

Oakway Academy

Off Oakway, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire NN8 4SD

Inspection dates

21–22 June 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Standards at the school have been too low for too long. Pupils are not well prepared for the next stage of their education. The progress of different groups is not always monitored well.
- Not all subject leaders have the skills to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning accurately, and to provide precise feedback to staff.
- Leaders do not promote pupils' spiritual development well enough.
- Teachers do not use information about pupils' achievement well enough to plan and deliver activities that meet the specific needs of all groups of pupils.
- Teachers and teaching assistants do not check closely enough how well pupils are learning, particularly in the early years.
- The development of pupils' knowledge and understanding in some subjects is not sufficiently well developed.
- Teachers do not enable pupils to practise, develop and enhance their writing skills across the wider curriculum.
- The teaching of reading, including phonics, is inconsistent.
- Teachers do not follow the behaviour policy consistently to minimise low-level classroom disruption.
- The proportion of fixed-term exclusions is higher than the national average.
- Attendance is below the national average. Some groups of pupils are regularly absent from school.
- Adults in the early years do not support children's learning effectively enough or make the learning environment as stimulating as it could be, especially for children who speak English as an additional language.
- The quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation is inconsistent.

The school has the following strengths

- The trust's recent appointment of a head of primary education has increased the school's capacity to improve. The headteacher has a sound understanding of the needs of the school.
- Trust leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are helping leaders to make improvements.
- Pupils behave well in the school's public areas.
- Good relationships with staff ensure that pupils are safe and cared for well. The safeguarding of pupils is effective.
- Pupils enjoy and are learning from the broad range of lunchtime activities and after-school clubs on offer.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management throughout the school by:
 - establishing a coherent system for reviewing pupils' attainment and progress, so that leaders and trustees have an accurate understanding of the progress that different groups of pupils make
 - developing the role of subject leaders so they have the skills to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning and ensure that staff act on the areas for improvement
 - ensuring that leaders provide pupils with opportunities to develop an in-depth understanding of world faiths
 - improving the curriculum to ensure that it is broad and balanced, so that pupils have opportunities to deepen their knowledge and understanding.
- Improve the quality of teaching rapidly to accelerate pupils' progress and raise their attainment by:
 - ensuring that teachers use assessment information effectively to set activities that match the specific needs of different groups of pupils
 - improving teachers' questioning skills so that they are able to evaluate and deepen pupils' understanding
 - ensuring that teachers demand of pupils high standards of presentation
 - promoting pupils' writing skills in subjects other than English, so that they have greater opportunities to develop, practise and enhance these skills
 - ensuring that the teaching of phonics is consistently effective
 - ensuring that teachers enhance pupils' reading skills.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
 - ensuring that all staff apply the behaviour policy consistently to eradicate low-level disruption in lessons
 - reducing the number of fixed-term exclusions
 - ensuring that pupils' attendance improves, particularly for those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged.
- Improve the quality of provision in the early years to increase children's attainment by:
 - ensuring that teachers use assessment information effectively to plan and deliver activities that are engaging and appropriately matched to different groups of children, especially the most able
 - ensuring that adults are purposefully involved in children's learning activities, to

provide challenge, appropriate support and guidance

- making the learning environment a stimulating and interesting place to be; one which celebrates children's achievements and supports children's language development, particularly those who speak English as an additional language
- improving the quality of adults' questioning skills to develop further children's knowledge and understanding.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of governance should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Improvements to teaching and assessment have not been rapid enough to ensure that all pupils make sufficient progress.
- Not all leaders are clear about the progress that different groups of pupils make. This means that they are unable to identify quickly enough those pupils who are falling behind in their learning.
- Not all subject leaders evaluate the quality of teaching and the progress that pupils make well enough. The necessary improvements to accelerate pupils' progress in their respective subjects have not been implemented quickly enough.
- Leaders have not effectively promoted pupils' spiritual development. Pupils' work in religious education shows that they have limited understanding of world faiths.
- Leaders from the Hatton Academies Trust have identified the right priorities for improvement and are working closely with school leaders to address these. Some improvements are evident, for example in the behaviour of pupils.
- Close support and challenge from trust leaders is increasing the school's capacity to improve further. For example, trust staff are improving the skills of middle leaders by undertaking joint observations of learning with them.
- The arrangements for managing staff's performance are effective. Leaders ensure that pay awards for staff are used effectively to bring about improvements to teaching and leadership. Leaders have taken appropriate action to address staff underperformance.
- Staff value the opportunities for professional development they have had, both through the trust and the school's links with the Affinity Teaching School Alliance.
- Leaders carefully monitor and evaluate the impact of the use of pupil premium funding. Leaders and trustees check regularly their actions to support eligible pupils so that they make accelerated progress.
- The school's use of the primary physical education (PE) and sport premium has been effective in increasing the range of lunchtime activities, after-school clubs and competitions. Leaders have carefully evaluated the impact of this funding to ensure, for example, that different groups of pupils take up these opportunities.
- Leaders have made significant and promising changes to the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, including the appointment of new leaders for this area of the school's work.
- The trust's recent appointment of a head of primary education has enabled the academy to focus sharply on school improvement and place pupil achievement at the forefront of the school's agenda.

