

Oakwood Avenue Community Primary School

Oakwood Avenue, Warrington, Cheshire, WA1 3SZ

Inspection dates 10–11 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.

- Pupils achieve well from their starting points on entry, which are generally below, or well below, those typical for their age.
- Teaching is good and some is outstanding. Pupils make good progress.
- The school's processes for tracking pupils' progress have been very effective in raising standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. Progress in reading is particularly strong.
- The school provides a nurturing and caring environment which enables pupils to behave well and feel safe. Pupils are polite, courteous and considerate.
- The curriculum is rich and is presented within inspirational contexts to ensure pupils' enjoyment and eagerness to learn.
- The school's strategies to manage pupils' behaviour within the two designated provisions are effective. As a result, pupils in these units achieve very well.
- Pupils' attendance has improved to reach the national average.
- Teaching and achievement are continuing to improve due to effective leadership. Senior leaders also provide good support to other schools in the local authority.
- The governing body knows the school well and actively supports and challenges it to improve further.
- Parents rightly believe that the school provides a good education for their children.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to apply their mathematical skills to solve problems.
- Checks on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress are not always sufficiently rigorous.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 18 lessons and part lessons.
- Inspectors observed many aspects of the school’s work, including the support for pupils who need extra help. They listened to pupils read and had discussions with pupils to establish their views of the school. Inspectors examined pupils’ work in their exercise books and on display in classrooms and around the school.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents. These included: records of notable incidents including bullying, the tracking of individual pupils’ progress, the school’s plan for improvement, the use of additional funding for supporting pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, the impact of the primary school sport funding, safeguarding and child protection arrangements and pupils’ attendance records.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and assistant headteacher, the Early Years Foundation Stage leader, the special educational needs coordinator, the safeguarding officer and middle managers. A discussion was held with three governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and with two local authority advisers.
- Inspectors evaluated the views of parents. Informal discussions were conducted with parents who visited the school. An evaluation was made of the 77 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) alongside 159 responses to a questionnaire conducted by the school at its recent parents’ evenings.
- The views of staff were considered through 36 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Prydwen Elfed-Owens, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Peter Allen	Additional Inspector
Rosemary Batty	Additional Inspector

Full Report

Information about this school

- Oakwood Avenue Primary School is considerably larger than most primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported by school action is in line with the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is slightly above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding is above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children looked after by the local authority.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion who speak English as an additional language are low.
- The number of pupils joining and leaving school part-way through their education is above average.
- The school has two Key Stage 2 local authority designated provisions: one for pupils with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties; and one for pupils with cognition and learning difficulties.
- There is a large nursery on site and provision for two-year-olds, through 'Little Oakies'.
- There is a breakfast club run by the school.
- Since the previous inspection in 2009, a new headteacher has taken up post.
- The headteacher has recently provided support to another school within the local authority as an executive headteacher.
- In 2013, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- During this inspection, most of the Year 4 pupils were out of school on a residential visit.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' achievement further, particularly in applying their number skills in mathematics throughout the school, by ensuring:
 - all teachers check pupils' understanding of their work effectively during lessons so they can adjust activities where necessary to meet pupils' needs and level of understanding
 - marking is consistent so that all pupils are aware of their next steps and targets.
- Ensure that leaders' checks on the quality of teaching always identify specific aspects in need of improvement and relate to the progress pupils make.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below, and often well below, those typical for their age. They make good progress to the end of Year 6. Progress in reading is particularly strong.
- By the end of the Reception Year, most pupils are confident and almost half of them reach age-related expectations in their communication and social skills.
- In Key Stage 1, standards fluctuate from year to year but are usually just below average. Currently, however, more pupils are reaching higher standards than in the past three years. Even so, pupils' numerical and mental arithmetic skills are not developed as well as they could be. In response, the school has developed good long-term plans to ensure that the teaching of mathematics in Key Stage 1 improves.
- Progress in Key Stage 2 accelerates and, by Year 6, pupils have developed their skills well to reach above average standards in reading. Since the previous inspection, standards in reading have improved at Key Stage 2. There has been a strong emphasis on reading and pupils of all abilities enjoy reading a wide variety of appealing fiction and non-fiction books in well-planned daily guided reading sessions
- Attainment in mathematics and writing, for pupils in mainstream classes, is also above average, although when figures are for all pupils are taken in to account, overall attainment in these two subjects is closer to average.
- Pupils in the designated provision units make very good progress from entry as is confirmed by the school's records and reports and discussion with local authority representatives.
- Pupils eligible for free school meals and supported through the pupil premium make very good progress across the school. In 2013, the standards attained by this group of pupils were approximately two terms behind their peers in reading and mathematics and four terms behind in writing. However, their current work and the school's own data show that these gaps are narrowing. It is also important to note that when just the data for pupils in the mainstream classes is analysed, then the in-school attainment gaps between the two groups are considerably narrower.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because of the effective support they receive.
- The proportion of the most able pupils reaching Level 5 in the Key Stage 2 national tests increased in 2013 and was in line with national figures for Level 5 attainment in reading. Current work and projectional data shows that end of key stage standards look set to be even higher in 2014.

