

Oakridge School

Oakridge Road, High Wycombe, HP11 2PN

Inspection dates

11–12 June 2014

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.

- From their low starting points when they join, pupils make good progress throughout the school. Pupils' attainment is rising and is now average in Year 6. This shows that pupils achieve well.
- Teaching is good. Teachers plan interesting activities that engage pupils. They have high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
- Pupils who receive additional support make good progress because this is effective.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils learn and work collaboratively in a calm and caring environment. They are very respectful towards their teachers.
- Pupils feel safe and learn how to keep themselves safe.
- The school is well led and managed. Senior leaders, other managers and governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and where further development is needed. This has ensured that teaching and achievement have improved.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well promoted in all aspects of school life.
- Almost all parents say that their child is happy at school and that they would recommend the school to others.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Writing throughout the school is not as strong as other subjects. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to practise their writing skills in subjects other than English.
- Some parents feel that they do not have enough information about what their child learns at school and how to help them at home.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 27 lessons or parts of lessons, six of which were jointly observed with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- Meetings took place with school leaders and members of the governing body including the Chair. Inspectors also met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors analysed a range of documentation. This included safeguarding records and those related to pupils' behaviour and attendance; records of monitoring teaching and pupils' learning, including the school's data about pupils' current achievement and progress; and the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- Inspectors looked at school displays, the school website and a range of evidence relating to the wider work of the school.
- Inspectors talked to a range of pupils about their work and play in school. They also looked at a selection of pupils' work in books across the school. Inspectors listened to pupils from Years 2, 5 and 6 read and talked to them about their enjoyment of reading.
- Inspectors took account of 10 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and 29 written responses by staff to their questionnaire. In addition, they spoke to parents when they dropped pupils off at school and one parent, who requested a meeting.

Inspection team

Susan Payne, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Gordon Jackson	Additional Inspector
Howard Dodd	Additional Inspector
Peter Lacey-Hastings	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school. The school has a nursery, which 73 children attend.
- The number of pupils attending the school has grown in recent years.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is average. This is additional funding provided by the government for groups including those pupils who are eligible for free school meals or in local authority care.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- Almost all pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest group being of Pakistani heritage.
- Most of the school population speak English as an additional language, this is much higher than average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding and raise achievement further, particularly in writing, by:
 - increasing the opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills in subjects other than English
 - making sure that subject leaders check pupils' writing in their subjects.
- Improve links with parents, so they are well informed about what their child is learning at school and how they can help them at home.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children join the Nursery and Reception classes with skills and abilities that are well below those typical for their age, particularly in speaking and listening and social skills. Good support and a variety of creative, practical and physical activities, which engage children's curiosity, help to ensure that they make good progress.
- Pupils continue to make good progress across Key Stage 1. They reach standards in reading and mathematics that are just below average. Standards in writing are relatively weaker because pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use their writing in subjects other than English.
- Although there was a small dip in achievement at the end of Year 6 in 2013, particularly in writing, the school's records for current pupils show that this has been reversed. However, pupils do not develop their writing skills enough by building on their work in English.
- Typically, pupils leave Year 6 with standards in attainment which are those expected for their age. Pupils are making good progress, with an increasing proportion of the most able pupils attaining the higher levels.
- There is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics (sounds that letters make). As a result, the proportion of children reaching the required standard in Year 1 is above the national average.
- Pupils respond well to programmes to help develop their reading skills. Reading is a strength throughout the school. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about their reading and demonstrated a secure knowledge of strategies to work out new and difficult words. They read confidently, fluently and with a good level of understanding.
- Pupils' mathematical skills and understanding are good. Pupils develop a sound understanding of basic numeracy skills early in their school life and these are systematically built on through their time in school. For example, in Year 1, pupils confident in counting backwards in ones and tens applied their knowledge to subtracting one or 10 from any given number. They confidently explained how to do this.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium make the same good progress as other pupils in school. The school's data for these pupils show their attainment is approximately two terms behind in mathematics and three terms behind in reading and writing. These gaps are narrowing because the support given to these pupils is effective.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make progress that is similar to that of others. This is because their needs are correctly identified and their progress is checked regularly in order to make sure that carefully planned support helps them to succeed.
- As a result of language support that is effective, pupils with English as an additional language share in the achievement seen by other groups in school. Groups of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, including Pakistani pupils, achieve well.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Good teaching enables most pupils, including the most able, to learn well and make good progress. Teaching is good across different subjects including in English and mathematics. Strong relationships within the classroom ensure that pupils have a positive attitude to their work. This helps them to learn new skills and knowledge with confidence.
- Classrooms are well organised and attractive. Displays are used well to celebrate pupils' achievements and to help them with their learning.
- Learning activities are tailored to the interests of pupils, which encourage enjoyment of learning. This is particularly the case in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where children benefit from a range of highly organised activities, both indoors and outdoors. Children are skilfully managed to promote creativity and independence. This encourages them to make their own choices about where to learn and the resources to use while developing early reading, writing and

