

Oakdale Junior School

School Lane, Poole, Dorset BH15 3JR

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| Inspection dates | 10–11 May 2016 |
| Overall effectiveness | Good |
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| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Good |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Good |
| Outcomes for pupils | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Requires improvement |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders' high expectations of staff and pupils have improved the quality of teaching and behaviour.
- The curriculum is a strength of the school; it interests and excites pupils so that they acquire knowledge and develop a broad range of skills.
- Pupils in different year groups are making more rapid progress than at the time of the previous inspection.
- The quality of pupils' writing across year groups, but particularly in Year 6, is much higher than at the time of the last inspection.
- Leaders and teachers receive effective external support from the local authority and the school improvement partner.
- The quality of teaching is improving because teachers are planning activities that better meet the needs of most pupils.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school site. They are respectful of staff, each other and the school environment.
- Pupils' attendance is higher than the national average.
- The majority of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs or disability are now making more rapid progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Leaders and governors do not have a sharp enough grasp of the progress of different groups of pupils.
- Some higher-attaining pupils are not making enough progress beyond that which is expected of them.
- Some parents do not feel that communication between home and school is effective.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that leaders and governors:
 - have a clearer, sharper overview of the progress being made by different groups of pupils
 - foster an open, constructive relationship with parents that improves communication between school and home.
- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that teachers use the new assessment system to precisely plan activities that enable the most-able pupils to make more than expected progress.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- School leaders have worked successfully since the last inspection to create a culture in which pupils are encouraged to succeed and have high ambitions. This is reflected in pupils' behaviour and the quality of work they produce.
- The quality of leadership in the school is improving because senior leaders have taken advantage of external support to develop middle leaders. As a result, a greater number of staff are taking responsibility for improving aspects of the school's work, such as the quality of teaching.
- The leadership of teaching is now more robust than it was at the time of the last inspection. This is because teachers are clear about the targets that are set to manage their performance and how these targets will be measured. Close, regular monitoring ensures that teachers are held accountable for their practice and the progress made by pupils in their classes.
- Teaching is improving across the school because teachers are making better use of training opportunities to improve their practice. For example, middle leaders have received training to help them become more strategic in their roles. All staff have received training in assertive mentoring, a means of raising pupil achievement through aspirational target-setting.
- Leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils are well provided for so that they achieve as well as other pupils in the school. The actions taken to improve the achievement of this group of pupils are overseen by a dedicated school leader who effectively monitors this work and ensures that the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent appropriately.
- The curriculum is a strength of the school. It excites pupils' interest because of the range of interesting topics studied and develops a broad range of skills. Reading and writing, in particular, are well developed across the curriculum. Consequently, pupils are prepared well for secondary school.
- Pupils are provided with an extensive range of extra-curricular opportunities, including school trips, visiting speakers and a variety of lunchtime or after-school clubs. These might include sports, drama, cookery, arts and reading clubs. Activities on offer change through the year to ensure that there is variety.
- Pupils' social, moral, cultural and spiritual education is very effectively developed in the school. The curriculum and the school environment encourage pupils to engage with the customs and religious beliefs of people from other cultures. For example, the school is awash with vibrant, colourful displays celebrating religious festivals and exotic foreign places.
- Key values, such as respect, tolerance and honesty, thread through the work of the school so that pupils learn how to be responsible, trustworthy and tolerant citizens. They understand the importance of achieving success by working together in a democratic way. For instance, a mock election was held to decide the names of the school's resident chickens. This was an engaging way of introducing pupils to the notion of democracy.
- Physical education and sports premium funding has been used effectively to nurture pupils' health and well-being. The funding has been used not only to train staff, to encourage pupils' wider participation in sport and to introduce them to less well-known sports, such as handball, but also to provide healthy eating choices at breaktime.
- Leaders do not yet have a precise enough understanding of the progress made by particular groups of pupils. Although they are able to account for individual pupils and talk broadly about pupils' progress, leaders' analysis needs to be sharper to improve the effectiveness of progress monitoring.
- Although leaders have recognised that more must be done to increase parental engagement, and a plan is in place to address this, some parents still feel that communication and the wider relationship between home and school are not as effective as they should be. A minority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire Parent View did not think that the school was well led and managed, and a quarter of respondents would not recommend the school.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are able to talk in detail about how the school has responded to the areas for improvement from the last inspection and the progress made.
 - Governors are committed to the school and frequently visit to monitor aspects of its work. Correspondingly, they also provide challenge to senior leaders. For example, minutes of meetings record questions asked by governors, such as 'Who assesses the effectiveness of pupil premium spending?'
 - Although governors are aware of general trends of attainment and progress, their understanding lacks precision. They are not able to speak authoritatively about the ongoing progress being made by

