

Oakwood Primary School

Cotswold Road, Cheltenham, GL52 5HD

Inspection dates 11–12 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leaders are committed to raising standards for the pupils in the school. They work tirelessly to make improvements to teaching so that pupils can achieve well.
- Leaders have very thorough systems and staff in place to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils and to give support to their families.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics as a result of effective teaching.
- When pupils leave the school in Year 6, they reach standards that are equal to those found nationally.
- Teachers have a good understanding of the needs of their pupils and they plan work that will help them make progress.
- Pupils are proud of their school. They are polite and behave well. They are keen to learn and also play well together.
- Pupils feel very safe. They know that the adults care for them well and pupils know how to keep themselves safe.
- The governing body are very knowledgeable about the work of the school. They support leaders and staff to ensure the well-being of the pupils. They ensure that leaders are always focused on how to improve the school further.
- Subject and key stage leaders know extremely well how well pupils are doing in their subject. They work alongside colleagues to improve teaching and so improve the outcomes for the pupils.
- Children in the early years provision have a positive start to school. They make good progress and the school ensures that children are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Parents are highly appreciative of how the school helps their children and supports the families.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers' written feedback to pupils does not always clearly identify how they could improve their work. This slows the progress pupils can make.
- Pupils do not always have enough opportunities to respond to the comments in their books, so they miss the chance to make further progress.
- Pupils are not confident deciding how well they or others have succeeded in their work and how they can improve it.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 lessons and part-lessons. They were accompanied by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior leaders in seven of the observations.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, teaching and non-teaching staff, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority and with pupils from Years 3 to 6.
- The inspectors heard pupils from Years 1, 2 and 6 read.
- Inspectors looked at the school's development plans and monitoring files, the headteacher's leadership files, and arrangements for the management of staff performance. They also looked at safeguarding documentation and minutes of the governing body meetings. They examined the school's records of pupils' progress and evaluated work in pupils' books.
- Inspectors considered the 51 staff questionnaires that were returned.
- There were insufficient responses to the online parent questionnaire Parent View to be able to analyse the results. Inspectors considered the recent survey of parent views undertaken by the school. They also heard from parents and held informal discussions with parents at the beginning of the school day.

Inspection team

Jenny Batelen, Lead Inspector	Additional Inspector
Helen Owen	Additional Inspector
Felix Rayner	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Oakwood is slightly larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Children attend the early years provision full-time.
- The majority of pupils come from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils who start at the school speaking English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding in this school for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or who are looked after) is well above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at the end of Year 6.
- The governing body manages a breakfast club.
- The school is federated with another primary school and seven children's centres. The headteacher is executive headteacher of all of these schools and centres, which also all share the same governing body. The other school and children's centres did not form part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement by ensuring that:
 - written feedback to pupils clearly identifies how they can improve their work
 - pupils have more time to respond to comments about their work so that they can make the necessary improvements that will help them make more rapid progress
 - pupils have the confidence to decide for themselves how they can improve their own and others' work.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher is extremely well supported by staff and governors in his drive to improve the chances for all pupils in the school. 'Aspire, Achieve' over the front door is an ethos that pervades all the school does.
- Leaders have worked to improve the quality of teaching so that achievement for all pupils has improved and all groups of pupils make at least good progress. Teachers fully understand their responsibility for how well their pupils achieve and they value the training and mentoring they receive to ensure they improve their skills. Leaders at all levels monitor teaching and set targets for improvement based on teaching standards and pupil progress. Teachers know that there are no automatic pay increases.
- There is a strong culture of learning across the school. Subject leaders and those who lead key stages have developed their skills very well so that they are highly effective. They have a thorough understanding of their subject or key stage and also the work across the school. They work tirelessly to help teachers improve their skills using a range of methods, including sharing the best practice. Links across the federation and with other local schools provide further support to developments. For example, improvement plans and ways of identifying pupil progress are shared and developed together.
- The comprehensive range of subjects enables pupils to thoroughly enjoy their learning. Key Stage 2 pupils spoke with enthusiasm of this term's focus on Roald Dahl and the books they are enjoying reading. Writing and mathematics skills are developed across the range of subjects. Visits and visitors enhance pupils' studies. Pupils have many opportunities to explore art and music through studying works of great artists and composers but also creating their own.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils have the chance to reflect on themselves and their world, as was very clearly demonstrated in a 'Faith in Art' project in which Year 6 pupils explored faith journeys. They have a strong understanding of the different faiths and cultures represented in Britain today. They understand about tolerance and respect for themselves and for others.
- Pupils have a good understanding about democracy through voting for members of the school council and know how the council helps influence change in the school. There are strong links across the federation and with other institutions involved in the school. This enables pupils to broaden their experience as they take part in a wide range of extra activities with friends from other schools. As a result, pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school is committed to ensuring that there is equality of opportunity for all pupils and no discrimination. Pupil premium funding is used for a range of support for pupils, such as intervention groups, pastoral support staff, trips and breakfast club. As a result, these pupils make progress that is at least in line with that of their peers.
- The primary school physical education and sport funding has been used to improve the confidence of teachers in teaching physical education. Staff have been able to train and work with the local network of schools and introduce more competitive sports. The funding has also enabled an increase in the amount of sport available in school. As a result, pupils are taking part in more sport and are very enthusiastic about the opportunities they have.
- Safeguarding procedures meet current statutory requirements and are very robust. The school is highly skilled at identifying pupils who may be having difficulties of any kind. Key staff are available to support the pupils and their families. Pupils are very safe and have the confidence to turn to adults in school when they need help.
- The school and local community give strong support to pupils as they make the transition to secondary school. As a result, pupils spoke confidently of their anticipated move in September.
- Parents feel that the school is well led and managed and made inspectors aware of how much they value the support the school gives their families.
- The local authority gives good support to the school. Officers have worked with the school to raise achievement, develop the skills of the middle leaders and supported governors with training.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Members of the governing body use their range of skills to provide highly effective support to the school. They have excellent knowledge of information on pupils' achievement and how well the school is doing compared with national figures. This knowledge is supported by their visits to school, discussions with staff and their knowledge of the local community. As a result, they are skilled at asking searching questions that will lead to improvements for the school and increase its effectiveness.
 - Governors know about the quality of teaching and understand how good performance is rewarded and any underperformance is tackled. They set targets for the headteacher to improve the school further.

