

# Inspection of Oakfield Primary Academy

Oakfield Lane, Dartford, Kent DA1 2SW

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Inspection dates: 5 and 6 October 2021

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils feel safe and happy at Oakfield Primary Academy. A strong sense of community fills this inclusive school. Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils play well together at social times and concentrate during lessons. Pupils told us how important the school's values and rules are to keep them safe and prepare them for the future. Pupils know that their well-being is at the heart of what the school stands for.

Staff have high expectations of pupils and expect them to work hard. Pupils respond well to the challenge. Pupils are keen to learn. They are developing as confident and curious learners. Reading and mathematics are planned and taught well. Pupils have the opportunity to develop new skills as they learn about other subjects. These include teamwork, staying positive, listening, creativity and leadership. Adults are strong role models in these areas. However, some gaps in pupils' knowledge remain in some other subjects, such as history. Leaders know this and are working to fill these.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school and the support they have received during the COVID-19 pandemic. A comment from one parent sums up the views of many: 'The teachers have maintained high standards of teaching and stimulating our children over the various lockdowns. It has been hard for everyone and as we come out of the pandemic I can see that the school team are doing all they can for the well-being of our children.'

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

Over the past three years, the school has improved significantly. All staff are passionate about providing the best education. Staff are proud to work here and pupils love to learn here. One staff member commented, 'There is a real team feeling – we are 'team purple'. Other staff echo this.

Leaders and staff have worked incredibly hard to improve the school since the previous inspection. The initial focus on developing English, mathematics and phonics has paid off. Staff are well trained in these subjects. They know the right questions to ask pupils to check what they know and remember. If pupils need additional help, this is given quickly to ensure that they do not fall behind. The order in which lessons are taught develops in a sensible way. This helps pupils to build new ideas in a logical order. Teachers ensure that pupils have time to practise what they have learned.

The curriculum covers every subject it should. However, in some subjects, the curriculum is not sequenced well enough. Pupils do not cover the depth of knowledge they should in every subject. The headteacher and her team are already making the right changes to improve the curriculum. Nonetheless, they are further forward in some subjects than others. Leaders are putting plans in place to ensure that the whole curriculum progresses systematically from Nursery to Year 6.

Subject leaders have the expertise to lead their subjects effectively. Some curriculum plans do not set out all that pupils should learn and remember over time. Leaders have not always identified when teaching has missed important steps within sequences of work, so some pupils still have gaps in their knowledge.

Children learn to read as soon as they are ready. Phonics teaching starts in Nursery and prepares children well for starting Reception. Teachers follow a well-planned sequence of lessons that allows pupils to learn new sounds quickly and securely. The learning environment is designed to immerse children in language. Activities help children practise the skills of early reading. This teaching continued during school closure due to COVID-19. Teachers worked well to engage parents in their child's learning. Any child falling behind in phonics gets extra help, including one-to-one daily support. Most children in Reception and pupils in Year 1 are reading at the standard expected for their age.

Staff read to all pupils regularly. They introduce pupils to both classic stories and books they have not come across before. This helps promote a love of reading and helps to widen pupils' vocabulary. Pupils speak with enthusiasm about the books they enjoy reading, especially the 100 books the school has recommended. One child said, 'I have read two of the new "Galaxy 100" books, so I will read them all before I go to secondary school.'

Teachers know their pupils well. Staff set high expectations and develop pupils' resilience. If pupils find something hard, they are given additional help if they need it. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers support pupils with SEND to be successful, including those from the resource-based provision. Pupils are given carefully considered resources to allow them to work alongside their peers. Lessons are adapted to ensure that these pupils achieve well. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) knows the pupils well. Checks are made to ensure that work is closely matched to what pupils can do.

Leaders have a relentless focus on developing children's language. In early years, classrooms are a hive of activity. Children are immersed in language. Teachers model speaking in full sentences. This is also seen in mathematics across the school. Pupils talk confidently with one another and answer questions using full sentences to justify their answers.

Curriculum plans show how the school is making useful links with its local community. Although some links have been paused due to COVID-19, the school is working hard to restart activities and continue to promote equality and diversity. For example, a local athlete who had not achieved his Olympic ambition visited pupils in Years 5 and 6 recently to talk about overcoming adversity and discrimination. Pupils feel that they will leave school remembering motivational teachers and visitors, that diversity is celebrated, and that they have been treated as individuals: 'It's OK to be me!'

The trust board and local governors have a firm grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They hold leaders to account for what pupils achieve in English and

mathematics. Their work to hold leaders to account for ensuring that pupils gain the depth of knowledge they should in every subject is in its infancy.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They know what to do if they have a problem, and they say that staff will always listen to their worries. Staff are responsive and reflective in the way they care for all pupils. Pupils of all ages can talk with confidence about how to keep safe when using technology. Staff are well trained in keeping pupils safe. Training takes place regularly. Staff have had training on neglect, peer-on-peer abuse, county lines and radicalisation and extremism. Leaders are relentless in getting families the support they need.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The school's curriculum is not yet coherently planned and sequenced in some subject areas. This means that it is not always obvious what the school intends pupils to learn and remember over time. However, it is clear from leaders' actions that they are in the process of bringing this about and are making any necessary amendments in response to the pandemic. For this reason, the transition arrangements have been applied.
- Teachers check what pupils can and cannot do in English and mathematics effectively. However, assessment is not used as effectively in some other subjects, such as history. This means that the gaps in pupils' knowledge are not being addressed as quickly as they could be. The trust board and local governors need to ensure that leaders check that no learning is missed, and all pupils gain all the essential knowledge they need to achieve consistently well across the curriculum.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	143218
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	10200906
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	709
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Philip Vander Gucht
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rajinder Kaur-Gill
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.oakfield-dartford.co.uk">www.oakfield-dartford.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11 December 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of The Galaxy Trust, a multi-academy trust of four schools: Oakfield Primary Academy, Temple Hill Primary Academy, West Hill Primary Academy and Fleetdown Primary Academy, all in Dartford.
- The headteacher reports to the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust. The school has a local governing body.
- The school has a higher proportion of pupils with SEND than that seen nationally.
- The school has a specialist resourced provision for pupils with autism spectrum disorder with a current capacity of 12 pupils, rising to 15 in January 2022.
- There is a children’s centre on the school site. This is managed and inspected separately.
- The school does not currently use 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 had received since the COVID-19 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 headteacher and other school staff, the chief executive officer and executive headteacher of the multi-academy trust, and members of the trust board and local governing body.
- Inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history and art. This entailed discussion with subject leaders, visits to lessons, looking at examples of work, discussions with teachers, discussions with pupils, and listening to pupils reading to an adult.
- Inspectors considered a range of other school documents, such as the school improvement plan and subject plans. Inspectors also reviewed records relating to pupils' behaviour, attendance and exclusions, bullying, and racist incidents.
- Inspectors gathered the views of parents through Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and free-text comments. The lead inspector considered staff and pupil surveys as part of this inspection.
- Inspectors considered how well the school protects pupils and keeps them safe. Inspectors met with designated safeguarding leads, reviewed a range of school documentation, and talked with staff and pupils. Inspectors also considered the school's safeguarding curriculum and its effectiveness in providing pupils with the information they need to keep safe, including in relation to child exploitation and local safeguarding risks.

## Inspection team

Jo Lakey, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Lizzie Jeanes	Ofsted Inspector
Claire Martin-O'Donoghue	Ofsted Inspector
Kirstine Boon	Ofsted Inspector

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