groups of pupils as they progress through the school year.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Checks are in place to ensure that all staff are appropriate to work with children. All staff and some governors have received child protection and 'Prevent' (the government's anti-radicalisation strategy) training. Relevant staff have also received safer recruitment training, which helps ensure that staff joining the school are appropriate to work with children. In addition, staff, parents and pupils regularly receive workshop training from the Poole Safer Schools and Community Team to raise awareness of aspects of safeguarding, such as e-safety. The school's designated safeguarding lead frequently checks behaviour records to check that there are no safeguarding issues that require investigation.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection because teachers now plan more effectively to meet most pupils' varying needs and have higher expectations of what they can achieve. As a result, most pupils are making more rapid progress.
- As a result of leaders' actions to raise the profile of different groups of pupils, teachers are more aware of pupils who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs. For example, colour-coded stickers on the front of pupils' books enable staff to see at a glance the needs of individual pupils. Consequently, staff are better able to support these pupils, either in the classroom or when assessing work, so that they make more rapid progress.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive when teachers plan interesting activities and the work is suitably challenging. Pupils enjoy the topics they study, appreciate the resources available to them and respond well to working both independently and collaboratively. Pupils' engagement with their learning is apparent in their work because it is purposeful, interesting and lively.
- Pupils take a lot of pride in their work, which is well presented. Across subjects, there are common expectations of neatness and how work should be set out. Pupils' handwriting has notably improved since the last inspection because leaders have prioritised this issue.
- The school's policy that all teachers should use a common system of written feedback to help pupils improve their work is being effectively applied. Teachers across subjects and year groups are consistently using the system to indicate next steps. As a result, pupils understand the system well and use it to reflect upon misconceptions and move their work forward.
- School leaders have championed the importance of reading. It is expected that pupils will read often at home, with parents, and regularly update reading records in their school journals to show how they are getting on. In addition, the school library is well stocked and enthusiastically promoted. As a result, more pupils read for pleasure and levels of literacy are rising.
- Although teachers are successfully using the new assessment system to identify and fill gaps in most pupils' knowledge, this is not being done sufficiently well in the case of the highest-attaining pupils to ensure that they make more than expected progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Most pupils are confident, happy and self-assured members of the school community. They enjoy talking about their achievements and are proud of their school. For example, when the lead inspector was observing pupils in the playground during breaktime, a group of girls bounded up to him, introduced themselves and talked positively about their experiences of school. When it was time for them to go, one girl said, 'Nice to meet you.'
- Leaders encourage pupils to lead healthy lifestyles. At breaktime, pupils are encouraged to get fresh air, play in the playground and use the trim trail. They are also provided with fruit. A variety of sports clubs give pupils the chance to burn off energy.
- Pupils who need a quiet space, or those pupils who are more vulnerable, are able to use a dedicated nurture room as a safe space. It is attractively decorated and comfortably furnished in a homely way, so that pupils feel safe and secure.

