

Oakridge School

Oakridge Road, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire HP11 2PN

Inspection dates

2–3 May 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The school has not maintained the good quality of education since the previous inspection. This is mainly due to significant and frequent changes of staffing at all levels.
- Teaching over time has not been good enough. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can do and achieve are too low and vary too widely. Often, the challenge for the most able pupils is not high enough.
- Subject leaders do not check on the quality of teaching and learning effectively in their subjects. As a result, teaching and learning are not typically good or better.
- While the attendance of pupils is beginning to improve, it is still below the national average.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not make enough progress from their starting points. Their achievement is below that of other children nationally.
- Pupils do not have opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge in reasoning and solving problems. This impacts on the rate of progress they make within the subject.
- Disadvantaged pupils were not supported effectively last year. Consequently, they did not make rapid progress. However, support for current disadvantaged pupils is improving their achievement.
- Governors do not hold leaders sharply to account for the progress particular groups of pupils make, including those eligible for free school meals. As a result, governors do not ensure that all pupils achieve well.

The school has the following strengths

- Children make good progress in the early years as activities are well planned. The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) is good. Pupils in Year 1 have good reading skills.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.
- Staff say they are proud to be part of the school community and show great commitment to tackling the issues identified by the new headteacher.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strong feature of the school. Pupils value and respect everyone equally, regardless of race, ethnicity or belief.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, learning and assessment so that they are consistently good, by:
 - ensure that teaching challenges all pupils' learning, but especially the most able, so that pupils achieve as well as they can
 - ensuring that mathematics teaching develops pupils' use of calculation skills to help them solve problems and develop reasoning skills
 - rigorously checking that the support given to disadvantaged pupils is effective in helping them make strong progress in all years.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, including governance, by:
 - improving the school's assessment systems by incorporating different groups of pupils in a wide range of subjects in order to identify any pupils who do not make consistently good progress
 - ensuring that subject leaders are more effective in their monitoring roles
 - governors holding leaders to account more rigorously for the impact of school improvement initiatives and planning over time
 - ensuring that governors have the appropriate training to carry out their roles and statutory duties.
- Work more closely with the families of those pupils with high rates of absence to improve their attendance levels.

An external review of the school's use of pupil premium 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

- Leadership and management requires improvement because leaders have not secured sufficient improvement to ensure that pupils' outcomes are good. In part, this is due to the changes in staff that have taken time to complete and the challenges leaders have faced in recruiting high-quality staff.
- Leaders and managers have not ensured that teaching has remained consistently good across the school. Consequently, not all pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school's system for checking pupils' outcomes does not provide leaders with clear information to enable them to check the attainment of key groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils. As a result, leaders are unable to effectively evaluate whether pupils make sufficient progress towards working at standards expected for their age.
- Joint observations with the headteacher show that her judgements are accurate and feedback to teachers focuses on ways in which they can improve their teaching practice. The headteacher has accurately identified areas requiring further development, such as the assessment system and challenge for the most able pupils.
- There have been a number of changes in leadership roles. Recently appointed subject leaders and other middle leaders have considerable expertise in, and enthusiasm for, the areas for which they are responsible. They are not all effective enough in identifying ways that teaching can be improved to the very best levels.
- Over the past few years, pupil premium funding has not been used effectively to consistently ensure that disadvantaged pupils make good progress. Improvements to teaching this year mean that more pupils are making better progress than previously. However, improving the progress of this group remains a high priority.
- The curriculum is well planned, broad and balanced. Leaders have ensured that it is closely related to pupils' interests and, as a result, pupils are generally engaged in their learning. It is supported well by a range of visits and other activities. For example, Year 2 pupils spoke enthusiastically about their 'forest school' (where activities are often taught in the outdoor environment) with great enthusiasm.
- The school is strongly committed to providing equality of opportunity, fostering good relationships and discouraging any discrimination. All pupils, whatever their ability or background, have the opportunity to take part in the school's activities.
- The school promotes pupils' understanding of fundamental British values effectively. Leaders foster the principles of democracy, for example, by holding elections to select members of the school council. The school's key values such as respect and perseverance encourage pupils to understand and display these qualities in and around the school. Leaders make sure all pupils are valued, and mutual respect and tolerance are strong features of the school.
- The school uses the primary education and sports funding effectively. Leaders employ this funding to support staff training and provide specialist coaching. Pupils enjoy sport and say that the school encourages them to look after their physical health.