The quality of teaching is good

- Work in pupils' books, the outcomes of the school's checks and the activities observed during the inspection confirm that the impact of teaching over time is good. Sometimes, it is outstanding, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Teachers inspire pupils to want to learn and so pupils are keen to come to school. Teachers' checks on pupils' understanding of their work during lessons usually result in work being adjusted to meet their individual needs although this is not always so.
- A wide range of resources, including impressive displays, books, interesting artefacts and interactive technology help make learning absorbing for pupils.
- Imaginative and well-planned activities promote pupils' positive attitudes to work. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to support one another and share ideas.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and comments are positive and boost pupils' morale. However, insufficient attention is given in some classes to help pupils know how to improve their work and to identify their own next learning target.

- The emphasis of the school's tracking processes is on the progress of groups of pupils, for example, by gender and for those who are supported by the pupil premium funding. This is having a good effect on pupils' achievement.
- Most teachers have high expectations of their pupils. For instance, in Year 5, pupils were engrossed in challenges to improve their mathematical skills. In Year 6, pupils were led skilfully to recall their knowledge of London and share it with their partner. The class knowledge was then pooled to compare and contrast it with knowledge they had about their home town. The end study was impressive and all pupils had contributed towards it.
- In mathematics, some work is repeated unnecessarily so that some pupils find the work too easy and do not make rapid enough progress. In addition, in some classes, pupils have too few opportunities to use their mathematical knowledge to solve problems and extend their skills.
- There is a key focus in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 on ensuring that pupils accurately recognise and sound out letters and words and so develop their reading, communication and social skills.
- Teaching assistants are trained and deployed very well to support pupils' specific learning needs.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This is evident in lessons, on the playgrounds and at lunch times. They are well supervised and relationships between pupils and adults are founded on mutual respect.
- Pupils report that they have opportunities to take responsibility; for example: in the dining hall, serving on the school council, or as a buddy to the younger children. They say that their contributions are valued and that they also have opportunities to say what they think and make suggestions.
- Pupils are polite and sociable with visitors. During the inspection, pupils were forthcoming in conversations and when working in groups, discussing their views.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and they say that good behaviour is typical of their school. One pupil explained 'It's not perfect all the time, but as soon as there is a problem teachers sort it out.' This view is confirmed by pupils' improved attendance and punctuality, by school records, and by parents' views in response to the online questionnaire.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep safe, for example, in relation to e-safety, road and water safety. They say that 'the police look after us' and they feel very safe and happy in school. Pupils feel well cared for and respected by all the adults, and know they can go to anyone should they need help or have any concerns.
- Most pupils are enthusiastic learners and put effort into their work. They were unanimous in their praise of 'Oaky', the character who introduces new challenges to all aspects of their topic work. However, some pupils lose interest in their learning when work is not matched to their ability, particularly in mathematics.
- Pupils listen well to one another in partner and group discussions. Most are well involved in their tasks and enthusiastic in their learning.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The school's efforts to promote positive behaviour and attitudes is a notable feature of its work. The school's work to support and nurture pupils who have faced difficulties in their lives is also a particular strength.
- In the lunch hall, pupils enjoy dining with friends and say that the food is 'very good'.

The leadership and management are good

- Strong and aspirational leadership by the headteacher and the school leadership team, supported by an effective governing body, has ensured that the school continues to move

forward. This momentum has continued even when members of the senior leadership team have been away from the school to provide leadership in other schools.

- The headteacher is recognised by the local authority as an excellent model of leadership.
- The staff and the governing body are dedicated to the school and to accelerating the learning of pupils of all abilities. Consequently, the school's overall effectiveness remains good and it is in a good position to improve further.
- Staff are supportive of leaders' aims and they work together positively and effectively as a team. As a result, pupils' progress continues to increase.
- The school's checks on the quality of teaching and on pupils' achievement are usually thorough and supportive, but occasionally more descriptive than evaluative. They do not always point out clearly what needs to be done to improve pupils' progress or a particular teacher's practice.
- Arrangements to check the performance of staff are tightly linked to the school's priorities, such as an increase in the proportion of the most able pupils achieving the highest possible standards.
- The systems to support the training, development and deployment of teachers and teaching assistants are effective. Presently, staff are focused on raising standards in pupils' writing.
- The broad and rich range of subjects studied through exciting and inspirational contexts ensures that pupils enjoy a variety of learning experiences, which are often enriched by visits and trips. The breadth of the curriculum stimulates pupils' enjoyment of learning and is a strength of the school.
- The primary school sport funding, for promoting pupils' greater participation in sport, is used well to train teachers so that they are confident to teach a variety of sports. This has been successful; staff and pupils have benefited from increased confidence and enjoyment of new sports, such as golf.
- The breakfast club, open to all pupils, provides them with breakfast and an opportunity to develop their social skills by joining in with other pupils to play a variety of games.
- The local authority considers the school is able to maintain its trend of improvement with minimal external support.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is effective and very committed to the school. Governors contribute to the life and work of the school and have a very good understanding of pupils' progress. They provide good challenge to leaders and methodically hold the school to account. There are a number of examples where this has influenced pupils' achievement very positively, for instance, in good succession planning to ensure that existing staff have been able to take temporary positions with confidence.
 - Governors participate fully in checks on the school's performance, including reviewing performance against national data. The governing body is fully aware of the impact of the pupil premium funding on the progress of those eligible pupils.

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	131372
Local authority	Warrington
Inspection number	439635

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	2–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	485
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Bennion
Headteacher	Gary Cunningham
Date of previous school inspection	5 May 2009
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