

# Oak Wood School

Sutton Court Road, Hillingdon, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB10 0EX

## Inspection dates

20–21 November 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	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not been effective in ensuring that pupils benefit from a good quality of education. They have been too slow to address some issues from the previous inspection.
- The relatively new interim executive board (IEB) has improved governance in a short period of time. Previously, governance was weak. Leaders were not sharply held to account for the pace and impact of their work.
- Leadership and teaching energy has been heavily focused on improving outcomes at the end of Year 11. The curriculum and teaching at key stage 3 do not prepare pupils well enough for the demands of key stage 4. Pupils do not make good progress across key stage 3.
- Subject leadership is improving. However, leaders require more time and further development in their skills to manage their teams and raise standards further.
- At key stage 4, GCSE results are not good in art, geography and design and technology.
- Leaders have not ensured that staff consistently follow school policies, particularly in relation to behaviour and assessment.
- Some teachers do not meet the needs of their pupils. Teaching is not effective enough in challenging the most able and supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- Teaching does consistently help pupils to develop their writing skills. Some teachers have low expectations for the quality of work their pupils should be producing.
- Pupils' attendance and their punctuality are not good enough.
- Pupils do not have good attitudes to learning. There is too much low-level disruption.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils have achieved particularly well in GCSE mathematics for the last two years.
- Leaders have successfully managed the integration of girls into the school since it became co-educational in September 2017.
- The sixth form is a strength of the school's work. Students make good progress.
- Pupils' overall progress and attainment at the end of Year 11 continues to improve.
- Pupils value the school's work to manage their emotional and mental health. The counselling and support provided to pupils is effective.
- Leaders manage day-to-day safeguarding well.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
  - the IEB building on their work to hold leaders to account for the pace and impact of their actions to improve the school
  - further developing the capacity of middle leaders to ensure that they have the time and skills to raise standards
  - reviewing the curriculum at key stage 3 to ensure that it meets pupils' needs and prepares them for the demands of key stage 4
  - ensuring that teachers apply school policies, particularly in relation to pupils with SEND, pupil assessment and behaviour.
- Improve pupils' personal development and welfare by:
  - urgently improving pupils' attendance, particularly for pupils from disadvantaged and White British backgrounds
  - eradicating low-level disruption
  - improving pupils' punctuality to lessons and at the beginning of the school day.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that teachers:
  - adapt their teaching to meet pupils' needs, particularly in challenging the most able and supporting those with SEND
  - have higher expectations about the quality of work that pupils should be producing
  - develop pupils' writing skills, including their ability to explain, analyse and evaluate their ideas.
- Improve outcomes for pupils, particularly ensuring that:
  - pupils make good or better progress across the wide range of subjects they study at key stage 3
  - the most-able make the progress of which they are capable
  - attainment improves in design and technology, art and geography at key stage 4.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Overall, leaders have not ensured that enough pupils benefit from a good quality of education. There has been some progress since the last inspection, such as in outcomes for pupils at the end of Year 11. However, improvements in other areas, notably attendance, have not been strong enough.
- The school has developed the confidence and role of middle leaders in securing improvement. They understand the school's priorities and know the actions they need to take moving forward. They monitor their staff and work hard to improve their subject areas. However, not enough has been done to ensure that middle leaders have the time and skills to manage all that needs to be done to raise pupils' standards.
- Leaders plan and assess the impact of pupil premium funding. However, attendance of this group of pupils is identified as one of the main barriers to their achievement. It is only recently that leaders have decided to use the funding to improve the attendance of this group of pupils. This is despite their attendance not improving over time.
- Staff value the training that they receive. Teachers new to the profession, who represent a large proportion of the new staff who started at the school in September 2018, feel well supported. Stronger teaching practice is now shared more frequently, including some work that is undertaken with other schools. However, there is still too much variability in the quality of teaching, particularly in the ability of staff to meet the different needs of pupils in their classes. Leaders have not ensured that staff consistently follow school policies, particularly in relation to assessment, meeting the needs of pupils with SEND, and behaviour.
- The curriculum structure has been improved. This has included the introduction of work-related and GCSE courses, and the development of performing arts at key stage 3. Leaders have decided that pupils will follow a two-year key stage 3 model. The reason for this is to give pupils more time to study the demanding content of their key stage 4 courses. However, the curriculum at key stage 3 is not being taught effectively across different subjects. It is not equipping pupils with the depth of knowledge and skills that they need in preparation for key stage 4.
- Leaders who oversee the provision for pupils with SEND, including the specialist resource base, have made significant improvements. They have addressed many of the weaknesses that they identified when they started their roles. They have an accurate view of their priorities and are turning their plans into actions.
- Leaders' use of Year 7 catch-up funding is effective. Most pupils improve their literacy and numeracy skills. Those pupils we listened to reading, read with confidence and accuracy.

