

Oakfield Primary School

Morecambe Avenue, Scunthorpe, Lincolnshire DN16 3JF

Inspection dates

28–29 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	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Recently appointed senior leaders are enthusiastic about their roles, and they support the headteacher's ambition to improve pupils' outcomes. However, it is too early to evaluate the effect of their work.
- Many leaders are new to post and, although knowledgeable, do not contribute enough to quality assurance or to securing improvements.
- Action plans for improvement lack precision. Consequently, improvements in teaching and learning are too slow.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is variable. Teachers do not insist on the same high standards of pupils' writing in all subjects, and they do not ensure that activities in reading meet pupils' needs and abilities consistently.
- Pupils' outcomes in key stage 2 improved at the end of 2018. However, in other year groups across the school, pupils' progress and attainment are more variable, particularly in English.
- The school's topic-based curriculum provides pupils with a meaningful context in which to learn. However, for subjects beyond English and mathematics, activities do not build pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding effectively.
- The early years leader is knowledgeable about how young children learn and has ensured all welfare requirements are met. However, adults in the early years setting do not provide sufficient challenge across all areas of learning. This affects the proportion of children achieving a good level of development, which is below the national average.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher is determined to improve the school. She has managed a period of substantial staff turbulence skilfully and calmly, providing purposeful leadership and a clear direction for future improvement.
- Leaders promote pastoral care successfully. They ensure pupils' well-being is paramount.
- Mathematics is a strength of the school.
- Governors are skilled professionals who lead the school well. They offer support and challenge to school leaders, and they are clear about the journey of improvement they are on.
- Pupils behave well and are respectful of each other and of visitors. They are polite, demonstrate good manners and are keen to talk about their work.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment further so that pupils' outcomes improve, particularly in English, by ensuring that:
 - pupils have frequent opportunities to observe and practise blending sounds within the teaching of phonics
 - the books pupils use to practise their early reading are matched precisely to their phonics knowledge
 - pupils, particularly lower-attaining pupils, receive frequent opportunities to read with adults
 - the teaching of reading and reading comprehension provides an appropriate level of challenge
 - all teachers share the same high expectations of what pupils can achieve, and that they plan activities that provide pupils with sufficient challenge, particularly in writing in key stage 1 and for the most-able pupils and disadvantaged pupils
 - actions within the specific plans for pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are precise so that these pupils receive the teaching and support needed to make good progress from their varying starting points.
- Increase the proportion of children in the early years reaching and exceeding a good level of development by ensuring that there is an appropriate level of challenge to enable children to consolidate and extend their skills and knowledge.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistently good or better
 - leaders' plans for improvement are precise and are focused on pupils' outcomes
 - senior leaders quickly establish their role in supporting the headteacher to secure further school improvement
 - middle leaders receive the professional development they need so that they can play a full part in evaluating the effectiveness of their actions in improving the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes
 - the planning of curriculum guidance documents in subjects other than English and mathematics helps teachers to build pupils' knowledge and skills more effectively.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the school's last inspection, there have been substantial changes in leadership at all levels, not least the appointment of a new headteacher. Since her appointment, the headteacher has managed this difficult period with calmness and great resilience. However, instability in staffing, including leadership appointments to senior and subject leadership taking longer than anticipated, has slowed the pace of improvement anticipated at the school's most recent Ofsted monitoring visit.
- The commitment and dedication of the headteacher are undoubted and she is determined to improve the school's overall effectiveness. There is now a full complement of senior leaders in post who share the same determination as the headteacher to improve pupils' outcomes further. Leaders are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about their roles. However, they are new to post and have not had sufficient time to have the desired effect on improving pupils' outcomes.
- The school's improvement plans do not set out precisely enough how inconsistencies in teaching, learning and assessment will be addressed.
- Middle leaders, despite being keen and committed, are also in the very early stages of developing their roles. They do not have an established role in evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. It is therefore difficult to determine their effectiveness as leaders. As a result, inconsistencies remain in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school.
- The curriculum offers pupils experiences through a topic-based approach. All pupils are provided with relevant contexts for learning. However, in subjects beyond English and mathematics, progression is not clear and, as a result, pupils repeat work that is of a similar standard in different year groups.
- Subject leaders for English have developed new strategies to improve the teaching of reading and writing. They have placed high-quality, age-appropriate texts at the heart of the curriculum. However, the teaching of reading comprehension skills and the effectiveness of guidance that teachers offer to pupils vary considerably across year groups. As leaders are at an early stage of implementing this change, improvement is not currently evident.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has only very recently been appointed. She is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and receives support from an experienced SENCo to help her in this role. She is ensuring that additional funding for pupils with SEND is spent wisely and that support is effectively deployed. However, there is some variability in the quality of plans to support pupils. The SENCo acknowledges that she is in the early stages of her role and that there is more to do to improve the progress rates of pupils with SEND.
- The pupil premium leader has accessed relevant training and is able to identify potential barriers faced by disadvantaged pupils. She knows the pupils well and her actions are beginning to have a positive effect on disadvantaged pupils' attendance and their achievement in some year groups. The school's strategy has a clear focus on improving pupils' outcomes and on diminishing the difference in achievement between

disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally. However, some actions lack precision, and this makes monitoring the effectiveness of such actions difficult.

- Additional funding to develop physical education and sport is used effectively. Leaders use it well to fund suitable initiatives, including specialist coaching for pupils and professional development for teachers. As a result, teachers' confidence has improved and pupils are accessing a wider variety of sporting activities and extra-curricular clubs.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is fostered well throughout the school and is underpinned by the school's strong values and ethos. Pupils who spoke with inspectors demonstrated a secure understanding of British values and were able to reflect articulately about the importance of respecting one another.
- All staff access appropriate professional development and training opportunities. More recent training has had a substantial effect on improving the quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics. Indeed, the teaching of mathematics is now a strength of the school. It is an expectation that any staff attending training events will disseminate the most important aspects to colleagues to improve practice more widely.
- The school has received effective support from the local authority. This support has helped leaders to develop strategic plans to further strengthen the capacity of leadership.

Governance of the school

- Governors have worked with the local authority, accessing support and developing their expertise to fulfil their strategic role effectively.
- Since the last inspection, a review of governors' work has led to substantial changes in the membership of the governing body. The structure of governance has been reorganised, and new members have been appointed, based on the suitability of their knowledge and expertise. A review of governing body minutes shows that governors are consistently holding leaders to account.
- Governors are involved fully in the life of the school and share the commitment, dedication and ambition of the headteacher, offering support to further strengthen the new leadership team.
- Governors see themselves as critical friends. They understand the information presented to them by school leaders, and they are confident in offering challenge and in holding school leaders to account.
- Governors regularly visit the school, and they are a visible presence at all main events, such as parent consultation evenings. Governors understand their community well.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that appropriate pre-employment checks are made on all staff who work at the school. Similarly, effective checks are made on visitors and volunteers, including governors.

- Training is up to date for all staff and takes account of the government's most recent guidance. This ensures that all staff have a good understanding of the school's safeguarding procedures and that they know who to report to should they have concerns. Those staff who spoke to inspectors could fully explain the process that they would follow to keep pupils safe from harm. Staff are aware of their role regarding the 'Prevent' duty and have a sound knowledge of the potential risks that pupils may face.
- The school's designated safeguarding governor and school leaders are proactive in ensuring that their safeguarding policies and procedures are effective. Governors evaluate the findings of the leaders' annual safeguarding audit. Any discrepancies are dealt with swiftly to ensure that their practice is relevant and up to date.
- Those parents who spoke to inspectors, along with those who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, feel that the school keeps their children safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school is variable. Teachers do not always ensure that work is well matched to pupils' needs and abilities. In some cases, pupils receive work that does not challenge them to work their hardest. When this happens, the pace of learning slows and pupils become distracted. This is particularly the case for the disadvantaged and most-able pupils.
- The quality of phonics teaching is inconsistent. Teachers do not focus sufficiently on pupils practising sounding out and blending. Some pupils' early reading books are not well matched to pupils' phonics knowledge, which means some pupils struggle to build reading confidence.
- Reading records have been introduced recently. Pupils are expected to read regularly both at school and at home. However, currently there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to read with an adult in school.
- Teachers provide feedback for pupils to improve the quality of their writing. However, while there is evidence of some pupils improving and/or correcting their writing, not all do so, which is inconsistent with the school's policy.
- Targeted support for lower-ability pupils to help them improve their spelling skills is not effective because they are not encouraged to draw on their phonics knowledge to spell unknown words.
- Teachers do not challenge pupils' use of language enough. For example, pupils do not typically correct or extend their answers to reading comprehension questions. Leaders know that approaches to the teaching of language comprehension are improving but are not embedded sufficiently.
- Pupils' handwriting and presentation are inconsistent across the school. This is because expectations are not made clear to pupils.
- The teaching of the wider curriculum, for example science and geography, ensures that the national curriculum is covered. However, in key stage 2, pupils' workbooks show great variability in the quality of learning and in the range of opportunities for the development of subject-specific knowledge. The level of challenge across the wider curriculum is not always well matched to pupils' abilities.