Governance of the school

- Trustees have not always responded quickly enough to the low levels of pupils' achievement within the school.
- As a result of improved information from the school, trustees now correctly identify the

school's areas of strength as well as its weaknesses. They have worked closely with leaders to improve the quality of leadership and ensure that school leaders remain focused on the right priorities for improvement.

- The inclusion team established by the trust has become an integral aspect of the support for vulnerable pupils. Provision for these pupils is improving.
- The trust ensure that the targets for professional development, both for the headteacher and for staff, are challenging and rigorous.
- The appointment of an experienced head of primary education has added strength to the leadership of the school and is increasing its capacity to improve further.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The new inclusion team works well with external agencies and families to ensure that individual pupils receive the support that they require.
- Staff have received updated training on the safeguarding and welfare of pupils. They know what to look for and how to respond if they identify any issues of concern. Staff and pupils are aware of who the designated safeguarding leaders are within the school. Pupils said that they have many people within the school who they can go to if they have a worry or a problem.
- Pupils who spoke to inspectors said that they feel safe and value the visitors that teach them about stranger danger and fire safety. Pupils are knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe on the internet because they receive special lessons to remind them of how to keep safe online.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The weak teaching in the large majority of classes results in pupils not achieving at the levels expected for their age. This means that pupils do not develop the skills they need to move on to the next stage in their education.
- Teachers do not use assessment information well enough to plan activities that meet the specific needs of different groups of pupils. For example, pupils who speak English as an additional language read the same texts as their classmates. The most able pupils do not have sufficient challenge in the activities that teachers give them. Lower-attaining pupils find some activities too difficult. This hinders the progress pupils make.
- Teachers' questioning does not fully explore and deepen pupils' understanding. For example, teachers do not ask challenging questions of the most able pupils to deepen their learning. This means that teachers cannot plan the next steps in learning effectively.
- Teachers deliver a broad range of subjects, but do not develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of science sufficiently well.
- Teachers do not demand high standards of presentation and handwriting from pupils. Teachers do not teach handwriting well. Pupils do not take pride in their work.
- Pupils do not have opportunities across the wider curriculum to develop and enhance

their writing skills. The progress they make in writing is limited as a result.

- Teachers have low expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, complete activities that are not appropriate to their different needs. These pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers do not consistently check that pupils regularly practise their reading skills. This means that pupils' reading skills, particularly those of the lower-attaining pupils, do not develop sufficiently. The most able pupils read well and tackle difficult words well.
- The teaching of phonics is not effective. Too few pupils meet the expected standard at the end of Year 1. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 2 phonics screening check has been close to the national average for the past two years.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils receive too few opportunities to learn about the world's religions. Their spiritual understanding is too narrow.
- The teaching at the school does not encourage pupils to develop into self-confident learners. For example, where planning does not meet the different needs of the pupils, they can quickly lose focus on the work that their teachers set them. On these occasions, pupils do not demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning.
- Pupils have a range of opportunities to develop their social and communication skills. Year 6 pupils enjoy their residential visit to the Isle of Wight, while Year 2 pupils participate in adventurous activities at an outdoor residential centre. Pupils enjoy the sporting events they are able to take part in.
- Pupils regularly participate in musical events to showcase their music skills. Year 5 pupils told inspectors that they enjoy learning how to play an instrument as well as the opportunity to perform in front of their parents at a band concert.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that they feel safe and value the opportunities that the school provides them to help them learn how to keep themselves safe. They know what they should do if they see something on the internet that worries them. Senior leaders regularly remind parents about the importance of online safety for their children.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about keeping healthy. They understand the importance of eating a well-balanced diet and of taking exercise.
- Pupils understand the different types of bullying. The pupils who met inspectors said that bullying at the school is rare, and that, when it does occur, staff deal with it quickly and well. The majority of parents who expressed a view agreed that the staff deal with bullying well, when it occurs.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Teachers and teaching assistants do not insist on high standards of behaviour in class. Where teaching is less effective, low-level disruption can occur, and teachers have to interrupt the lesson to deal with it. This limits the progress that pupils make.
- Attendance is below the national level. The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school is high. This is particularly true for disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- More recently, leaders have taken action to improve pupils' attendance. For example, senior leaders hold fortnightly meetings to monitor attendance. They also regularly communicate with the parents of pupils with low attendance. These actions, however, have had limited effect on raising levels of attendance at the school.
- The number of fixed-term exclusions is above the national average, having risen for the second consecutive year. Leaders have put training in place to support teachers and teaching assistants to manage pupils' behaviour more effectively. This training has yet to have the necessary impact on reducing the number of fixed-term exclusions.
- Almost all pupils move around the school in an orderly fashion. They are well-mannered to adults and to each other.
- Pupils play together well on the playground. They are able to take part in a wide range of activities that adults and sports leaders organise during breaktime, lunchtime and at after-school clubs.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- The progress of pupils is inadequate. In 2015, the Year 6 cohort left having made significantly less progress than others nationally in all subjects. Attainment was also significantly low in all subjects at the end of key stage 2.
- In 2016, the progress that pupils made in writing was below the national average, while their progress in reading and mathematics was well below national levels at the end of key stage 2.
- Pupils' workbooks show that current pupils continue to make insufficient progress, particularly those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged.
- Across the school, the most able pupils make inadequate progress. The expectations of what these pupils can achieve are often too low.
- In 2015 and 2016, the attainment of pupils at the end of key stage 1 was significantly below national levels in all subjects. The school's current performance information, and pupils' books, indicate similar low achievement for current pupils in Year 2.
- The proportion of pupils in Year 1 achieving the expected standard in phonics has seen a steady rise over the past two years. However, it is still below the national average. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in phonics at the end of Year 2 has been close to the national average for the past two years.

