

# Oakridge Primary School

Silvester Way, Stafford, ST17 0PR

## Inspection dates

9 July 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
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.

- Exceptionally strong leadership and management are a major reason for the school's successes. There is no complacency and the school has ambitions to improve on the already very high standards.
- Pupils' achievement is outstanding and they make excellent progress throughout the school in all subjects.
- Standards reached by pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are consistently well above average.
- Teaching is outstanding. Lessons are exciting and interesting and teachers inspire their pupils to develop a strong love of learning.
- Teaching assistants are highly skilled and work effectively with their teachers to provide excellent support to all their pupils.
- Pupils feel very safe and their behaviour is exemplary. All parents who responded online (Parent View) agree that this is the case.
- Pupils use their excellent literacy and numeracy skills to achieve very well in other subjects like science, art, history and geography.
- Children make an outstanding start to their school life in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- There is a positive atmosphere in the school with all pupils and adults believing in the same values of respect for each other. In the words of one staff member, 'Working here is a unique experience; it really is a special place.'
- Leadership and management at all levels, including governance, are outstanding and committed to a consistent push for excellence.
- Additional activities and visits provide pupils with many memorable experiences and these enrich their personal development.
- Staff are very committed to identifying and trying out new practices and this is driving up standards. They regularly share their findings and successes with other schools.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 14 lessons, nine of which were jointly observed with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. A number of small-group activities were also observed with the senior leadership team.
- The inspectors talked to pupils and listened to them read and looked at work in their books.
- During the inspection, meetings were held with senior leaders, subject leaders and the special educational needs coordinator. The lead inspector also had meetings with four members of the governing body.
- The inspectors took account of the 38 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and one letter from a parent. They analysed the 23 questionnaires completed by school staff.
- The inspectors observed the school at work and looked at a range of documentation, including its development plans, information on pupils' progress and attainment and evaluation of its own performance. They looked at reports produced by the local authority.
- The inspectors also looked at information on staff performance and records relating to attendance and behaviour, safeguarding and child protection.

## Inspection team

Alan Giles, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Sheila Crew

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Oakridge is an average-sized primary school.
- Pupils are taught in single classes in each year group, from Nursery to Year 6.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- Very small numbers of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well below average. This funding is to support looked-after children or those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- 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?

- Increase the progress rates of a small number of pupils in writing and mathematics by:
  - building on recent successes to continue to motivate a small number of boys to improve their writing skills
  - providing a small number of girls with further challenges to improve their recall of number facts when solving problems.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Achievement is outstanding because, whatever their starting points, pupils make at least good, often outstanding progress, in all years. Year 6 pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in 2013 was well above the national average, continuing a long trend of similar outcomes. Projections for the 2014 test results are set to continue this success.
- The proportions of pupils who make expected and more-than-expected progress in all subjects in Year 6 is high compared to the national figures. Projections for 2014 show these are set to improve further with a big rise in the number of pupils who make more than expected progress in writing.
- Most children are working at the levels typical for their age when they enter the Reception class. They make outstanding progress in all areas of development and are very well prepared for the next stages in their learning. This is because the children are challenged and inspired with activities that capture their imaginations. Consequently, by the end of the year many have highly developed literacy and numeracy skills well beyond those expected for their age.
- By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is well above average. Projections for the 2014 Year 2 tests match the well above average standards in all subjects sustained by the school over many years and these pupils have made outstanding progress since they started in the Reception year.
- All groups of pupils achieve as well as each other. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make outstanding progress like their peers by responding positively to the expert support that they receive.
- There are too few pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding to comment on their attainment by the end of Year 6 without identifying them. This group achieves extremely well across the school. Additional support is checked rigorously and shows that the gap between the attainment of eligible pupils and the others in the school closes very quickly.
- The very small numbers of pupils who speak English as an additional language make rapid progress in improving their speaking skills. Their attainment in English and mathematics is as high as other pupils by the end of Year 6.
- Younger pupils use their knowledge of phonics (the sounds that letter make) to improve their reading skills very well. They perform very well in the national reading check for Year 1 pupils. Reading standards are very high across the school and staff promote a joy of reading for pupils of all ages.
- The number of pupils who make more-than expected progress in writing has improved in Year 6, because writing in other subjects has motivated them to write more extensively. This was seen when they evaluated their art designs for monsters and wrote poems inspired by Beethoven's symphonies. The school is still ambitious to accelerate progress further for some boys.
- The number of pupils who make more-than expected progress in mathematics, although high, is lower than in reading and writing. The school is set to continue the recent momentum of improvement by giving some girls more opportunities to apply number skills when solving problems.

