

Oakwood Primary School

Sandpiper Road, Southampton, Hampshire SO16 8FD

Inspection dates

9–10 November 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher leads the school with a clear vision. His high aspirations ensure that the school continues to improve.
- The recent amalgamation of the previous infant and junior schools to form one primary school was accomplished extremely well.
- The school is a happy place to be. Pupils, staff and parents show a genuine and mutual respect for each other.
- The school's curriculum is a strength. Pupils enjoy coming to school because of the wide range of interesting things they learn about.
- A well-established culture of respect for the rights of others sits at the heart of the school, impacting very positively on the personal development and welfare of pupils.
- Leaders work well together as a collegiate team. However, the headteacher knows middle leaders are keen to have more of a role in improving the quality of teaching and learning.
- Governors are clear about the strengths of the school. They are not sufficiently well informed about pupils' academic progress to hold school leaders more fully to account.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment ensures that the majority of pupils make good or better progress in most subjects and across each phase of the school.
- The most able pupils, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, make good progress, especially in key stage 2. Progress in reading at key stage 2 is slower.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do well because of the good quality of provision they receive.
- Children in the early years get off to a good start. They enjoy coming to school and are very keen to learn about new things.
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds do well here. School leaders ensure that their academic and pastoral needs are given equal priority.
- Pupils conduct themselves exceptionally well both in and out of the classroom. They strongly disapprove of behaviour which disrupts learning or makes others feel unhappy.
- The school's new system to track pupil progress needs further refinement to become fully effective.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that middle leaders play more of a role in improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, so that outcomes for pupils continue to improve.
- Accelerate pupil progress in reading throughout key stage 2, so that outcomes by the end of Year 6 improve rapidly.
- Further refine the school's new pupil progress tracking system so that:
 - teachers are able to assess pupil progress more accurately and use this information to plan next steps in learning
 - leaders can track pupil progress with greater accuracy, especially that of different groups, including disadvantaged pupils and those capable of achieving at higher levels
 - governors are provided with a clear overview of the progress that pupils are making, so that they can hold school leaders fully to account to improve the school to become outstanding.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher leads the school with total dedication. His enthusiasm and commitment to improving all aspects of provision has ensured that the recent merger of the previously separate infant and junior schools has been achieved successfully and with the minimum of disruption. The capacity for further improvement of this 'new school' is clear to see.
- The wider leadership team are a collegiate group who understand their roles well. Aspirations are high and everyone wants to play their part as the school moves forward. This includes middle leaders, who are beginning to play more of a role in leading their subjects. The headteacher has identified this aspect as an area to develop, so that middle leaders have greater impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning across the school.
- Extra funding to support pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds is spent effectively. Leaders have ensured a clear focus on how this funding is targeted to ensure maximum benefit. This includes providing good additional support in the early years in order to help boost disadvantaged children who join the school at levels lower than those typical for their age.
- The school's curriculum is a great strength. Leaders have ensured that it matches the needs of pupils well, while allowing staff the flexibility to introduce new themes and subject matter when they feel this is required. Topics such as 'fierce earth' and 'knights and castles' excite pupils' interests, as do projects such as that with a local business to develop and market a new, totally unique flavoured ice-cream.
- The curriculum is further enriched by a wide range of after-school clubs, educational visits, residential trips and opportunities that are designed to enhance pupils' experience of the wider world. Public performances by the choir and groups of pupils visiting a local water sports centre all contribute well to developing pupils' confidence and independence.
- School leaders' work on developing the school's 'rights respecting' culture also plays a big part in enhancing pupils' knowledge of the values of respect and tolerance, and life in modern Britain. Pupils have a highly developed understanding of equalities and what it means to be different. Discrimination is not tolerated here. Differences are understood, and celebrated appropriately and without undue fuss.
- Additional government funding to support physical education and sport is spent well, providing specialist coaches and improving participation in sporting activity across the school. Last year, three quarters of pupils attended at least one after-school sports club and the school's various teams competed successfully in a wide variety of local competitions.
- Leaders' self-evaluation of the school's strengths and areas to develop is generally accurate. However, the school's new system to track pupil progress requires further refinement to enable leaders and governors to accurately identify variations between subjects and within different pupil groups.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school well and are very clear about its many strengths. Their part in the recent amalgamation of the previous infant and junior schools to form one primary school on the site is to be commended. What might have been a time of instability has proven to be a positive period in the school's history, ensuring that firm foundations have been laid for future improvement.
- Governors carry out their statutory duties successfully and are constantly looking at ways of improving their effectiveness. Recent changes to the responsibilities of individual governors and the way meetings are scheduled are examples of the governing body evolving to better meet the needs of the new school.
- Because the school's new system to monitor pupil progress is not yet fully developed, governors are not as well informed as they have been in the recent past regarding school leaders' work to improve the school. Governors and school leaders are aware of this and the situation is being addressed as a matter of urgency.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. School leaders and governors have ensured that statutory arrangements, including policies, procedures and the training of staff, are all fit for purpose. Day-to-day routines are well thought through. The school site is well maintained, including the parts of the school that were refurbished and enhanced during the recent amalgamation.
- The 'rights respecting' culture seen across the school plays a significant part in how well pupils and staff interact, leading to a high degree of pastoral care and an ethos that ensures the social and emotional development of pupils is a high priority. Pupils are encouraged to play a part in this, for the most part self-regulating their own behaviour in classrooms and on the playground. This, in turn, has a big impact on the well-being and welfare of pupils, who feel safe in school and are not afraid to speak up when the actions of others cause them concern.
- Parents were extremely positive about all aspects of the school. All parents who spoke to inspectors during the inspection said that they felt their children were happy and safe at school. The very large majority of parents who completed the online questionnaire, Parent View, also expressed positive opinions.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good across the school. Because of this, most pupils make good or better progress with their studies, including in the arts and in a wide range of subjects other than just English and mathematics.
- Classrooms are productive places because teachers plan engaging and exciting learning experiences. The learning environment is bright and vibrant throughout the school. Good-quality art displays and examples of pupils' writing and mathematics work adorn the school's communal spaces and corridors. Pupils take a pride in their work due to staff ensuring that success is celebrated.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is very good. Many teachers have specialist interests or strengths in their teaching, which they put to good use across the school and in

