the advice into practice. As a result, pupils develop an excellent understanding of what they need to do to improve their work. Teachers also use the information

from assessments especially well, for example to decide which pupils would benefit from additional support by the teacher or teaching assistant, and which pupils are ready for more challenging work.

- Teachers ask questions in ways that provide good levels of challenge for pupils, including those who are more able.
- Teachers plan well-structured lessons in mathematics, which enable them to give pupils of different abilities small-group, or sometimes individual, instruction, according to the assessment of success with their previous work. This greatly benefits pupils' learning.
- In the case of writing, pupils are not always clear about teachers' expectations for the successful completion of set tasks.
- Teachers demonstrate good knowledge of the subjects that they teach. However, teaching assistants do not always extend the learning of pupils of all abilities. On occasions, some assistants do not have the level of knowledge necessary to help pupils to improve aspects of their writing to a higher level. However, those assistants who provide additional work in phonics (linking letters and the sounds they make) are skilled in the role, so that pupils make good progress and enjoy the work.
- Pupils are not as consistently productive as they could be in their writing tasks because they do not always know in advance how much time is available for completion.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well in lessons, and their attitudes to learning are particularly positive. They are very attentive to teachers, responding readily to questions, and cooperating willingly when they work with other pupils. Furthermore, pupils are exceptionally courteous towards visitors.
- The school is effective in fostering good relations. Pupils also behave well around the school. At break times, in the playground, they play happily with others. There is a calm and orderly atmosphere in the school hall as pupils eat their lunch. Pupils conduct themselves responsibly when they are not directly supervised. They are confident that adults will look after them if ever problems should arise.
- Pupils are well behaved in school assemblies. For example, they showed respectful attitudes to a visiting speaker who used humour well to engage their interest.
- In their respective surveys, almost all parents agreed that the school makes sure its pupils are well behaved, and every member of staff agreed that pupils' behaviour is good and is consistently well managed.
- The school's behaviour mentor meets weekly with particular pupils, and uses a variety of reward schemes which pupils themselves say have had a positive impact.
- Although the school's records show a significant reduction in behaviour issues, some incidents are still being recorded.
- Attendance is above average, and has improved in the current year. The attendance of pupils who may be vulnerable is similar to that of others.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils know how to stay safe, because the school has taught them about possible dangers. For example, they understand the need to consider e-safety when using the internet, and the school's Junior Road Safety Officers alert pupils to road safety issues. In the surveys, parents and members of staff were unanimous in agreeing that pupils are safe in school.
- Pupils understand the persistent nature of bullying, and say that bullying is rare. Almost every parent, and all members of staff, agreed that the school deals effectively with bullying. There have been no racist incidents and no exclusions since the last inspection.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, with the good support of the deputy headteacher, offers the school strong and determined leadership. She communicates the ambitious vision for 'pupils to be the best they can be', and this underpins the school's very positive climate for learning. Members of the senior leadership team, the governing body and other staff fully share the headteacher's ambition. This is shown by the unanimous expression of pride in the school by the staff. Without exception, they also agree that they know what they are trying to achieve as a school. One member of staff encapsulated this well in recording that, 'The school puts children at the centre of everything that it strives to do.'
- The headteacher sets high expectations for members of staff as well as for pupils. The leadership team closely tracks pupils' progress at regular intervals, leading to additional support for any who are not making the progress expected of them. Leaders, including middle leaders, ably undertake a range of activities to check the quality of pupils' learning. The resulting self-evaluation is accurate and is based on good analysis of carefully-gathered evidence, including leaders' observations of teaching. This, in turn, leads to whole-school improvement planning of good quality. Where necessary, the headteacher also works alongside other teachers in order to demonstrate how they might improve their performance.
- School leaders make effective use of the annual arrangements to set targets for teachers. They set challenging targets to accelerate pupils' progress and enhance the quality of teaching.
- The curriculum is broad and stimulating. It emphasises the development of pupils' knowledge and skills in reading, writing and mathematics, including through effective links across subjects, and provides opportunities to apply these skills. In addition, the school holds a national award in recognition of the good focus on information and communication technology (ICT). The International School award is testimony to the link with a school in India, and to the work of widening pupils' cultural understanding. Extra-curricular activities include a wide range of sports as well as art, practical activities and guitar playing. The curriculum and the out-of-school programme contribute strongly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders make effective use of the primary sport funding. The school has employed an external agency to provide sports coaching. This role has extended the range of in-school provision, improved participation rates in extra-curricular sport, and is enhancing teachers' skills and confidence to teach physical education. The Healthy School award attests to the school's success in promoting pupils' physical well-being.
- Leaders focus carefully on issues of child protection and safeguarding, which meet requirements. They are at pains to ensure that pupils at risk of not doing as well as others are well supported.
- In the light of the headteacher's accurate self-evaluation and good record in securing improvements to teaching and to pupils' achievement, and effective self-evaluation, the local authority has judged the school as requiring only low-priority support.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and the areas needing improvement. Governors have improved their capacity to hold the school to good account. They understand the importance of their responsibilities for the management of the headteacher's performance. Governors are also well informed about the arrangements to appraise other members of staff, and have assured themselves about the rigour of the arrangements and about whether any salary progression is warranted. They know how the school has spent the pupil premium funding, and that this has led to better progress for these pupils, and to improvements in inclusion. Governors are familiar with the national information about the school's performance, and individual governors have the expertise to analyse this data carefully. They know too that the senior leadership has ensured consistency in the quality of teaching. Governors recognise the value of training, including that which is available through the local authority's training programme to which they subscribe.

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	115974
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	442489

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	189
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Terri Bickford
Headteacher	Diane Charman
Date of previous school inspection	23–24 October 2012
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