mathematical skills.

- Early identification of pupils, who need extra support with their learning, ensures that they make the same good progress as other pupils in school.
- Teachers mark pupils' work and check their progress regularly. They use this information to plan work that builds on pupils' understanding. In Year 4, the most able pupils, who had mastered the 'grid method' of multiplication in mathematics, confidently learnt another method of long multiplication known as the 'expanded method'. Pupils learnt the correct subject vocabulary as the teacher modelled its use accurately.
- Pupils respond well to skilful questioning and work cooperatively when talking about their learning. During a Year 2 literacy activity, pupils enthusiastically discussed Mickey Mouse's behaviour in a cartoon and how his actions made other characters feel. Pupils made good progress in their speaking and listening skills and also gained an understanding of how to write about characters.
- Pupils enjoy solving problems in mathematics using their calculation skills and knowledge of numbers. Year 6 pupils were challenged to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills to solve calculations that gave them clues to find the murderer in a 'murder mystery'. Throughout the investigation they received appropriate support from the teacher.
- The work in pupils' books shows how hard pupils work and the good progress they make. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills in subjects other than English.
- Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning by providing support that is effective in one-to-one and small group sessions, as well as in lessons. This is especially for disabled and those with special educational needs.
- Parents agree that teaching is good and that their children make good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are welcoming and friendly; they treat each other well.
- The school has an effective system for encouraging pupils to behave well, which pupils understand. This is based on clear expectations of how pupils should behave. It fosters very positive relationships and mutual respect, ensuring there is no discrimination. As a result, pupils behave well in and out of lessons. Pupils come to school keen to learn and work hard. On the very few occasions when pupils become restless, they respond quickly to the teacher's request to improve their behaviour.
- Inspectors analysed the school's records of behaviour, which showed that it is consistently good over time. Pupils conducted themselves impeccably during the inspection, both indoors and outdoors, despite building repair work taking place. Pupils say that this good behaviour is typical.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different forms of bullying, such as name calling, and say that such incidents are very rare in school. If pupils do fall out or experience unkindness, they know who to go to and they are confident that teachers or other staff will help them to resolve it. Pupils like the 'Bullying Box' organised by the school council because it allows them to post their worries to their teachers.
- There have been no recent exclusions or racist incidents.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils said that they feel safe in school because they trust their teachers to look after them.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and manage risks in a range of situations. They know how to keep safe on the internet as the school has clear displays about this and has provided support and advice through lessons.
- Attendance is improving and current school data show that it is now average. The school has clear systems in place to encourage pupils to attend school regularly. The school is continuing to work with parents to improve this further, by explaining how longer absences, for family holidays, can impact on the progress their child makes.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, well supported by the deputy headteacher, has created a welcoming and purposeful environment, where everyone is focused on learning. All staff and governors are committed to doing their best for the benefit of the pupils in school.
- The leaders, including governors, have an accurate knowledge of the school's strengths and areas to improve. Consequently, the school improvement plan has the correct priorities for further improvement. Discussions with staff and governors are taken into account when writing the plans and help to make these effective.
- The views of parents and pupils are beginning to be sought and the school is beginning to involve parents in their child's learning. For example, parents of Early Years Foundation Stage children enjoy coming in to learn alongside their child in Stay and Play sessions. This gives parents an opportunity to gain a better understanding of how to help their child at home.