**The quality of teaching is outstanding**

- The quality of teaching over time is never less than good and regularly outstanding. Teachers are very creative and plan tasks that engage and excite their pupils and help them produce work of a very high standard.
- In the Reception class, children are given high quality support by all adults and this is successful in consistently moving their learning on. Reading, writing and mathematics skills are taught very well and adults plan exciting activities that inspire children to write, read and use their number skills on a daily basis. For example, children designed a World Cup football stadium and planned many other activities such as tickets and programmes in a theme on football.
- There is a strong sense of team spirit among staff. One teaching assistant wrote about working with 'passionate and committed' groups of people. Teaching assistants have excellent levels of expertise and use these skills to question and challenge pupils to achieve the very best they can.
- Teachers have very high expectations of pupils and have a detailed knowledge of what they are capable of achieving. Pupils' show their awareness of the 'reach for the stars' school motto in all classrooms where they consistently work hard to do the best they can, while still enjoying their learning.
- Teaching staff constantly reflect on their own practice to improve the learning opportunities for pupils. Recent training in questioning skills is one way that staff are deepening pupils' understanding of their learning. They do this by very successfully involving pupils in reflecting and developing their curiosity. For example, Year 1 pupils calculated fractions of whole totals and quickly worked out what three quarters were after finding out one quarter. Also, Year 6 pupils checked the stopping distances of dodgem cars 'driven' by Sir Isaac Newton in an experiment on velocity and gravity.
- Teachers' marking in books consistently praises pupils' work, describes their achievements very well and gives them clear instructions on how to achieve the next steps in their learning. Pupils regularly respond to this advice by doing corrections or recording their understanding.
- All parents who responded online thought that the amount of homework given by the school is appropriate. They help their children with reading, spelling and mental mathematics at home and leave constructive messages in their home learning journals.
- Pupils' books show that English and mathematics are taught very well. Resources, such as information technology, are used very well to improve pupils' skills in other subjects. Outstanding teaching in history and geography and art and music, also results in pupils producing work of a very high quality.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Parent conversations and numerous letters sent to the school confirm the excellent reputation the pupils have for behaviour and politeness in the local and wider community. One letter from an official in Croke Park, Ireland said, 'Pupils from Oakridge are the best behaved I have seen in twenty years of showing visitors around'.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. This is because the school is a very caring community and shares the same values, with all adults and children having high levels of concern for the safety and well-being of each other.

- There are procedures in place for pupils to inform staff of any bullying incidents. Pupils say that these procedures work well. The school council has been involved in setting-up the anti-bullying policy, including the dangers of cyber bullying, and pupils are regularly asked whether this is working.
- Lunch and break-times reflect the harmonious nature of the school. There are excellent relationships between pupils and supervisory staff and pupils play a number of games without any disputes. Older pupils do a fantastic job of checking the well-being of their younger peers.
- Attendance is consistently above average and pupils' enjoyment of learning is evident in all lessons as they consistently try their hardest and respect the views and work of their classmates. These strengths have enabled the school to gain the 'United Nations Rights Respecting Award'.

### **The leadership and management** are outstanding

- All returned staff questionnaires strongly agreed that the school is well led and managed. The headteacher provides exceptional leadership based on a clear vision for high quality teaching and learning. This vision is successfully developing pupils' love of learning and valuable personal skills such as resilience and tolerance.
- Outstanding leadership is effectively closing some gaps between girls and boys in mathematics and writing standards in line with the very high reading standards. Pupils are motivated by a 'can do' attitude which is a recurring theme in the school. One recent visitor wrote, 'Your school mission is very much alive and your school is a celebration of learning'.
- Senior leaders, together with very effective subject leaders, know all pupils very well and collect information on pupils' progress very effectively. This means pupils of all abilities make at least good progress and also ensures there is no discrimination within the school.
- The school has an excellent track record for improving teaching and training and supporting new teachers to the profession. This works well because all leaders and teachers are excellent role models and the school receives many visitors from other schools to see this work in action.
- The arrangements for managing staff performance are rigorous. Teachers' individual targets are linked closely to the school improvement plan and pupils' progress. Their pay and career progression depends upon them meeting them successfully.
- Pupils' investigations across a range of topics and enrichment activities successfully improve their understanding of different social, ethnic and religious differences around the world. They do this through, for example, celebration assemblies and visits to different places of worship. Pupils gained insight into moral viewpoints on slavery during visits to Liverpool and studying the 1916 Easter uprising during their annual visit to Ireland.
- The school is spending its sport funding on additional resources to improve teachers' knowledge and understanding of physical education further. Pupils have a very positive interest in healthy lifestyles and many are successfully involved in out-of-school competitions. The new arrangements are increasing pupils' participation in a wide range of sporting activities.
- The local authority has no formal procedures for supporting this outstanding school. It has given training for the Early Years Foundation staff and for teaching mathematics, as well as an audit

on teaching effectiveness. These actions have been highly valued by school leaders.

- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. Members of staff are carefully checked for suitability for working in schools and receive relevant training and updates to their practices.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are overwhelmingly enthusiastic for the school to be the best it can and are a well-trained and skilful body who work very closely with the school as one leadership team.
- The Chair of Governors, who is a national leader of governance, leads a very informed team who have rigorously assessed their skills and understanding so they can support and challenge the school in the most effective way.
- The governing body has an accurate understanding of how well the school is doing, much of which is acquired by joint leadership monitoring and training. They do not over-rely on information presented to them by the school and have excellent systems for finding things out for themselves.
- The governors have a good understanding of teaching strengths and this knowledge is used well to reward good teaching.
- They ensure that all funding is checked for its impact on pupils' achievement, including the impact of the additional funding for the pupil premium and sport development.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	124130
<b>Local authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	441317

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	246
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Andrew Chell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paul Fisher
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 November 2006
<b>Telephone number</b>	01785 354620
<b>Fax number</b>	01785 354622
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