

Oak Tree Primary School

Jubilee Way North, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire NG18 3PJ

Inspection dates

7–8 February 2018

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is inadequate.
- Leaders have not taken effective steps to tackle the weaker teaching that they know some groups of pupils continue to experience.
- Early reading is not taught consistently well in key stage 1.
- Pupils' achievements are too variable. Pupils' progress during key stage 2 declined last year and was inadequate by the end of Year 6 for lower-attaining pupils, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.
- Pupils currently in the school make inconsistent progress. In some classes, their progress is inadequate.
- Leaders do not make checks on pupils' attainment frequently enough to ensure that pupils who need to catch up do so quickly.
- Leaders are overly optimistic about how well pupils are achieving. Their judgements about pupils' current attainment and the quality of teaching are too generous.
- Leaders do not make proper checks on the quality of teaching provided for considerable numbers of pupils by support staff, to ensure that it is of good quality.
- Governors do not provide effective support and challenge to the headteacher. They do not hold leaders sufficiently to account for pupils' achievements.
- Leaders and governors do not analyse carefully enough how well the additional funding provided through the pupil premium is contributing to disadvantaged pupils' achievements. The school does not report on the impact of this spending as it should.
- Leaders and governors have not ensured that the school's website includes all the information needed. This was identified by inspectors as an area for improvement at the last inspection.

The school has the following strengths

- Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception Years from their often very low starting points.
- Pupils benefit from strong pastoral support. Pupils with complex needs are cared for well.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils behave well, are polite and enjoy coming to school.
- Very effective child protection arrangements ensure that pupils are kept safe. This includes pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the leadership and management of the school, by:
 - ensuring that self-evaluation is accurate and is rooted in probing analysis of the quality of teaching and its impact on the progress made by different groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, those who have SEN and/or disabilities and pupils whose prior attainment is low
 - making more frequent checks on pupils' progress so that leaders can identify quickly whether the actions they are taking to raise attainment are making the difference they intend
 - evaluating the impact of the pupil premium in raising the achievement of disadvantaged pupils so that strategies can be adjusted when they are not working well enough
 - evaluating the impact of the physical education (PE) and sports premium to assess how well the funding is being used to raise pupils' participation and attainment in PE
 - strengthening the effectiveness of the school's governance arrangements so that governors are able to hold leaders properly to account for the quality of teaching, pupils' achievements and the impact of additional funding provided through the pupil premium and the PE and sport premium
 - ensuring that the school's website fully meets the requirements set by the Department for Education.
- Strengthen the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the school so that all groups of pupils make the progress they should, by:
 - tackling quickly, systematically and effectively the weaker teaching which continues to inhibit pupils' progress
 - strengthening the checks made on the quality of teaching by scrutinising pupils' work more regularly and carefully
 - ensuring that all teachers insist on high standards of presentation in pupils' work and tackle the errors and misconception they identify when they scrutinise pupils' books
 - making checks on the quality of teaching delivered by the school's support staff
 - ensuring that teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment are accurate and are rooted in secure evidence of pupils' knowledge and skills
 - improving strategies to develop pupils' reading by ensuring that pupils have the skills necessary to decode the books they are reading and that the teaching of phonics is consistently of high quality in key stage 1

- ensuring that all teachers consistently implement the newly introduced approaches to the teaching of reading and writing, and that these are regularly and effectively reviewed to ensure that they are working well in all classes.