- Where teachers' subject knowledge is strong, and sequences of work are matched to pupils' abilities, pupils are effectively challenged and make progress.
- Teaching, learning and assessment in mathematics have improved consistently across both key stages. This is mainly due to an effective programme of training for all staff. Lesson structures allow for children to work productively, demonstrating and applying skills effectively. However, questioning does not always support conceptual understanding in mathematics and, as a result, some pupils do not learn to work independently, and they have an over-reliance on adult support.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed, and they support pupils to access their learning effectively. They work closely with teachers to ensure that the activities they support are appropriate to pupils' needs, and they adapt resources to ensure that pupils are appropriately challenged.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils say that they feel safe, and they describe incidents of bullying and derogatory language as rare. They say that any incidents are dealt with swiftly by adults if they do occur. Those pupils who spoke to inspectors said that the school was a safe place because 'there are adults who you can talk to and Year 6 buddies'.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online and are able to make healthy life choices. The sports leader has a clear focus on making learning active in all physical education lessons.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported effectively. Pupils demonstrate a culture of tolerance and democracy. They have an understanding of other cultures, and they celebrate this in events such as Black History Month. They have knowledge of people such as Nelson Mandela, Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils walk calmly between lessons. They use the stairs sensibly – keeping to the left – in line with school policy and with few reminders needed.
- Pupils themselves believe that they are well behaved. They are clear about the school's 'Good to be Green' behaviour strategy. They feel that it is effective, consistently applied and fair.
- Pupils say that they feel happy in school, and this is endorsed by parents.
- Historically, pupils' attendance had been declining and was below the national average. This is no longer the case. Leaders now take effective action to follow up any pupil's absence, and they have a range of measures in place to manage those pupils who miss school regularly. Consequently, the level of attendance is improving.
- Occasionally, when work is not well matched to pupils' abilities there is some disruption

to learning. On these occasions, pupils' ability to self-regulate is inconsistent. That said, adults demonstrate high expectations regarding pupils' behaviour, and they address any disruption quickly.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In 2018, pupils' attainment in the key stage 2 statutory tests was above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics at the expected standard. At the higher standard, pupils' attainment was better than that seen nationally in writing and mathematics. However, pupils' progress from their starting points was average.
- At the end of key stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has varied over time. In 2018, pupils' standard of attainment at the expected standard was below national averages in reading. At the higher standard, pupils' attainment was below national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Outcomes for pupils currently in the school remain variable across all subjects because of the variability in the quality of teaching and learning. Too few pupils, especially the most able and the disadvantaged, make the progress that they should from their different starting points. Work in pupils' books shows that pupils are not consistently challenged to produce work that is of their very best.
- Leaders have already identified improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND as a priority for improvement. They have begun to improve the quality of pupils' individual learning plans where this is appropriate, and they now check their progress more regularly than other pupils. The school's own assessment information indicates that most disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are now making better progress. However, there is still more to do to ensure that they make the progress needed to improve their outcomes further and diminish overall differences in outcomes with other pupils nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening test in 2018 was above the national average. There was a substantial increase in the school's performance when compared with that of 2017, when the standard achieved was well below the national average. However, too many pupils currently in key stage 1 do not use their phonics knowledge when reading or writing outside of the discrete phonics session. This affects pupils' development of their phonics skills and knowledge.
- Pupils' outcomes in subjects beyond English and mathematics are equally variable. This is because pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to deepen their knowledge, skills and understanding of a range of subjects across the curriculum. Too often, work in other subjects is focused on the development of pupils' English skills rather than the development of subject-specific knowledge and skills.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the early years is variable.
- Leadership of the early years requires improvement because up until recently there has

been too little time for the leader to drive up the quality of teaching.