### Governance of the school

- Since the previous inspection, governance has not been effective in holding leaders to account for the pace and impact of their school improvement work. An IEB replaced the governing body and has been in place for a relatively short period of time.

- The IEB members are highly skilled and have the right mix of knowledge and experience. The IEB uses a range of information to inform their views on the school's effectiveness. This information includes a recent external review on the quality of teaching, and reports from the local authority. As a result, IEB members have a broad understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- The IEB provides challenge to leaders on a range of issues and has made improvements to how school leaders are held to account. However, its challenge around some aspects of the school's work is not sharp enough, for example in evaluating wider indicators of behaviour at the school, beyond the use of fixed-term exclusions.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There is an effective leadership structure in place to manage safeguarding across the school. Leaders are well trained in their roles. They are aware of and take effective action to manage the contextual risks that pupils may encounter in their local community and beyond. As a result, most pupils told inspectors that they feel safe at school, and know how to keep themselves safe. An evaluation of Parent View, Ofsted's survey for parents and carers, together with the school's own survey, suggests most parents agree that their children are safe and well cared for.
- Leaders have effective systems to identify, help and manage concerns about pupils' welfare. This includes fortnightly cluster meetings. Here, the right staff come together to share information and make decisions about how to provide support for pupils promptly.
- Staff are trained appropriately on a range of safeguarding issues. Leaders, for example, have ensured that staff are more aware of and confident in dealing with racist or homophobic comments. Leaders have adapted their approach to safeguarding to reflect the intake of girls. This includes making changes to the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum, and their work with external agencies.
- Leaders follow statutory guidance in relation to safeguarding. However, on occasion, leaders are not sharp enough in ensuring that some of their school policies and/or procedures are updated and recorded robustly to reflect what happens in practice.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- There is too much variability in the quality of teaching across the school. This inconsistency is mainly where teachers do not: have consistently high expectations for the quality of work that their pupils should be producing; use the information that they have about their pupils to meet their needs effectively, for example in challenging the most able and supporting those with SEND; manage pupils' behaviour as effectively as they should.
- As a result of these inconsistencies, pupils make variable progress over time within different subjects and key stages. For example, teaching over time has been stronger in mathematics. However, in other subjects, such as English and modern foreign languages, pupils' progress across key stage 3 is not good.

- Most-able pupils are not being challenged enough in their learning across the school. In many cases, their work does not make them think deeply enough about the topics that they are learning.
- Teachers do not use tutor time well. The start of the school day is not used by some as productively as it should be.
- Pupils are not confident writers. Some teaching does not support pupils in developing their writing skills effectively so that they can, for example, give well-developed written responses.
- Pupils with SEND, including those in the resource base, are well supported by the specialist staff who work with them. This is the case, for example, in small-group interventions and in literacy development. Typical classroom teaching does not meet pupils' needs effectively enough. There is an over-reliance on the role of the teaching assistant to support pupils. Some teachers do not use autism-friendly teaching approaches where this is the primary need of some pupils.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge, and there is some strong teaching in the school. When it is most effective, teachers use their knowledge to prepare engaging activities for pupils. Also, they use their questioning techniques and choice of teaching approaches to encourage and support pupils to think about what they are learning.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

