

Inspection of a good school: Oakley Primary Academy

Station Road, Oakley, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK43 7RE

Inspection dates:

2–3 October 2019

Outcome

Oakley Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Oakley has changed a lot in recent years. It was a lower school and is now a full primary. Pupils now leave at the end of Year 6 instead of Year 4. Five classrooms have been built and it has become an academy. Through all this, the school has kept its 'heart'. It is still the 'very friendly and welcoming place' that it was when it was last inspected as a lower school.

Oakley is a school where everyone is welcome. Every parent and carer who responded to Parent View said that their child is happy at school. Almost all parents said they would recommend the school to others.

The school is a safe and happy place. Pupils behave well in their classrooms and as they move about the school. They are polite and respectful towards other people. The school is a calm and pleasant place. Bullying does not happen very often. When it does, staff take it seriously and sort it out quickly.

Leaders want the best for every pupil at the school. Staff get the training they need to teach each subject well. On the whole, pupils do at least as well as pupils in other schools across the country.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have kept standards high, despite the changes the school has gone through over the past few years. In the 2018/19 academic year, the school had Year 6 pupils for the first time. These pupils took the national assessments in the summer term 2019. The school's results in English and mathematics were in line with the national averages.

Teaching of reading is now much better. Children start learning phonics as soon as they join the Reception classes. Pupils carry on with their daily lessons as they move on to Year 1 and Year 2. Staff know a lot about how to teach children to read. Leaders have made sure that staff have had the right training to be able to teach phonics well. The results of

the Year 1 phonics screening check were in line with the national averages in 2019. Reading books in key stage 1 are not always well matched to pupils' ability and the phonics that they have been taught.

Pupils learn about all the subjects in the national curriculum. They enjoy their learning and say lessons are fun. Pupils have a wide range of other learning opportunities. For example, on Friday afternoons, pupils take part in a weekly 'enrichment afternoon'. They learn skills such as calligraphy, sewing and gardening. Pupils also go on visits to places of interest, as well as working with visitors that come in to school. For example, pupils in Year 5 go to London to see important sites, such as St Paul's Cathedral, and to see a play at a theatre.

Leaders and staff are working on improving the school's curriculum further. Although pupils learn about subjects such as history, planning is not fully developed. For example, the school is working on making sure that they teach topics in a suitable order. This is so that pupils build up their knowledge and skills in the subject, bit by bit.

Pupils behave well at Oakley Primary. Pupils are interested in their learning and they listen to their teachers. At breaktimes, pupils enjoy playing with their friends and making up games. There are always plenty of staff for them to go to about their concerns or if they have a problem at playtime.

The school meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) very well. Leaders and staff make sure that pupils with SEND are fully included in the school. They make sure that pupils' individual needs are met so that they make progress from their own starting points.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders take pupils' safety and welfare seriously. For example, almost all members of staff are trained in paediatric first aid. Leaders also ensure that staff are properly trained to spot signs of abuse and neglect. They make sure that staff know how to report any concerns, and that they do so quickly. The school's designated safeguarding leads understand their roles well. They act quickly, when they need to, to make sure that pupils are safe. The school is a very open and caring place. Pupils know that their teachers and other staff will always listen to them and help them.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some aspects of the curriculum are not fully developed. All national curriculum subjects are taught regularly, and pupils are developing their knowledge across a range of areas. However, in some subjects, planning is not sufficiently coherent and is not sequenced well enough. However, it is clear from the actions that leaders have already

taken to plan next year's curriculum and train staff in how to deliver it that they are in the process of bringing this about. This is the case in art and design, design and technology, history and geography.

- The school has invested in suitable reading books for children in the early years. This means that the books children are given to read are matched closely to the phonics they have been taught and to their current knowledge and ability. This is not the case in key stage 1, where the stock of reading books has not been improved in this way. As a result, some pupils are given books that are too hard for them or that require phonics skills that they have not yet been taught.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Oakley Lower School, to be good on 19 January 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	143561
Local authority	Bedford
Inspection number	10110250
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	308
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Dr Jeremy Reynolds
Principal	Sarah Litchfield
Website	www.oakleyprimaryacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy on 1 November 2016. When its predecessor school, Oakley Lower School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is part of the Sharnbrook Academy Foundation, a multi-academy trust.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector met with: the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust; the headteacher and other senior leaders; leaders of specific subject areas; groups of pupils; and members of staff.
- The inspector looked in depth at the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. The inspector met with the leaders of these subjects, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, spoke with pupils about their work, and listened to pupils read.
- To check the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector checked the school's single central record of pre-appointment checks, met the school's designated safeguarding leads, spoke with staff and pupils, and checked the school's child protection records.

Inspection team

Wendy Varney, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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