- The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through its strong and caring ethos. Adults are positive examples as they show empathy, respect and kindness. As a result, pupils are considerate and thoughtful. They have extremely positive relationships with adults and one another.
- Staff who completed the Ofsted inspection questionnaire are positive about the leadership of the new headteacher. Staff have confidence in leaders and feel well supported.
- The support from the local authority has been too variable. The consultants working with leaders have not provided clear judgements about the school's performance and the quality of teaching, which has limited their influence in promoting greater improvement.
- All of the parents and carers who replied to the school's fact finding questionnaire are pleased with the school. This is reflected in the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and those who spoke to inspectors.
- The school's breakfast and after-school clubs are well led and managed. They provide a safe and nurturing environment that supports pupils' social development.

Governance of the school

- The governing body has changed significantly since the previous inspection. Governors know that standards have not been good enough in recent years, but they have not been fully effective in evaluating the impact of the approaches used by leaders to raise pupils' attainment. They know how the school is using the pupil premium funding to provide interventions for pupils falling behind, but do not understand how all pupils in this group benefit from the funding allocated. As a result, governors' challenge to leaders has not been sharp enough to ensure that pupils achieve as well as they could.
- Governors receive regular reports about the quality of teaching from senior leaders. However, their understanding of the quality of teaching over time and its impact on pupils' achievement is underdeveloped. Governors are fully aware of the management of teachers' performance and how this helps to not only reward better teaching, but also to ensure teaching is not inadequate.
- The governing body monitors safeguarding effectively. It quality assures the steps taken by leaders to ensure that children are safe within the school and has a good knowledge of what this requires.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All members of staff have up-to-date training and are checked for their suitability for working in school. Staff understand their statutory responsibilities to report concerns to the appropriate people. Any concerns about pupils' welfare are reported and dealt with promptly.
- The school sensitively identifies parents and families that may need extra support and advice. There are effective relationships with other agencies to ensure pupils are safe and their welfare needs met well. Parents and staff agree that the school keeps pupils safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because its impact on pupils' achievement is not consistently good across the school. School leaders have tackled some important inadequacies in teaching successfully. Despite this, the quality of teaching is still not consistently good through the school.
- Teaching does not provide tasks that offer sufficient challenge, especially for the most able. This is because some teachers' expectations are not high enough, particularly in key stage 2.
- The teaching of mathematics focuses on pupils' calculation skills, although teachers do not ensure that pupils are confident enough to apply these skills when faced with problems. This results in pupils not gaining a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts.
- The teaching of phonics is good. Pupils apply their knowledge of sounds and whole words to support their reading and writing development.
- There are some strengths in quality of teaching, such as the ways it promotes discussions, questioning and independence. Pupils make good progress where these strengths are evident.
- Writing in current pupils' books has improved since the start of this academic year and reflects pupils' understanding of the features of different types of writing. Leaders have introduced high-quality texts and these have had a very beneficial impact on the quality of current pupils' writing.
- Teachers work closely and effectively with skilled teaching assistants to make sure that pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are fully included in, and benefit from, their classroom activities.
- Good teaching in the early years ensures that children get off to a good start. Activities are well planned to develop their knowledge, skills and routines. These help children to become independent and learn confidently.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. All of the parents that responded to Parent View confirmed they felt their children were happy and safe.
- The pupils are friendly, polite and confident towards visitors. They are proud of their school and enjoy collaborating with each other, sharing their thoughts and opinions.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the dangers of different types of bullying, including online cyber bullying. Through personal, social, health and economic education, pupils know how to stay safe in a range of situations, including when using the road and being exposed to potential hazards. Pupils also have an appreciation of e-safety and stranger danger. They apply their understanding to everyday situations as they arise.