An external review of governance and of the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- Leaders have been ineffective in tackling weaknesses in the quality of teaching in the school. Strategies to improve weaker teaching have lacked precision and urgency. The actions taken have not made enough difference in ensuring that all teaching is consistently of acceptable quality. This explains why pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is too variable, and in some cases inadequate.
- Leaders do not check frequently enough whether teaching is making the necessary difference to pupils' achievements, including pupils who are working below national expectations, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. This means that pupils who are underachieving are allowed to drift for too long before the strategies used to support them are reviewed.
- Lower-attaining pupils achieved poorly in national tests at the end of Year 6 last year, but no clear system has been implemented to check on how well this group of pupils is currently achieving. Hence, leaders do not have a clear overview of whether outcomes for this group of pupils are improving throughout the school.
- A considerable amount of teaching is provided for pupils in small groups by support staff. Plans are in place to make systematic checks on the quality of this teaching, but these have yet to be implemented. Hence, leaders do not have a clear understanding of how well this approach is working.
- The lack of systematic monitoring of the quality of teaching provided for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities means that leaders are unable to identify, precisely, the reasons why some of these pupils make more rapid progress than others. Leaders do not know well enough whether this is due to the curriculum or the quality of teaching.
- The school does not meet statutory requirements with regard to reporting on its use of the pupil premium or the PE and sport premium. The school received over £200,000 in pupil premium funding last year, but leaders have not analysed what difference the spending made to the achievement of eligible pupils. This limits their ability to make adjustments and improvements where spending has been unsuccessful or to build on strategies which have worked.
- The curriculum has failed to ensure that all groups of pupils achieve well in reading and writing. The strategies introduced to improve the teaching of reading last year did not work well enough. New approaches have been introduced across the school since January. It is too soon to see if they are making the difference needed.
- Other aspects of the curriculum are stronger. For example, the provision made for pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development is good. Leaders ensure, through lessons and assemblies, that pupils learn about people whose lives are different from their own. Leaders provide good opportunities for pupils to gain experiences beyond the local community, including through trips to other parts of the country and, for some, to France.
- Provision for extra-curricular sport is a clear strength. Many pupils participate in

sporting activities and competitions, including indoor athletics, football and especially cricket. Pupils also benefit from good opportunities to participate in music and drama.

- The school's leadership and management arrangements regarding pupils' attendance have improved, resulting in attendance rising following a dip last year.
- The school's work with parents and carers has improved and is effective. Leaders provide a range of classes to help boost the parenting skills of those parents whom they have identified as needing additional support. Parents who have benefited from this support value the help they have been given.

Governance of the school

- The school's current governance arrangements are not strong enough to provide leaders with the support and challenge that they need to tackle the school's weaknesses quickly and effectively.
- At the time of the last inspection, leaders and governors were asked to ensure that the school's website fully met government requirements. The website has since been revamped and improved but, at the time of this inspection, the website still did not include all the information it should.
- Governors have not ensured that the school complies with statutory requirements with regard to reporting on its use of the additional funding provided by the pupil premium or the PE and sports premium.
- Governors lack the up-to-date knowledge and skills necessary to hold leaders to account for pupils' achievements, including the achievements of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Governors know which aspects of governance need to improve but have not undertaken the training they need to in order to become fully effective.
- Governors provide more effective oversight to other aspects of the school's work, for example its safeguarding and child protection arrangements. They are very committed to the school. Some have devoted many years of service in their roles.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders work effectively to ensure that vulnerable pupils are kept safe and protected. The family support worker, funded by the pupil premium, has established strong relationships with families in need of help and support. She uses her knowledge of their difficulties well to secure the support they need from other agencies.
- Leaders do not hesitate to contact social services when they have concerns about a pupil's welfare and are tenacious when they are not satisfied that action is being taken quickly enough.
- The strong culture of nurture that pervades the school benefits all pupils, particularly those with complex physical or emotional needs. Staff are skilled in providing gentle reassurance to pupils who are anxious. Leaders have ensured that staff are well trained so they know how to keep safe the pupils who have serious medical conditions.

- Regular safeguarding training ensures that staff are very well informed about the potential risks to pupils' welfare. They know precisely what to do when they have concerns about any of the children in the school.
- Checks on the suitability of staff to work with children are rigorous and fully meet requirements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- There is too much inconsistency in the quality of teaching. Pupils' experiences of teaching and quality of learning vary too much depending on which class they are in.
- The less-effective teaching is characterised by teachers' poor use of assessment, resulting in the work that is either too easy or too hard for the pupils.
- Teachers do not always assess accurately enough pupils' previous attainment. In their scrutiny of pupils' work, inspectors found clear examples of inaccurate and overgenerous assessment. For example, in one instance, some pupils had been judged to be punctuating their work correctly when this clearly was not the case.
- The quality of the teaching of reading varies too much between classes. Some key stage 1 pupils are not taught the basics of early reading well enough in contrast to others who receive high-quality teaching. Assessments of pupils' attainment in reading are not robust or rigorous enough.
- Teachers do not ensure carefully enough that the books pupils read are well matched to pupils' knowledge and skills. Inspectors observed younger pupils trying to read books which clearly were too difficult for them. In these instances, pupils lacked the phonic knowledge necessary to decode the words they were trying to read. The staff who were reading with them did not tackle the pupils' difficulties systematically enough but instead soldiered on, with pupils making little progress as a result.
- Some teachers insist on high standards of presentation. The high standards seen in these classes are not matched in others.
- The new whole-school approach to the teaching of writing is working well in the classes where teachers have been trained and have trialled the approach for a longer period of time. However, in other classes, teachers do not check pupils' work closely enough to make sure that the inaccuracies or misconceptions they have identified are properly remedied.
- Some pupils benefit from strong teaching. The quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6 has improved this year because leaders have reorganised staffing. This has shifted the weaker teaching, however, rather than improved it. Similarly, while there is strong teaching in key stage 1, the overall quality is not consistent enough. Some teaching is weak and prevents pupils making the progress that they should.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.