supporting other staff. The quality of phonics teaching is a particular example of this, with the school's much improved provision being largely due to collaborative working and sharing of good practice among staff.

- Teachers understand that the levels of challenge and support they offer in lessons are crucial in ensuring that pupils of different abilities make the progress they are capable of. Accordingly, most pupils make at least good progress, because tasks are pitched at the right level. This includes tasks set for the most able pupils, who enjoy the extra layers of challenge that teachers make available.
- Leaders are keen to promote reading, and attach high importance to pupils using the library, as well as reading for pleasure. During the inspection it was clear that pupils who struggle with acquiring early reading skills are supported well, including with regular phonics lessons to help them make sense of words and the sounds they make. Higher-ability readers read with confidence. All pupils are expected to read daily, including at home.
- Teachers and support staff provide well for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This is especially the case for those pupils who have education, health and care plans, who are supported very well, both in and out of classrooms.
- Disadvantaged pupils do well here, including those who are capable of achieving at higher levels. School leaders ensure that teaching staff fully understand the importance of providing for the academic and pastoral needs of pupils from vulnerable backgrounds. This constant focus ensures that their needs are met well.
- Despite the quality of teaching and learning being generally good, there are occasions when expectations are inconsistent and the level of challenge is either too high or too low. This means pupils find work too easy, or do not understand clearly enough what they are expected to do, resulting in variations in progress across year groups and within different subjects.
- Teachers are beginning to use the school's newly introduced system for tracking pupil progress more effectively. The system still requires refinements to better enable teachers to use it to identify pupils in danger of falling behind, especially those from vulnerable groups.
- School leaders have rightly identified reading as a priority for improvement. This is especially the case in key stage 2, where progress in recent years has fallen below that seen in writing and mathematics. Evidence gathered during classroom visits indicates that a renewed focus on developing pupils' reading and comprehension skills is having a positive impact on redressing the balance, especially in upper key stage 2.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. The importance attached to ensuring that pupils' social and emotional needs are met is second only to ensuring that their safety is paramount.
- The school is a recipient of the Unicef 'rights respecting school' award. This is an initiative which encourages schools to place the United Nations convention on the

rights of the child at the heart of their ethos and curriculum. Adults in the school openly acknowledge rights and model respect in the way they interact with children and each other. As a consequence, the caring culture of the school enables pupils to thrive, having a very marked impact on the way they behave and respond to each other.

- Pupils display high levels of confidence. They enjoy coming to school and show very good attitudes to learning both in and out of the classroom. During visits to classrooms, inspectors found that pupils relish challenge and enjoy the wide and varied curriculum on offer to them. Older pupils in particular display mature attitudes and are self-motivated in their learning.
- The school's curriculum helps pupils to understand the potential dangers of the internet and using social media. Assemblies and other special events also make pupils aware of other potential dangers in and out of school. Pupils are clear that bullying is not an issue at Oakwood, and have confidence in staff to deal with any incident of bullying or poor behaviour should it ever occur.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. During the inspection, pupils' conduct was never less than exemplary. This includes that in the Reception Year, where routines have already been firmly established and expectations are as high as in the rest of the school.
- Classrooms are happy and productive places. Even when activities excite pupils, and lively exchanges are evident between pupils and staff, behaviour is exceptionally good. This includes at break and lunchtime, when the playground charter allows pupils to self-regulate their own behaviour, and draw on the support of adults when required.
- The school's rates of attendance are very high and much better than those of the majority of other primary schools nationally. This includes the attendance of different vulnerable groups, including pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Consequently, most pupils attend school most of the time.
- The school's nurturing culture plays a large part in ensuring that pupils treat each other with respect. Good manners are expected. Expectations are high. Confidential staff questionnaires gave inspectors a relatively rare, unanimously positive view about different aspects of pupils' behaviour. Parents were also very positive, giving testament to the school's exceedingly good provision in this area.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes for pupils are good because the quality of teaching and learning ensures that most pupils make at least good progress from their different starting points.
- Children in the early years make consistently good progress. By the time they leave Reception, the majority are well prepared for their move up into Year 1.
- School leaders' interventions have ensured that outcomes in phonics improved dramatically in 2016, following a worrying decline in the previous year. Many more pupils met the expected standard by the end of Year 1 this year. Importantly, those pupils who needed to catch up in Year 2, including a large proportion of pupils from

disadvantaged backgrounds, did so.