- The vast majority of pupils who responded to the questionnaire provided by Ofsted feel happy and safe. This response is also mirrored by parents, nearly all of whom agreed, on Parent View, that their children felt safe in school.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in different contexts. During information technology lessons they learn about e-safety and cyber bullying. In other lessons and assemblies, pupils are taught about physical dangers, such as 'stranger danger' and road safety.
- Pupils who spoke to an inspector said that they valued their PSHE (personal, social and health education) lessons because they helped pupils with life issues, such as relationships, because these are important for adult life.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils conduct themselves well around school. They respect the wonderful school displays that showcase pupils' best work and help to make the school a place where they want to learn. Pupils also treat each other with respect, in the main, so that there is a calm orderly atmosphere around school.
- Pupils take pride in their appearance and work. Uniform is worn smartly and books are all uniformly presented to the same high standard. There are no doodles or graffiti, work is written in pen, titles are underlined and pupils are taught to use joined-up handwriting.
- Pupils take on various positions of responsibility with enthusiasm, such as house captain, play leader, prefect and school council member. They take these responsibilities seriously. For example, the school council is working with other school councils in Poole to redesign the local park.
- Pupils' attendance is good and is above the national average. Persistent absence also compares well with the national average. In the small number of cases where pupils are persistently absent, these pupils are facing particularly difficult circumstances. Nonetheless, the school is working hard to address these issues by working closely with the attendance officer and parents.
- Pupils are punctual to school in the mornings. The breakfast club that opens before school, and staff on 'gate duty' each morning who greet parents and pupils, help to improve punctuality.
- Pupils also arrive quickly to lessons because little time is wasted between lessons and breaks. The lead inspector observed a speedy transition on one occasion when, at the end of break in the playground, a supervising member of staff silently held his arms in the air. The pupils all stopped what they were doing, fell silent and copied the staff member by putting their own arms in the air. This was the cue for the staff member to instruct pupils to make their way to the next lesson in a calm and orderly way.
- Pupils who spoke to inspectors reported that they felt behaviour had improved in the school. This view is also supported by most of the parents who responded to Parent View, who stated that they thought behaviour was well managed.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Published performance information does not provide a complete picture of the achievement of pupils in the school at the end of key stage 2. The school's own information, which is based upon robustly moderated assessments when pupils enter the school, indicates that most pupils are now making more rapid progress than at the time of the last inspection.
- The quality of pupils' writing across the school has markedly improved since the time of the last inspection for both boys and girls. This is most apparent in Year 6 where pupils have been given many opportunities to edit and redraft ambitious pieces of extended writing. As a result, pupils not only have improved technical skills but a better grasp of audience, purpose and personal voice.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs or disability make strong progress comparable with that made by other pupils in the school. This is because pupils receive appropriate classroom support and helpful, well-pitched written feedback.
- The curriculum is enabling pupils to acquire a broad range of skills and knowledge. Although the school is now modelled upon primary school principles, pupils benefit from being taught by subject specialists. As a result, pupils show in their work that they are making good progress in the full range of subjects.
- Pupils' mathematical skills are improving. This is because teachers devise activities that build conceptual understanding, reasoning and problem-solving. Pupils learn from their mistakes and teachers use mistakes to correct misconceptions.

- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education by the time they leave Year 6. This is because pupils have well-developed communication skills, a strong level of prior learning and the confidence and maturity to adapt to a new secondary school environment. They are aware of the need for high ambitions; one girl told an inspector, 'I need to work hard in school because I want to get a good job.'
- The most-able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are not yet making more than expected progress. This is because teachers are not yet identifying and filling gaps in pupils' knowledge to the extent that the progress they make is beyond what is expected.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 131691 |
| Local authority | Poole |
| Inspection number | 10012364 |

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

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| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 7–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 501 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | David Mann |
| Headteacher | Eileen Bissell |
| Telephone number | 01202 685800 |
| Website | www.oakdalejunior.poole.sch.uk |
| Email address | office@oakdalejunior.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 2–3 July 2014 |

Information about this school

- Oakdale Junior School is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The current headteacher has been in post since September 2012 and the current deputy headteacher since September 2013.
- A number of assistant headteacher and middle leader appointments have been made since the last inspection.
- The majority of pupils are from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average.
- The proportion of girls in the school is much lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability requiring support is below average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability who have a statement or education, health and care plan is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- During the inspection, Year 6 pupils were sitting their end of key stage tests.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in lessons, some observations being conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, teachers, groups of pupils, representatives from the local governing board and the local authority.
- The lead inspector spoke to the school's improvement partner by telephone.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and the school development plan. Inspectors also scrutinised records relating to behaviour and attendance, the monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment, the work of the governing body and the safeguarding of pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work and observed their conduct at break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors took account of 76 responses to the online survey Parent View, 22 responses to the staff questionnaire and 74 responses to the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Stephen Smith, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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