

Inspection of Oakfield Park School, Ackworth

Barnsley Road, Ackworth, Pontefract, West Yorkshire WF7 7DT

Inspection dates: 8–9 October 2019

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Sixth-form provision

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Oakfield Park is a remarkably friendly and welcoming school. Staff are highly skilled. They really know their pupils and understand their needs precisely. Pupils say they love coming to school and love learning. They feel happy and safe because they know that adults care about them.

Pupils' behaviour is superb. Classrooms and corridors are calm. Staff are on hand at breaktime to help pupils to play and socialise with each other. Pupils say they do not worry about bullying. They know that adults will help if others are unkind to them.

Day-to-day routines are established and clear. Pupils know exactly what they need to do. Some pupils travel quite a distance to school. Breakfast club and morning exercise help these pupils, in particular, to settle and be ready to learn.

Pupils work hard and achieve highly at Oakfield Park. Teachers' expectations of pupils are high. They ensure that pupils have the right help at the right time to progress. By the time students leave school, they are exceedingly well prepared for adult life. Some pupils already have a job by the time they leave. Students in the sixth form told us they have plans for the future and are excited to move on from school.

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

The quality of education at Oakfield Park is outstanding. Leaders, staff and governors are extremely ambitious for pupils to achieve their potential and become active citizens. Leaders have thought hard about what they want each pupil to learn as they move through the school. Teachers get to know each pupil as an individual. They understand pupils' specific special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in detail. Teachers use pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans very well to plan individual pupils' learning. Teachers receive highly effective training and support to improve their skills. Teachers successfully meet the educational and social needs of pupils so that they understand and remember more.

Leaders want all pupils to be able to communicate and read so that they can learn well and be successful adults. As soon as pupils join the school, they start to learn the communication skills they need. A core set of 50 signs are used constantly and consistently by staff and pupils alike. Pupils enjoy a range of activities, both in groups and individually, to develop their attention and listening skills. Morning routines encourage pupils to communicate with staff and with each other. For example, staff encourage conversations about how pupils are feeling or what the weather is like. Pupils develop their love of reading by listening, watching or experiencing a variety of different stories. Pupils learn to read books that are the right level for their ability and age.

Leaders ensure that pupils' learning is not limited to academic subjects. Pupils told

us about the different clubs they belong to, such as choir, band and basketball, that broaden their learning. Pupils also spoke with excitement and enthusiasm about school trips and visits to Pontefract Castle and local shops and cafés. The school has well-equipped outdoor areas. Pupils use these at breaktime, but also during the day if they need 'time out' to calm down before returning to learning.

Leaders have made sure the systems to assess pupils' progress closely match their needs. The system tracks pupils' progress according to their EHC plan. Teachers use these assessments to plan work that challenges pupils to learn and develop further.

Sixth-form students get precisely the right support to help them to get ready for when they leave school. Knowledgeable staff and a careers adviser support students to decide what they want to do when they leave the school. Students study the right course and have access to work experience that suits their needs. Students also broaden their knowledge and experience of the world through activities such as fishing. They also take part in weekly community visit days where they learn vital life skills such as working to a budget to buy lunch. Some students on work experience have been offered part-time paid employment. Last year, all those who were able moved to college to continue their studies.

Pupils can concentrate on their work because behaviour is managed exceptionally well. Pupils show respect to their friends, teachers and visitors. Members of staff use the same approach so that pupils understand exactly what is expected of them in school. Teachers help pupils to spot in advance and manage more effectively their anger and emotions.

Staff say that leaders care about their well-being as well as that of the pupils. They speak highly about the support they receive and the school's 'open-door' policy. Leaders ensure that staff have the training and support they need to develop.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding training is regular and relevant. Staff are aware of their responsibilities in keeping children safe. Staff pass on any concerns to the appropriate person or external agency.

Exceptionally strong relationships between pupils and staff ensure that staff notice when pupils might be at risk of harm straight away. Any concerns about a pupil's safety or welfare are quickly reported to the safeguarding team, who look into any concerns promptly. Leaders ensure that pupils get the help and support they need.

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're 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	133719
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10110641
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	119
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	40
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ernie Lockett
Headteacher	Stephen Copley
Website	www.oakfieldpark.wakefield.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26–27 November 2014

Information about this school

- Oakfield Park is a community special school that caters for pupils from the age of 11 to 19 years.
- Oakfield Park provides for pupils who have severe learning difficulties. Some pupils have profound and multiple learning difficulties. Some pupils have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. All pupils have an EHC plan.
- The school runs lunchtime and after-school clubs on the school site.
- The school did not use any alternative provision at the time of inspection.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We held meetings with senior leaders, middle leaders, teachers and support staff. The lead inspector met with four governors, including the chair of the governing

body. The lead inspector spoke to the school improvement partner.

- We met with pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils informally about the school. No pupils responded to Ofsted’s online pupil survey. We took account of 11 responses to the Ofsted parent view questionnaires and 51 Ofsted Staff surveys.
- We evaluated the quality of education by looking in detail at communication and English, numeracy and mathematics, independence and personal, social and health education. We discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils’ work and spoke to pupils and teachers about the curriculum.

Inspection team

Tricia Stevens, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Paul Barton

Ofsted Inspector

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