- Pupils feel safe and are safe. They receive good-quality information about how to keep themselves safe and are well informed about potential risks to their well-being and safety.
- Strong provision is in place to support pupils' physical and emotional well-being, including pupils who need help in improving their fitness and mobility, for example through the 'fun-fit' classes provided at the start of the school day.
- Pupils enjoy receiving the rewards they are given, for example for good attendance and behaviour in assemblies. Leaders ensure that the achievements of pupils who consistently behave and attend well are also recognised and celebrated.
- The school's records show that when bullying occurs it is dealt with effectively. Pupils know how to recognise bullying and do not hesitate to report any concerns that they may have. They told inspectors that their teachers deal with the occasional incidents of bullying quickly and effectively.
- Pupils value each other's differences. Initiatives, such as 'odd-socks day', help pupils to understand that everyone is unique and that it is 'okay' to be different.
- The support for pupils experiencing emotional difficulties is strong. This is because staff are well trained in understanding how to help pupils with specific needs overcome the difficulties they may be experiencing.
- Good-quality extra-curricular provision, including through a range of trips and visits, enhances pupils' enjoyment of school and their understanding of the world beyond their immediate community.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Learning takes place in a calm and orderly environment. Pupils' achievements are celebrated through the attractive displays which enhance the classrooms and corridors and complement the curriculum.
- Pupils move around the school safely and courteously. They are polite to visitors, and keen to tell them about their school and the work they are doing.
- The school's simple and effective approach to managing pupils' behaviour works well. Behaviour logs are detailed and carefully maintained so any patterns, which might reveal more deep-rooted concerns, can be identified.
- The headteacher and staff work skilfully with pupils who find it difficult to manage their own behaviour. Their careful interventions have had a marked effect in improving the behaviour of some of the most challenging pupils.
- Occasionally, when teaching is not well enough matched to the pupils' needs, some pupils lose focus and do not behave as well as they should.
- Attendance is improving, having declined last year. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent remains too high, however. Leaders have identified this is a result of a few parents taking pupils out of school for holidays in term time.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Outcomes for pupils currently in the school are too variable and are overly dependent on which class pupils are taught in.
- Last year, pupils' achievements by the end of Year 6 were significantly below average in reading and writing. Pupils' attainment in mathematics dipped from being just above average to being considerably below average. Pupils made less progress in mathematics than previous cohorts.
- Lower-attaining pupils, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and the disadvantaged pupils made significantly less progress by the end of Year 6 than pupils with similar starting points nationally.
- Leaders know that these variations were due to the inconsistent quality of teaching that these pupils experienced. They acknowledge that the pupil premium funding did not make the difference to pupils' achievement that they had hoped.
- While achievement is rising in Years 5 and 6 because of the improved quality of teaching seen in these classes, it remains too variable in the rest of the school. This is because the quality of teaching, particularly the teaching of reading and writing, is inconsistent.
- Weaker teaching in some of the younger-age classes, including in lower key stage 2, means that some groups of pupils are not making the progress that they need to make in order to catch up to the expectations for age set out in the national curriculum.
- The school's assessments of pupils' current attainment are not secure or robust enough to support leaders' views that pupils' attainment and achievement are rising quickly. This is particularly the case in reading.
- In each of the last two years, pupils' progress by the end of key stage 1 has been similar to that of other pupils nationally who have similar prior attainment. Nevertheless, attainment dipped last year in reading, writing and in mathematics.
- Attainment in the Year 1 national phonics screening check, while low, has improved in the last two years. Almost all pupils have met the expected standard by the end of key stage 1. Inconsistencies in the quality of teaching pupils in key stage 1 are currently receiving, however, mean that some pupils currently in key stage 1 are not making the progress that they should, including in reading.
- In recent years, pupils have made better progress in mathematics than in reading and writing by the end of key stage 2. This continues to be the case, although not all mathematics teaching is currently ensuring that pupils are learning well enough in mathematics.
- Pupils with complex needs make good progress because of the intensive and high-quality support they receive through one-to-one specialist teaching, and through the high-quality care and support provided by the learning support assistants.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter the Nursery class with knowledge and skills which are typically well below those usually seen. Very effective assessment arrangements ensure that the