Early years provision

Inadequate

- Leadership and management of the early years is inadequate. Leaders do not have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision.
- Teachers do not use information about children's progress incisively to plan and deliver next steps in children's learning. This means that children do not make the progress of which they are capable and are not well prepared for Year 1.
- The proportion of children attaining a good level of development is below the national average for the second consecutive year. In 2016, boys' attainment and that of disadvantaged children was well below average.
- Expectations of what children can do are too low. Adults do not provide creative or demanding learning opportunities, especially early writing activities, to engage children in their learning. The most able children do not complete sufficiently challenging activities. Due to this, children do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Adults do not engage purposefully with children during learning activities. As a result, children do not receive sufficient support to extend their learning further.
- The early years space is not a bright and language-rich environment, where children's work is celebrated. Children who speak English as an additional language do not receive sufficient support, partly because the displays in the classrooms do not provide them with vocabulary to support them with their writing skills.
- Adults in the early years provide a safe place for children to learn. They have fostered nurturing relationships with children. Children cooperate and share activities with each other. This is despite the slow pace and lack of challenge in some of the activities.
- Where adults plan appropriate activities, children engage well with their learning. For example, children joined in enthusiastically with a group activity involving fun games to develop their self-esteem and communication skills.
- Parents who spoke with inspectors said that they value the information that they receive from the school and the opportunities to visit the early years prior to their child starting school. Comprehensive transition procedures are in place so that children settle quickly in the early years.
- The early years leader makes effective use of other organisations. Staff work with other schools in the trust to share effective practice.

School details

Unique reference number	140853
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10031132

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	584
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mr Fergus Macdonald
Principal	Mrs Clare Wallace
Telephone number	01933 678714
Website	www.oakwayacademy.org.uk
Email address	admin@oakwayacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school does comply with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish regarding the use of the PE and sport premium and a comprehensive overview of the curriculum on its website.
- The school does meet requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school joined the Hatton Academies Trust as a sponsor-led academy in September 2014.
- The principal has been in post since September 2015.
- The vice-principal has been in post since September 2015.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.

- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The school did not meet the government's floor standards in 2016, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of key stage 2.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 30 lessons and visited all classrooms. Six lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the principal, vice-principal and primary leader for the trust. Inspectors met with the leaders for English, mathematics and the early years. Inspectors held meetings with the chief executive and a director of the trust.
- Inspectors held meetings with the inclusion team.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of the school’s documentation, including information on: the school’s evaluation of its own performance and development plan; pupils’ attainment and progress; behaviour and attendance; quality of teaching; safeguarding procedures; and the use of the pupil premium and the primary physical education and sport premium.
- Inspectors observed behaviour around the school, including at breaktimes and lunchtimes. They spoke formally to one group of pupils and informally with others around the school.
- The 42 responses to Parent View, Ofsted’s online questionnaire, were considered. Inspectors spoke with parents before school and considered the 16 responses from parents to the Ofsted free-text service. There were 34 responses to the staff survey. There were no responses to the pupils’ surveys.

Inspection team

Emma Nuttall, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Christopher Mansell	Ofsted Inspector
Aileen King	Ofsted Inspector
Moira Dales	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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