**Requires improvement**

#### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Some pupils have not developed appropriate social skills, for example they do not always know how to manage their behaviour and show respect to adults. Some pupils do not take pride in their work. Not enough of the teaching helps pupils to develop the confidence to become resilient learners.
- The school's careers programme has been updated and planned against the 'Gatsby Benchmarks' that are outlined in recent statutory guidance. Pupils have a range of ways of developing an awareness of careers and the world of work. Pupils at key stage 3 said that they would benefit from more access to careers advice and guidance.
- Leaders have a firm grasp on managing pupils' emotional health and well-being. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about the counselling service that is available at school. This service includes pupils being able to self-refer. Pupils said that adults are supportive and take their concerns seriously.
- The schools PSHE curriculum is age-appropriate and covers a range of topics to help pupils learn about staying safe, and the world around them. This helps pupils to become tolerant of different views and beliefs. Pupils summed up what each other said when they commented that 'it is OK to be different', and that the school is 'a place where you can speak out'.
- Leaders have been effective in identifying and dealing with incidents of bullying. They have improved their approach since the monitoring visit in June 2017. This approach has included better training for staff. A new online system makes it easier for staff to

report any concerns. It also enables leaders to identify and track different types of bullying quickly. Overall, pupils were positive that bullying is dealt with effectively. Pupils also commented that the new school building has made a difference to their safety. For example, it has more safe and open spaces, and there is increased staff supervision.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Attendance has not improved since the previous inspection. The attendance of pupils from disadvantaged and White British backgrounds has also not improved. However, some case studies reviewed by inspectors showed improvements, where pupils had more complex circumstances.
- Pupils' punctuality at the beginning of the school day and to their lessons is not good. Some are frequently late to school.
- Of the 49 staff members who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire, just over half felt that pupils' behaviour was good. Some commented that the school's behaviour systems do not work effectively.
- Low-level disruption is not rare. Some pupils disrupt the learning of others by calling out or not settling down quickly. This is often the case when work is too easy, or where teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils' behaviour.
- Fixed-term exclusions have fallen over time. However, permanent exclusions are above the national average. The school's information shows that internal exclusions are high. This includes some pupils who have received more than one internal exclusion.
- Leaders use alternative provision for a very small number of pupils, including to provide behaviour support. These placements help meet pupils' needs and improve their attendance, including, where relevant, in preparation for reintegration into school.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Requires improvement

- Pupils do not make good progress across the range of subjects that they study, particularly in key stage 3. This is partly due to instability in staffing over the past few years, and leaders' decisions about where they deploy teaching staff.
- Most-able pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. This is because they are not challenged enough. For example, by the end of key stage 4 they make stronger progress in mathematics than they do in English.
- Pupils with SEND, including those in the resourced provision, are well supported to develop their social and communication skills. This is because leaders have put in place effective interventions to develop these skills. Also, leaders of the SEND provision have successfully prioritised and improved pupils' literacy skills. Pupils' books show that they are writing using more accurate grammar and punctuation. However, pupils with SEND make variable progress in mainstream classes because not enough teaching meets their needs.
- Pupils' literacy skills across the school are not consistently being developed well. While some teachers help pupils to spell accurately, to read aloud and to write fluently,

others do not. Pupils' writing skills, in particular, are not being promoted effectively.

- Pupils' progress by the end of key stage 4, although in line with the national average, has improved in each of the last two years. There has been notable improvement in the progress made by lower-ability pupils. This was an area for improvement from the last inspection. Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds make progress in line with other pupils nationally. However, pupils from a White British background make much weaker progress across the curriculum, including in mathematics.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 4 has improved. For example, in the proportion of pupils being successful in achieving the higher grades in English and mathematics. Furthermore, in 2018, pupils' attainment improved in several subjects, including history and French. However, attainment in geography, design and technology and art was poor.
- Pupils coming to the end of key stage 4 are effectively supported in preparation for their next steps. However, pupils at key stage 3 are not as well prepared for the academic demands of key stage 4 as they should be.