children's needs are quickly identified so that provision can be adapted to help them catch up.

- Staff in the early years are quick to identify children who may have SEN and/or disabilities. They ensure that these children are well supported through specialist teaching, including teaching provided by a specially trained language leader.
- Strategies to improve children's skills in reading and writing in the early years have improved and are more effective than before. As a result, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development continues to rise and is becoming closer to the national average.
- Children have good opportunities to write every day. Teachers' regular assessments of children's writing in their 'magic writing books' ensure that teachers know when children need extra help.
- Opportunities to learn outdoors, for example through the 'welly-Wednesdays', boost children's enjoyment of reading and writing because they are closely linked to the books the class is reading, such as 'What the Ladybird Heard'.
- Staff listen regularly to children reading. The early years leader ensures that disadvantaged children spend more time reading with their teachers than do other children. Leaders have used the pupil premium funding to increase the ratio of adults to children in the Nursery and Reception class. As a result, children from disadvantaged backgrounds make progress at least in line with that of the other children. The proportion of disadvantaged children who reach a good level of development by the end of the early years has risen in the last three years. In the last two years, their attainment has been higher than that of other children in the setting.
- The early years curriculum is well planned and provides a good balance between purposeful play and more formal teaching. Leaders have planned provision carefully to ensure that pupils are ready for learning at the start of Year 1. For example, teaching on Fridays is more formally structured so children become accustomed to the formal teaching they will experience when they move into the main school.
- The children are happy and safe. They exhibit increasingly good self-discipline and are able to concentrate on the activities they are given for extended periods of time.
- Children enjoy learning because the curriculum is well matched to their needs. The early years environment is stimulating and provides lots of opportunities for children to develop their imagination, through role-play for example.
- Staff take every opportunity to boost children's self-confidence, for example celebrating 'wow moments' to capture the children's achievements.

School details

Unique reference number	133276
Local authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	10041710

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	289
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David French
Headteacher	Mark Thrower
Telephone number	01623 458261
Website	www.oaktreeschool.co.uk
Email address	head1@oaktreelane.notts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 February 2014

Information about this school

- The school is slightly larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school serves an area with high levels of deprivation. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is much higher than average.
- Most of the pupils are from white British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school does not meet the Department for Education's definition of a coasting school.
- The current headteacher has been in post since January 2016.

- The school has recently entered into a formal collaboration with a group of three other primary schools.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the pupil premium funding or the PE and sport premium for primary schools.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors scrutinised the school’s work and considered a wide range of documents, including the school’s self-evaluation and improvement plan and records regarding safeguarding and child protection and pupils’ attendance, behaviour and achievements. In preparation for the inspection, the lead inspector scrutinised the school’s website.
- Inspectors considered the views of the 10 parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View. No surveys from staff or pupils were submitted during the inspection.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other leaders and members of the governing body. A meeting was also held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with staff and pupils during the inspection and with parents at the start of the school day. They observed pupils’ behaviour at break and lunchtime.
- They observed teaching and learning in all of the classes, including in the Reception and the Nursery classes. Some of these observations were undertaken with the headteacher.
- Inspectors undertook a scrutiny of pupils’ work, looking at books from a wide range of classes.

Inspection team

Daniel Burton, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Karen Slack	Ofsted Inspector
Hazel Henson	Ofsted Inspector
Peter Stonier	Her Majesty’s 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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