

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Vikki Reader
Oakfield Church of England Aided Primary School, Ryde
Appley Road
Ryde
Isle of Wight
PO33 1NE

Dear Mrs Reader

Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Oakfield Church of England Aided Primary School, Ryde

Following my visit to your school on 8 June 2021, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the monitoring inspection findings. Thank you for the help you gave during the inspection and for the time you made available to discuss the actions that have been taken to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The monitoring inspection was carried out under section 8(2) of the Education Act 2005 and has taken place because the school has received two successive judgements of requires improvement at its previous section 5 inspections.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. I discussed the impact of the pandemic with you and have taken that into account in my evaluation.

Having considered the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time:

Leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action in order for the school to become a good school.

The school should take further action to:

- fully embed the planned improvements to the school's wider curriculum alongside the consolidation of the teaching of phonics
- continue to implement the recent improvements to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Context

Since the last section 5 inspection in January 2020, there has been a restructure of the leadership of the school. There is no longer an executive headteacher post. The previous head of school was appointed as the substantive headteacher in September 2020, alongside the appointment of two assistant headteachers. The new part-time special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) also began working at the school at this time. A number of new governors have also joined the governing body.

Main findings

You and your staff are resolute in your shared determination to achieve the very best for your pupils and the local community. This was clearly evident during the lockdown periods over the past year and when pupils fully returned to school in March 2021. You and your newly formed leadership team are focused on taking the necessary actions to improve many aspects of the school, including the school's curriculum. Much of this work is well under way and governors and leaders have a clear understanding of what is required to ensure that all pupils are offered a good quality of education.

Staff are focused on giving pupils the support they need to help them read fluently and appropriately for their age. This is because you and your leaders have rightly prioritised improvements to reading across the school. Staff have developed their expertise through a significant amount of training. Both this, and a much-needed investment in the quality of books available, is continuing to foster both pupils' ability to read as well as their love of books. Many pupils in Reception and key stage 1 are more readily using their decoding skills when they read more difficult words. This was evident when I heard pupils in Year 2 read. However, there are still some pupils who do not always secure the phonics knowledge they need to be confident readers. You recognise this and have plans in place to further enhance the teaching of phonics to the youngest children in the school.

Over the past year, you have worked with staff to implement your ambitious vision of an 'engaging and active curriculum'. Improvements are evident in subjects such as mathematics and science where the content of what pupils will learn has been carefully ordered. More precise assessment means that teachers know what pupils have learned before and how they can build on this. As a result, pupils can more confidently apply their numeracy skills in mathematics with much greater success. Pupils can also recall many examples of scientific knowledge. However, leaders and governors know that more time is needed to ensure that all subjects are of a similar quality. Plans are currently being developed to ensure that the curriculum in subjects such as computing, history, geography and music is as well considered. You and your staff know these improvements must be implemented quickly to ensure that pupils know and remember more across the full curriculum.

Following the recruitment of a new SENCo, the identification of the needs of pupils has vastly improved. This has been particularly important to secure the appropriate external agency support for pupils who have complex special education needs. In school, staff expertise has continued to develop, particularly in the support of pupils' social and emotional mental health. While the provision and support for pupils with SEND has improved, leaders acknowledge that there is still more to do. As yet, teachers do not have enough specific strategies to ensure that the needs of all pupils are consistently met within the classroom. Leaders recognise the importance of this work to ensure that all pupils get the precise teaching they need to catch up quickly with their peers.

The school community hugely appreciates the improvements that leaders have already made over the past year. Everyone recognises that the expectations of what can and will be achieved have increased. Pupils, staff and governors are rising to this challenge and are eager to be a part of Oakfield's journey towards becoming a good school.

Additional support

You have worked closely with Hampshire local authority to secure appropriate support and training. This has focused specifically on the identified areas of school improvement. Staff value this guidance and talk positively about the impact this has already had in improving the school's curriculum. The newly formed inclusion team is continuing to benefit from support provided by a number of different external agencies. This is helping to evaluate and strengthen the provision for pupils with SEND.

Evidence

During the inspection, I held meetings with you, other senior leaders, pupils, staff and representatives of those responsible for governance to discuss the actions taken since the last inspection. I also held a telephone discussion with a representative from the local authority. I considered various school documents, including the school's improvement plan.

I had discussions with pupils and staff, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work. I considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including nine free-text responses. I also took account of the 34 responses to the staff questionnaire and spoke with staff.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the director of education for the Diocese of Portsmouth, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Isle of Wight. This letter will be published on the Ofsted reports website.

Yours sincerely

Aimee Floyd
Her Majesty's Inspector