Governors monitor closely how all funding is spent and are particularly aware of how specific funding, such as the pupil premium, benefits the pupils concerned. Governors regularly review and update policies, including safeguarding, to ensure that they are tools that improve the work of the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are welcoming to visitors and enjoy talking about their school and their work. Relationships across the school are very strong so that there is a strong culture of trust.
- Pupils play very well together. They make the most of the large playground space to run and jump and climb, and use up their energy so that they are ready to learn when back in class.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons and are quick to settle and apply themselves to the tasks they have been set. They understand and appreciate the class systems to help them learn and behave well.
- There are consistent systems in place to help those who find it difficult to manage their feelings. The appointment of members of staff with pastoral responsibilities has greatly improved the support the school can give to these pupils. As a result, there has been a considerable drop in the number of exclusions, with none since September 2014.
- Pupils move sensibly between classes and to different group activities so that learning can carry on without any disruption.
- The school has many strategies in place to work with families and improve attendance. As a result, this has improved and is now broadly average. Most pupils are punctual to school, but there is a small proportion of pupils who find it difficult to arrive on time for school. Breakfast club gives good support to some of these families so that pupils are in school and well prepared for the school day.
- Parents agree with the staff that pupils are well behaved and that there are good systems in place to support this.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Staff are extremely well trained and alert to any issues that indicate a pupil may be in need of help. Strong links with a range of agencies mean that help can be provided immediately when there are any difficulties for pupils and their families. Governors are rigorous in ensuring that everything possible is done to provide safety and security for all pupils in the school.
- Pupils feel very safe. They have an excellent understanding of all forms of bullying, including racial and homophobic bullying. They feel that any instances of bullying are very rare, but that if it does occur, adults deal with it very quickly. They know how other forms of abuse may affect them and their families, and value the opportunities to learn and talk about these.
- Pupils are highly aware of how to keep themselves safe when using the internet. They understand about cyber bullying and how to ensure they are safe and not at risk of bullying.
- Risk assessments of the site and of the range of activities, including trips off-site, ensure that pupils are safe in and around school.
- Parents believe that their children are kept very safe in school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers are ambitious for their pupils to do the best they can. As a result, they plan lively and interesting lessons that help pupils to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils consider they are taught well and parents agree with their children.
- Teachers make good use of the information about how well pupils are progressing to ensure that they set work the right level that will challenge all groups of pupils.
- Teachers use subject-specific language consistently so that pupils develop confidence in using and understanding these terms. This was clearly demonstrated in Year 1 as pupils learnt to use adjectives while identifying connectives learnt the previous week.
- Teaching assistants work alongside teachers to support groups of pupils. They are skilled at supporting pupils to concentrate and tackle their tasks whether in the whole class or in a small group.
- Teachers mark books regularly and give clear guidance as to how pupils can improve their work. However,

this is not consistent across all classes and, as a result, some pupils miss the opportunity to make further progress. Pupils do not always respond to the comments in sufficient depth and so lose the chance to improve their work.

