

Inspection of Oakridge Infant School

Oakridge Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 5RR

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 September 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected 14 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils get off to a great start at Oakridge. Very quickly, staff establish consistent and effective rules and routines. These help pupils to feel safe in school and to learn in classrooms which are calm and purposeful. As you walk around school, staff and pupils smile, and pupils are eager to learn. Every parent who responded to the Ofsted survey, Parent View, agreed that their child is happy and safe in school.

Leaders' high expectations start with ensuring that pupils' behaviour is the best it can be. This happens from the beginning of Nursery. Even the youngest children know what to do and how to play well with each other. Staff and pupil relationships in the school are excellent. Pupils say bullying does not happen. They know that staff care deeply for them and will help when it is needed.

At Oakridge, everyone is valued and respected. The school's inclusive culture means pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), thrive. Pupils blossom through the many opportunities to develop their interests and talents. Leaders are rightly proud of the many experiences that pupils have beyond the classroom. As leaders say, 'We are creating the whole child for the future.'

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

Leaders ensure that pupils learn to read as quickly as possible. This starts in early years. Staff are expertly trained to deliver the phonics programme consistently and to follow it exactly as planned. Pupils read books that closely match the sounds they are learning. Leaders are quick to identify pupils who may be struggling with reading. They make sure additional sessions are timetabled daily to help the weakest readers.

In all year groups, pupils are enraptured by the daily story time sessions. Staff select high-quality picture books and novels from a carefully chosen 'reading spine' to enthuse pupils' reading and develop vocabulary.

Across all subjects, leaders are ambitious for pupils' learning. Subject leaders have identified the knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn. The building blocks of the school's curriculum begin in early years. Staff in early years are clear on what children from the age of two need to know and be able to do. Well-chosen activities in Nursery and Reception enable children to develop their language, social skills and physical development very well.

In mathematics across the school, teachers have good subject knowledge. They present content clearly and set work that helps pupils to become fluent in number and calculation. Staff ask probing questions to check pupils' understanding. They help pupils to avoid making common errors because they understand likely misconceptions.

Teachers revisit prior mathematical learning daily in all year groups. This helps pupils to remember mathematical facts securely.

In some other subjects, teachers select activities which do not best help pupils to learn. This is because teachers are not always sure how to deliver what is written on the plans effectively. In these instances, pupils spend more time on skills-based tasks in lessons rather than teachers ensuring pupils have mastered the essential knowledge first. Teachers are not assessing the right things to help identify any gaps in knowledge pupils may have. Consequently, some pupils do not remember enough of what they have learned in previous lessons.

Staff plan well for pupils with SEND. This happens because leaders quickly identify whether a pupil might have additional needs. The school works closely with families every step of the way to ensure pupils with SEND get the help they need. Adults aim high for all pupils and well-trained support staff skilfully meet pupils' needs so that they can learn alongside their classmates.

Leaders make sure that all staff know how to follow the school's behaviour policy. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils are free to learn in an environment where they are not allowed to distract each other. Pupils listen intently to adults and work conscientiously in lessons.

Leaders view pupils' personal development as the bedrock of the curriculum. They offer pupils access to many different experiences. Pupils participate in a range of clubs, such as cooking, singing in the choir and exploring the natural world through the 'forest school' provision. These experiences enhance pupils' social skills and teamwork. The school's 'Learning Charter' teaches pupils about respect and tolerance to others.

Governors are knowledgeable about the school's priorities. The experienced team provides strong support and challenge to leaders. Governors seek to check for themselves whether leaders' plans are working for the quality of education. They make time for the well-being of leaders and staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Keeping children safe is leaders' main priority. They train staff well to spot signs of abuse and to know what may be happening in the local area. Staff are clear how to log concerns and procedures for managing any allegations against adults.

Leaders meticulously scrutinise all information to decide on actions that may be needed. They are tenacious when making referrals to outside agencies and will re-refer if a decision is not, in their view, in the best interests of the child. Leaders communicate effectively with families to provide early support where needed.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, teachers do not always select activities that help pupils to learn knowledge. This leads to pupils not having the essential background knowledge to learn new content. Leaders need to develop staff's subject expertise so they can implement the school's planned curriculum effectively. Leaders need to make sure that teachers focus on checking precisely what pupils have learned and remembered.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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 the school and 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	115859
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10199391
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	342
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Iain Cameron
Headteacher	Diane Charman
Website	www.oakridgeschoolsfederation.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 March 2007, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school joined with its junior counterpart to form the Oakridge Schools Federation, with a single governing body, in September 2014. The existing headteacher of the junior school became executive headteacher of both schools.
- The nursery, previously managed separately, became part of the infant school in April 2019. Since then, the school has admitted children from the age of two years upwards.
- The number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above the national average.
- The school is not currently using any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors, and with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science, history and art. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's improvement plan, policies and pupil premium funding plans.
- To inspect safeguarding, the single central record of recruitment checks on staff and safeguarding records were reviewed.
- Inspectors spoke to parents during the inspection and considered the 36 responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire, including 36 free-text comments.
- The views of staff and the 21 responses to Ofsted's staff survey were considered.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils and reviewed the 15 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

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