

# Oak Heights Independent School

3 Red Lion Court, Hounslow TW3 1JS

## Inspection dates

27–29 November 2018

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders ensure that the school provides its pupils with a good standard of education.
- Leaders have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and self-discipline. As a result, pupils' behaviour is excellent, and they work diligently in class.
- Pupils enjoy school and their attendance is high. They feel safe and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe in different situations.
- Teaching is good because teachers know their subjects well. They plan lessons that help pupils build on their prior knowledge and understanding. Teachers regularly assess pupils' progress and use this information to identify and support pupils who need extra help.
- Pupils make good progress overall. Pupils regularly make substantial progress to reach high standards in mathematics and the sciences. However, there is some variation in pupils' progress in other subjects.
- Leaders ensure that the curriculum is well suited to pupils' academic needs and career ambitions. Teachers lead daily discussions about the news, which help pupils understand and debate current affairs. However, opportunities for pupils to take part in wider enrichment activities to broaden their cultural experiences and develop their creative skills are more limited.
- Teachers focus well on physical well-being. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of how to stay physically healthy. However, teachers do not ensure that pupils have a similarly secure understanding of emotional well-being.
- Leaders do not make sure that teachers learn from best practice. Occasionally, therefore, teachers do not give pupils, especially the most able, sufficiently challenging work to deepen their understanding. This limits pupils' potential to reach the highest standards of which they are capable.
- At the start of the inspection, the school did not meet some of the independent school standards. The proprietor immediately addressed these. As a result, the school is now compliant with all of the independent school standards.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

## **Full report**

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

- Improve teaching by:
  - teachers learning from best practice how to routinely set more challenging work, especially for the most able pupils, so that they can reach their potential across all subjects.
- Improve the curriculum by creating:
  - activities which enhance pupils' creative and cultural development
  - greater opportunities for pupils to understand mental health and emotional well-being.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management so that leaders keep up to date with the latest Department for Education (DfE) requirements.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Leaders have created a culture in which there is mutual respect for all and a shared aspiration for pupils' academic success. As a result, adults care for the pupils, help them to learn well and set high expectations for behaviour. Pupils benefit from good teaching, behave exceptionally well, and succeed in their studies.
- Leaders use assessment systems effectively to monitor pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance. Parents and carers can also monitor their children's progress so that they are helped to support their children's education. Leaders use the information to hold teachers to account and to identify pupils who need extra help.
- Leaders have taken action to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to reduce variation in quality between subjects. For example, leaders have improved the quality of teaching resources available, and allocated more curriculum time to some subjects. There are early signs that these actions are improving the quality of teaching.
- The proprietor supports new teachers effectively through monitoring their teaching and providing feedback on how to improve. Leaders ensure that teachers keep up to date with developments in their respective subjects. Although teachers discuss their teaching informally with their colleagues, they do not learn from best practice in how to ensure that pupils routinely reach their potential. As a result, teaching, although still good and improving, remains too variable to ensure that pupils make substantial progress across all subjects.
- In line with the school's vision and stated aims, leaders ensure that the curriculum gives pupils opportunities to excel in academic subjects. Leaders plan the curriculum sequentially so that learning builds on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding. There are many opportunities for revising prior learning and for pupils to apply their knowledge and skills across subjects. When appropriate, leaders choose topics within subjects that are pertinent to pupils' interests and backgrounds. In history, for example, pupils learn a unit on the conflict in the Middle East.
- Leaders ensure that the curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Pupils benefit from local authority specialist teachers for physical education, swimming and music. Every day, teachers facilitate pupils' discussions and debates about items in the news. Pupils express their contrasting views and opinions in a respectful manner. These activities contribute to pupils' understanding and respecting people with protected characteristics, international politics, the law and threats to the global environment, for example. They also make a strong contribution to pupils' speaking and listening skills.
- Leaders provide limited opportunities for pupils to take part in enrichment activities to broaden their creativity and cultural experiences.

### Governance

- The proprietor is also the headteacher. He and another trustee, who works at the school as the senior administrator, take responsibility for the day-to-day running of the school.

- The other trustee and governors support school leaders in ensuring that the school is suitably resourced and able to provide pupils with a good education.
- Since the previous inspection, governors did not keep fully abreast with changes to DfE requirements. As a result, at the start of the inspection, inspectors found that the school did not meet a few of the independent school standards. Leaders immediately addressed these shortcomings so that by the end of the inspection the school met all the standards.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- In this small school, members of staff know the pupils well. As a result, adults are alert to any changes in pupils' behaviours and know to report any concerns to the designated safeguarding leader.
- Leaders have well-established links with the local safer schools police officers. The police officers visit the school every week. They give leaders updates about local safeguarding issues and deliver workshops for the pupils. These include on knife crime, internet safety and other aspects of crime and the law. In addition, leaders give pupils and parents the names and direct contact details of the police officers so that they can contact them directly if needed.
- Leaders work with external agencies to ensure pupils' safety and welfare. For instance, they know to alert the local authority should the whereabouts of any pupil be unknown.
- The school publishes its safeguarding policy on its website. The policy has now been updated and has proper regard to current government requirements.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- The quality of teaching is good. As a result, pupils learn well and make good progress across a range of subjects.
- Teachers know their subjects well. They also know how to establish a good rapport with the pupils and inspire them to value academic success. As a result, pupils work hard and maximise their time in lessons.
- Teachers use good-quality resources effectively to plan learning that is systematic. They build on pupils' prior knowledge to help them gain a deeper understanding and a range of skills. Teachers assess pupils' progress frequently and use this information to identify and address any gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding. Teachers give pupils exemplar materials to help them aspire towards excellence. This helps pupils to learn successfully.
- Teachers build pupils' literacy and numeracy skills well across the subjects. They help pupils to apply their knowledge in one subject to solve problems and deepen their understanding in other subjects.
- Teachers give extra support to new pupils and to those who need it so that pupils catch up quickly. They also give extra tuition to some of the most able pupils to help them achieve extra qualifications, such as the additional mathematics GCSE.
- Teachers give pupils homework in all subjects, which helps pupils consolidate their learning by researching new topics and broadening their general knowledge. Inspectors