- Teachers clearly identify what pupils should be learning in each lesson and pupils are beginning to evaluate how well they have done. However, this is not yet firmly established across the school and pupils are not yet confident enough to decide for themselves how they can improve their work. There are few opportunities for them to consider how well their classmates have done and make suggestions for improvements. As a result, they are not yet developing the skills to take responsibility for their own learning.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enter the Reception class with skills that are below those typical for their age, especially personal, social and emotional and writing and physical skills.
- All pupils, including the few who speak English as an additional language, make good progress through the school. In 2014, pupils in Year 6 left school with standards in line with those found nationally in reading and writing and above those found nationally in mathematics.
- Current school information, including work in books, indicates that standards for the current Year 6 are lower, but progress from their different starting points is good.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are below average but steadily rising. School information shows that pupils currently in Year 2 are making at least good progress, particularly in reading and mathematics. The gaps with national figures are closing.
- Writing has a large focus throughout the school and there is evidence of improved achievement. Younger pupils are given every opportunity to develop their writing skills in a range of ways, including developing their physical skills. Pupils write at every opportunity across all subjects. They are proud of their own and others' successes that are celebrated through the 'Wonderful Writers' awards.
- Phonics (the sounds that letters make) is taught consistently throughout the school until pupils move onto grammar, punctuation and spelling sessions. As a result, pupils in Year 1 achieve standards that are broadly in line with the national average in the phonics check. This helps them make good progress in reading as they are able to use these skills to read unknown words. Pupils read with increasing fluency and older pupils speak with enthusiasm of the range of books they read and their favourite authors.
- Mathematics teaching has been particularly successful. Pupils enjoy the challenge of problem solving and explaining their work and thinking. They are beginning to be able to decide how well they have done and what would make their work better.
- The most-able pupils are challenged well. They are given tasks that allow them to deepen their thinking while aspiring to reach the higher levels.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are very clearly identified, and plans to meet their specific needs are detailed and monitored by leaders. There is a range of support available that helps these pupils make similar good progress in their learning and also in their ability to manage their feelings.
- Disadvantaged pupils eligible for pupil premium progress from their different starting points at rates at least in line with their peers, and in some cases better. In the 2014 national tests, the gap in disadvantaged pupils' attainment compared with that of other pupils nationally was equivalent to about half a term's progress in reading and two terms in writing, with no gap in mathematics. When compared with other pupils in the school, the equivalent gaps are about half a term in reading, one and a half terms in writing and no gaps in mathematics. Overall, gaps are closing between other pupils in the school and nationally.

The early years provision

is good

- Leadership of the early years is strong. Leaders know the children and the community very well. Outcomes for children are improving and the proportion of children achieving a good level of development is just below the national figure. As a result, an increasing proportion of children are ready for Year 1.
- There is a clear understanding of the needs of the children and activities are planned to enhance the opportunities for children to learn and make good progress. There is a particular focus on developing the personal, social and emotional skills so that children are able to play well together and learn alongside

their friends.

- Children are keen to learn and they are able to develop skills across the all areas of learning because of the wide range of activities available. Children are encouraged to choose activities for themselves, following their interests, as well as working with adults on activities such as writing, where a puppet helps them develop their thinking skills.
- Teaching is good. Planning includes children’s interests and the school’s priorities. As a result, there is a strong focus on developing the writing skills and in giving them early opportunities to learn about features of language, such as adjectives.
- Children have easy access to the outside area and they are able to learn and develop a range of skills. Staff have plans in place to develop this area further so that children’s experiences are enriched and progress, particularly in physical development, can be more rapid.
- Staff make accurate judgements of how well children are learning. Children’s activities are recorded in ‘learning journeys’ which clearly demonstrate the progress they make.
- Children move between activities sensibly and safely. They help tidy up and are able to listen carefully to each other and their teachers.
- Links with homes and parents are strong. Parents value the information they receive and the fact that they are welcomed into the classroom.
- There are strong links with the children’s centres and with other providers. These links, along with home visits, ensure that children have a good start to their school life.

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	135857
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	453674

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	323
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Reverend Stephen Eldridge
Headteacher	Charles Welsh
Date of previous school inspection	14–15 March 2013
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