- Outcomes by the end of Year 2 broadly match those seen in most schools nationally. Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds also make good progress in key stage 1, although school leaders know that differences still exist in the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally.
- Most pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the targeted support and interventions they receive. School leaders ensure that the progress of this vulnerable group is monitored closely, ensuring appropriate support plans are in place for those pupils that need them.
- By the end of key stage 2, the progress pupils make in writing and mathematics broadly matches that seen in other schools nationally. Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are making increasingly better progress, although there are still differences in their achievements when compared to other pupils nationally at the end of Year 6.
- The most able pupils, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, make good progress across the school. This is especially the case in writing and mathematics. However, outcomes in national tests at the end of Year 6 for most-able pupils in reading were not as strong as expected this year, although better than those for other pupils overall.
- Despite many strengths in outcomes across different phases and subjects, the school's national test results in reading at the end of key stage 2 were much lower than expected this year. School leaders understand that this situation needs to improve rapidly. Classroom observations and scrutiny of pupils' work during the inspection indicate that the renewed focus on improving reading comprehension, spelling and grammar will have the same positive impact as the school's work in addressing weaknesses in phonics provision did last year.

Early years provision

Good

- Children get off to a good start in the early years because of the high quality of provision. Teachers and support staff know children well. Relationships between staff and children are excellent. Aspirations are high from the outset.
- Leadership of the early years is a strength. The current joint leaders are knowledgeable, and ensure that staff are well prepared to meet the day-to-day challenges that working with young children can bring. As a result, there is an air of quiet confidence and calm assurance in the Reception classes, despite the busy and energetic nature of the classrooms and outside learning environment.
- Children make good progress in the early years. In previous years, the gap between the achievements of boys and girls was too wide. This has closed over the last two years due to the actions of leaders. This means that outcomes for boys are now much more closely aligned to those of girls.
- Staff assess the progress that children make very well. They use their knowledge of individuals to plan learning that encourages independence and challenges children to make the small steps of progress required for them to be successful.

- School leaders have ensured that provision for disadvantaged children has been strengthened this year, increasing capacity and providing extra support where needed. This means that those in danger of falling behind, or those who already need to catch up, can receive the extra targeted support required.
- Behaviour is very good in the Reception Year. Routines are firmly established and expectations are high. As a consequence, children feel safe and enjoy their time in and outside the classroom. Inspectors visited the early years a number of times during the inspection. On each occasion they were met with happy and inquisitive children, who were keen to share their learning and were clearly proud of their work, be it painting pictures of 'beautiful' lollipop ladies, or working on their emerging number skills.
- Parents are very positive about the care and support their children receive in Reception. Those who talked to inspectors were clear of the many strengths in the provision, including opportunities provided by staff to help them understand how their children are learning to read and write at school.

School details

Unique reference number	116138
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10019829

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	411
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Judy Short
Headteacher	Ian Taylor
Telephone number	023 8074 2345
Website	http://oakwoodlive.net
Email address	info@oakwoodlive.net
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Oakwood Primary School is larger than the average primary school.
- This was the first inspection since Oakwood Primary School came into existence in January 2014, after the amalgamation of the separate Oakwood Infant and Junior Schools that occupied the site previously.
- The current headteacher was previously the headteacher of Oakwood Junior School and took up his present appointment when the schools amalgamated.
- Both Oakwood Infant and Junior Schools had been judged to be good at their last inspections.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is broadly average.

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited all classes and year groups across the school at least once, observing teaching and learning, talking to pupils and assessing the quality of their work. Some classroom visits were accompanied by senior leaders. Others were carried out by inspectors on their own.
- Inspectors were present at two assemblies held during the inspection.
- Meetings were held with pupils, parents, the headteacher accompanied by senior leaders, middle leaders, and the chair of governors accompanied by three other governors. The lead inspector also met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of pupils' work, heard pupils read and observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents, taking into account 77 responses to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff using the online staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents including those to do with safeguarding and attendance. They looked at minutes of meetings of the governing body, records of visits by the local authority, information about pupils' outcomes provided by the school, the school's self-evaluation of its own performance and the school's improvement planning.

Inspection team

Clive Close, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Stephanie Praetig	Ofsted Inspector
Gill Robertson	Ofsted Inspector

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