- All pupils feel valued, and equality of opportunity is clearly within the culture of the school. Pupils told inspectors that there is always someone to talk to if they ever have a problem.
- Discussions with staff demonstrate that the school has effective links with external agencies and is very active in supporting children and families who need additional help.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are proud of their school saying it is 'fun, educational and great'. They are positive about their learning and enjoy taking on additional responsibilities. For example, the 'play leaders' encourage pupils to play games and respect everyone within their community.
- Pupils, parents and staff believe that behaviour is good. The school's behaviour logs show that behaviour is typically good over time.
- Pupils show respect and work collaboratively with each other in lessons. They accept and embrace all the different cultures within the school.
- Pupils' attendance is lower than the national average. The impact that extended holidays have on attendance is noticeable. The leaders of the school have worked hard at reducing absences and there are signs that attendance is improving.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes require improvement because the progress that they make across the school is not consistently good. Pupils' progress in 2017 from key stage 1 to the end of key stage 2 was not as good as that of other pupils nationally.
- The proportion of pupils achieving the combined expected standard at the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics remains below the national average. In Year 6, not enough pupils, particularly the most able, reached the higher standard when they left. This is because they did not receive sufficient challenge in their learning.
- Outcomes in 2017 for key stage 2 pupils were partly as a result of previous weak teaching. This has been successfully identified and much remedied by the headteacher, but gaps in pupils' learning remain. While pupils made progress, it was not enough to match that of pupils nationally. Current pupils' books indicate that progress across key stage 2 is beginning to improve.
- Most pupils make good progress from their starting points in key stage 1. In 2017, pupils' attainment was below the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2. The school's records and inspection activities indicate that attainment is consistently improving and the attainment of current pupils is better than last year. However, the most able pupils in key stage 1 are not making the rapid progress of which they are capable.
- Information kept by the school about the current pupils in Year 6 indicates that they are making better progress than in the past. The work seen during the inspection

confirms this. This means that the current Year 6 pupils are better prepared for secondary school.

- Pupils' reading skills are improving. This is because of stronger phonics teaching. The results of the Year 1 phonics screening check have steadily improved and are now in line with the national average. Current information on pupils' achievement suggests this trend is set to continue.
- Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are improving; however, progress is not improving rapidly enough. In some year groups, differences are diminishing quickly. In others, they are not.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to other pupils as a result of targeted support provided by support staff and through well-planned class activities.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants, which is suited to their specific needs. They currently make good progress from their individual starting points.

Early years provision

Good

- Children achieve well in the Nursery and Reception classes. Teaching is good. Adults quickly and accurately assess the children's skills and understanding when they arrive in school. The staff closely check children's ongoing progress and adapt their planning accordingly.
- Children start Nursery with skills and knowledge that are well below those typical for their age, especially in their language and communication skills. By the end of the Reception Year, the proportion that achieve a good level of development is below the national average, but it is improving. Current children make good progress which is narrowing the difference between their attainment and that of other children nationally.
- The early years is well led and managed. The leader has a good understanding of how children learn and develop. There is a good balance between activities led by the teacher and those they choose themselves.
- Children enjoy positive relationships with each other and with staff. This, together with their good behaviour, indicates they feel safe.
- Disadvantaged children and those who have SEN and/or disabilities make progress that is equal to, or better than, that of their classmates because adults plan for each child individually.
- Parents told inspectors that they find it easy to communicate with the adults, and that their children are happy and safe. One parent said, 'My child loves coming to school and is inspired to learn as the class atmosphere is welcoming.'

School details

Unique reference number	110289
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10045819

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	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	441
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Val Osbaldeston
Headteacher	Jane Jefferson
Telephone number	01494 520341
Website	www.oakridgehighwycombe.co.uk
Email address	office@oakridge.bucks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11-12 June 2014

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- Most of the school population are from minority ethnic backgrounds, with the largest group being Asian or Asian British Pakistani.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is average.
- The school met the 2017 government floor standard that sets out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress for primary schools.
- The school offers a breakfast club and after-school club.
- There have been considerable staff changes since the last inspection, with the appointment of a new headteacher, a seconded deputy headteacher and two new

assistant headteachers. The governing body has changed considerably, with a new chair and several new members.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 35 lessons; 19 of these were joint observations with the headteacher.
- The inspectors observed the school's work. They looked at a wide range of documentation including safeguarding documents, the school's procedures for gaining an accurate view of its own performance, and pupils' work in books.
- Discussions took place with a group of pupils, as well as informal conversations with other pupils during lessons and at playtimes. Inspectors listened to pupils read and talked to them about books they enjoy.
- Meetings were held with school staff, four members of the governing body, parents and carers.
- Inspectors took into account 33 responses to the online staff questionnaire and 50 responses to the online pupil questionnaire.
- Inspectors considered 11 responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire, including three written comments.

Inspection team

David Harris, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Barbara Carr	Ofsted Inspector
Peter Dunmall	Ofsted Inspector

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