- The arrangements for checking teachers' performance are clear and are linked to the national Teachers' Standards. The objectives set out for each teacher include how success will be measured against pupils' achievement. This has led to improvements in teaching.
- The school is strongly committed to ensuring equal opportunity for all pupils. The impact of pupil premium funding is carefully monitored. It has been used to employ extra staff to provide support to eligible pupils. These pupils have made good progress because the support is effective.
- The range of subjects taught provides a variety of experiences which make learning fun and increase the pupils' understanding of the world in which they live. Year 4 pupils enjoyed practical science workshops, from an external specialist teacher, that helped them understand how to investigate materials. Specialist music teaching, linked to their classroom work, also enriches pupils' learning. The school has already started to plan for the new National Curriculum that will be introduced in schools later this year.
- The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Regular assessments are made of what the children know and can do, and activities are carefully planned which interest children and which steadily build their skills and knowledge. For example, a group of children were investigating three dimensional shapes to find out which ones would roll down a slope. They developed their language skills by describing the movements of the shapes.
- Middle leaders with responsibility for subjects, or other specific areas, have a clear understanding of their roles and accountability. They lead their areas of responsibility effectively, both by example and in working collaboratively with colleagues. However, subject leaders, other than for English, do not check what opportunities pupils have to use their writing skills in their subject.
- The school is using the government funding for physical education and sport to provide sports coaches to extend the range of activities for pupils and to work alongside teachers so that their skills are further developed in teaching this subject, particularly in tennis and dance. This is having a beneficial effect on pupils' health and well-being.
- Assemblies and a wide range of enrichment activities contribute well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. During 'fruit time', Year 6 pupils watched 'Newsround' to develop their awareness and knowledge of global events.
- There is a good range of out-of-school activities to support pupils' interests, including sport and music.
- Parents hold positive opinions of the school and its work. The large majority of those who spoke to the inspectors would recommend the school to others. However, parents of pupils, in year groups other than the Early Years Foundation Stage, say that they would welcome more opportunities to come into school to see what their child is learning. They would also value more information on how to help them more at home.
- The local authority knows the school well and is committed to providing high quality support and guidance as necessary to promote further development of teaching and learning. For example, the school was involved in the local authority's initiative to enhance the learning for those pupils supported by pupil premium funding, enabling them to make faster progress.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors have a good understanding of how well the school is doing compared with other schools and what actions are being taken to raise pupils' progress and attainment.
- Governors use their skills to support and challenge leaders of the school appropriately because they are ambitious for the school and pupils' achievements.
- They ensure that the school meets statutory safeguarding requirements and they effectively support the pupils who are most in need.
- Governors visit the school regularly through their links with different subjects and this gives them a clear picture of the day-to-day running of the school, as well as the quality of teaching and pupil achievement.
- Governors are well informed about teachers' performance management, including that of the headteacher. They review teachers' pay accordingly. They are aware of what is being done to reward good teaching and where underperformance has been addressed in the past.
- They check that policies are up to date and that finances are managed effectively. They understand and review the impact of the spending of pupil premium funding and primary sports funding, in order to ensure that the money is used to improve pupils' progress and physical well-being.

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	110269
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	444080

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	440
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fayth Holmes
Headteacher	Margaret Jordan
Date of previous school inspection	4–5 November 2009
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