observed a robust debate, for example when pupils presented their research findings on the influence that Freud had on psychology.

- In the best lessons, teachers have very high expectations of what all pupils, including the most able, can achieve. In these lessons, once a pupil has mastered a concept the teacher gives more challenging work. Teachers ask probing questions and do not accept narrow answers.
- However, teachers do not provide this level of challenge in all subjects. Consequently, in some subjects, some pupils do not reach the highest standards of which they are capable.

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

**Good**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- As they progress through the school, pupils develop their self-confidence. This is because adults encourage them to express their views in an environment where everyone respects each other and values their opinions.
- Teachers help pupils develop a mature sense of responsibility, an understanding of democratic processes and of balanced arguments. This was demonstrated during a school council meeting, where representatives discussed improvements they would like to see in the school. In doing so, some pupils challenged their peers' proposals on the basis of affordability.
- Pupils say that they all get on very well with each other. Bullying is extremely rare. Pupils are confident that should it ever occur, adults would deal with it effectively.
- The school promotes pupils' safety and well-being effectively. Adults encourage pupils to tell them about any personal concerns or if they are worried about a friend. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe.
- Pupils have a good understanding of healthy eating and the dangers of substance misuse. They have weekly swimming and physical education lessons, which help them keep physically fit.
- Members of staff help pupils who have emotional or mental health issues. They do not, however, proactively educate pupils about how to recognise mental health problems and how to ensure their emotional well-being.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils are highly courteous and welcoming to visitors.
- Pupils are very proud of their school. They arrive punctually to lessons, with the right equipment. Pupils work diligently as they are determined to succeed. Low-level disruption is exceptionally rare. Because of these positive attitudes, pupils learn very well.
- Pupils' behaviour as they move around the school and at social times is also excellent.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Their rates of attendance and punctuality to school are

high. No pupils are persistently absent.

## **Outcomes for pupils**

**Good**

- Over time, pupils make good progress from their varied starting points.
- In 2018, pupils working towards GCSE examinations made strong progress to reach high standards particularly in mathematics, biology, chemistry and physics. Progress in other subjects was broadly good, but weaker in history and psychology. The small number who took the extra examination of additional mathematics passed with distinction.
- Current pupils are making good overall progress across the subjects and in all year groups. There remains some variation between subjects. As a result of the changes the proprietor made to improve teaching, current pupils' progress in English and psychology has improved.
- The most able pupils make substantial progress and reach high standards in the subjects where teachers give them very challenging work. This is especially the case in mathematics and the sciences. In subjects where teachers do not challenge them sufficiently, the same pupils make good progress but do not reach the highest standards of which they are capable.
- It is not possible to judge the progress of other specific groups of pupils, as group sizes are too small to have any reliable statistical significance.
- Leaders prepare pupils well for their futures. Pupils leave the school with positive attitudes, ambition and a good set of GCSE qualifications. Last year, all Year 11 pupils went on to sixth-form provision and are studying a range of A-level courses.

## School details

Unique reference number	135090
DfE registration number	313/6081
Inspection number	10055429

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Secondary School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	77
Proprietor	Sukhvinder Dhillon
Chair	Jamshed Butt
Headteacher	Sukhvinder Dhillon
Annual fees (day pupils)	£6,000.00
Telephone number	020 8577 1827
Website	<a href="http://www.oakheights.co.uk">www.oakheights.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:enquiries@oakheights.co.uk">enquiries@oakheights.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	17–19 May 2016

## Information about this school

- Oak Heights Independent School is a selective secondary school for girls and boys in the London Borough of Hounslow.
- The school is registered for 80 pupils from Year 7 to Year 11.
- The proprietor increased teacher staffing from the start of this academic year by appointing two extra part-time teachers for English and psychology.
- The school uses the sports and swimming facilities of Hounslow Leisure Centre.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The headteacher of the school is also the proprietor. There are three trustees and four

governors.

- This was the school's fourth standard inspection.
- The school also operates as an examination centre for external candidates wishing to take public examinations.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with one day's prior notice.
- The inspectors observed learning in 11 classrooms, most of which were visited with senior leaders.
- The inspectors scrutinised samples of pupils' work. They checked the school's information about pupils' progress.
- The inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other members of staff. They met with two groups of pupils and had informal discussions with pupils during social times and lessons.
- Inspectors took account of five responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for parents and parents' additional written comments. Inspectors considered four responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspectors checked documentation, policies and all aspects of the school's work for compliance with the independent school standards.

## Inspection team

David Radomsky, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

John Lucas

Her Majesty's Inspector

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