### 16 to 19 study programmes

**Good**

- The sixth form continues to offer a good quality of education to students. Students make good progress overall.
- In 2018, provisional outcomes show that students' attainment and progress in A-level and work-related courses improved further on 2017 outcomes. This includes the proportion of students achieving the higher grades.
- Although the sixth form is small, leaders consider carefully what subjects to offer within the curriculum. There is a small range of academic and work-related courses matched to the expertise and knowledge of staff.
- Teaching in the sixth form is strong. Teachers have a good command of their subject, and how it is assessed. Teachers use questioning and feedback effectively to help students to deepen their understanding.
- Students on certain work-related courses have access to specialist resources. As a result, in courses such as hairdressing, students benefit from applying their learning to practical situations.
- Students receive effective careers provision, including access to work experience. The proportion of pupils who engage in work experience is high. This helps students to improve their communication skills and develop knowledge of the industry that they are considering for their future employment.
- Leaders ensure that students have access to a range of impartial advice and guidance. Although most students move on to further study, approximately one-fifth of students, last year, decided to pursue an apprenticeship.
- The proportion of students who successfully complete Year 12 and move into Year 13 is improving.
- The progress made by students who retake their GCSE English is good. However, the number of students who are successful in attaining a good pass in mathematics is



lower.

- The sixth-form PSHE curriculum offers a diverse range of activities, including a safer driving course, managing sexual health and first aid training. Students said that they find PSHE helpful and informative.
- Students do not have enough opportunities to interact with pupils lower down the school, or to make wider contributions to the life of the school.



## School details

Unique reference number	102449
Local authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	10054357

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	735
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	69
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board
Chair	Alloysius Frederick
Headteacher	Mark Bland
Telephone number	01895 237350
Website	<a href="http://www.oakwoodhillingdon.org.uk">www.oakwoodhillingdon.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@oakwoodhillingdon.org.uk">office@oakwoodhillingdon.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	6–7 June 2016

## Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized school. The number of pupils on roll has increased sharply since the previous inspection.
- The school is now co-educational, with girls currently in Years 7 and 8. The school changed its name to Oak Wood School in September 2017. Previously it was Abbotsfield School for Boys.
- The school moved into its new building in January 2018.
- The school has a high number of new admissions and leavers during the school year.
- An IEB replaced the governing body in February 2018.

- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average. The school has a small resourced provision for pupils who have autism spectrum disorder.
- The proportion of pupils who are from disadvantaged backgrounds is above the national average.
- Approximately 40% of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The school uses short-term off-site educational provision for a small number of pupils when required. This includes the Jubilee Academy and Springboard West. Some pupils also study courses at Innov8 Training and Development Ltd, which is situated in a building on the school site.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team visited a range of classes, many jointly with school leaders. Inspectors reviewed a wide range of pupils' work across the curriculum.
- The inspection team held a range of meetings with senior and middle leaders to evaluate the impact of their work. Inspectors held meetings with members of the IEB, teachers new to the profession, a small group of staff, and different groups of pupils, including sixth-form students. The lead inspector met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors evaluated the 49 replies to Ofsted's online inspection survey for staff, the 15 replies to the pupil questionnaire and the 40 replies to Parent View. Inspectors also evaluated the school's most recent survey of parents.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide variety of documentation provided by leaders, including internal assessment information for pupils in all year groups, GCSE examination results, sixth-form examination results, and leaders' self-evaluation and improvement planning. They scrutinised minutes of IEB meetings, a variety of school policies, the single central record of recruitment checks and a wide range of other information relating to the attendance, behaviour and safeguarding of pupils.

## Inspection team

Sam Hainey, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jennifer Bax	Ofsted Inspector
Bruce Goddard	Ofsted Inspector
Yvonne Chisholm	Ofsted Inspector

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