- Children enter the Reception Year with skills and abilities broadly in line with those that would be typically expected for their age and stage of development. However, in 2018 the proportion of children reaching a good level of development was lower than the national average, with no children able to exceed this. This represents a dip in outcomes compared with 2017.
- Sometimes, adults in the school do not take account of children's prior abilities, particularly in literacy. In the Reception class, there are few opportunities for children to choose activities which consolidate or extend their reading and writing skills. Although many areas within the setting have pencils and paper, children rarely access them and are not encouraged to do so by adults effectively.
- When adults work alongside children, they skilfully ask questions to steer learning and, as a result, they extend learning well and provide challenge.
- Outdoor provision does not enable children to choose their own learning independently. Activities do not provide opportunities for all children to consolidate their skills in reading, writing and number. It is not always clear how adults intend to challenge and extend learning for older children and the most able, as activities in the outdoor area are not adapted to meet their different needs.
- The school has recently begun to offer nursery provision. Of the 30 children in the current Reception class, half came from the school's nursery, with half coming from a range of other pre-school settings. In nursery, children can choose their own learning. Activities provided encourage children's talk and cooperation. Adults lead learning effectively by using engaging storytelling with props. This approach supports children's understanding of communication, language and literacy.
- Early phonics is taught effectively and enables children to articulate and recognise the initial sounds of letters accurately. However, there are insufficient opportunities for children to practise their blending skills. As a result, children do not develop early reading and writing skills as well as they could.
- Routines are clear and well established. They enable children to settle effectively. As a result, children appear happy in the setting and their behaviour is good.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective. All staff have accessed appropriate training to ensure that they follow the school's systems and processes. Children's welfare requirements are met.
- There is an effective partnership with parents. Strong systems are in place for parents to contribute towards their child's learning. Staff offer a weekly newsletter and home school link books to ensure timely communication.

School details

Unique reference number	134867
Local authority	North Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10048253

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	310
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Caroline Kupfers
Headteacher	Mrs Sarah Williams
Telephone number	01724 842 246
Website	www.oakfield.n-lincs.sch.uk
Email address	admin.oakfield@northlincs.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	14–15 June 2016

Information about this school

- Oakfield Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage, with a small proportion coming from minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average, as is the proportion who have an education, health and care plan.
- A breakfast club is offered by the school.
- In 2018, the school extended its age range, from 3 to 11 years, to include nursery provision.
- Formal support has been provided from the local authority. Leaders are currently participating in a peer review programme with colleagues across the local authority that is designed to strengthen the leadership capacity of the school.

- Since the last inspection, most of the teaching staff and leaders are either new to the school or new to role. This includes the headteacher, who was previously the deputy headteacher of the school.
- Several governors have been appointed since the last inspection.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in lessons, or part lessons, across a range of subjects from Nursery to Year 6. Some of these visits were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors met with four groups of pupils and talked informally with pupils at lunchtimes and breaktimes.
- Inspectors also listened to reading from pupils in Year 1, Year 2, Year 4 and Year 6, and talked to them about their reading. Inspectors observed the school's acts of worship, breakfast club, breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders and leaders with responsibility for English, mathematics, science, humanities, personal, social and health education, early years and pupils with SEND. Inspectors also met with those members of staff responsible for attendance, behaviour, bullying and exclusions, disadvantaged pupils and the sports premium. They also met with teachers in the early stages of their careers and teaching assistants.
- The lead inspector met with governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the 36 responses to Parent View, including 33 free-text comments. The lead inspector also looked at the 33 responses to the staff survey and the 189 responses to the online pupils' questionnaire. Inspectors met with parents at the beginning of the school day.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a broad range of evidence, including the school's analysis of its strengths and weaknesses, school development planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to attendance, behaviour and accidents.
- Inspectors also looked at an extensive range of pupils' books and considered the school's assessment information on current pupils' progress and attainment.
- The school's child protection and safeguarding procedures were scrutinised. The lead inspector reviewed the school's website to confirm whether it met the requirements on the publication of specified information.

Inspection team

Gill Wild, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Karine Hendley

Her Majesty's Inspector

Darren Marks

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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