

Inspection of Oakridge School

Oakridge Road, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire HP11 2PN

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 March 2022

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

From the minute pupils join the school, this school's ambition for 'working together to succeed' drives leaders, teachers and children alike.

Pupils are proud of their school. They enjoy learning and love reading. One pupil demonstrated to inspectors how his extra independent reading about football helped him recall facts in geography lessons.

Teachers have high expectations for all pupils. One parent told inspectors, 'The teachers are amazing... they try their level best to help my child reach their full potential.' Relationships are warm and caring. Differences are both accepted and celebrated. For example, pupils recently learned about inspirational role models during Black History Month. Children quickly learn the school values of kindness, respect, perseverance and integrity. Pupils feel happy and safe here. Bullying is very rare. Pupils know that adults will help them resolve any problems if they need them to.

Pupils remain focused during lessons. They behave well and play cooperatively with each other at break and lunchtimes. Classrooms are inspirational places in which to learn. Pupils are inquisitive about the detailed and relevant displays. Pupils' high-quality artwork is celebrated and adorns the walls of corridors. Pupils take pride in seeing their work displayed.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum that is challenging and caters for the needs of all pupils at the school. Subject leaders are knowledgeable and enthusiastic. They organise subjects using 'golden threads' of learning. These threads help pupils make links between subjects and their learning. In the early years, leaders have developed an 'Oakridge curriculum' that gets children off to the best possible start. The learning environment, both inside and outside, is vibrant and inviting. It is always a hive of purposeful activity. As a result, children learn through meticulously planned and engaging activities. Children develop vital skills for learning, such as resilience and curiosity. Everyone's behaviour in the early years is impeccable. Children cooperate with each other and take turns using equipment. Adults teach children good manners and respect through all activities.

The staff in the early years are adept at identifying misconceptions in learning. They provide support to help children learn through warm, caring and purposeful interactions. Further up the school, assessment in some subjects addresses what pupils do not understand or have missed due to the pandemic. Leaders know that in some subjects assessment practices need to improve so that teaching is better informed by what pupils know and can do.

Reading is a strong focus of the school. The recently introduced phonics scheme is yet to be fully embedded. Pupils learn to read from the moment they begin Reception. The approach to teaching phonics is consistent. Books are well matched to the sounds pupils know. Leaders have carefully selected books to encourage pupils to engage with material that promotes equality and diversity. Story time motivates pupils with the use of high-quality texts. Staff focus on the school's priority of developing key vocabulary. This ensures that the teaching of writing builds on pupils' prior experiences and knowledge.

Leaders and staff are ambitious when supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In lessons, adults break down tasks into smaller steps to support learning where needed. The school has robust processes in place to identify any needs as they arise. Leaders provide expert guidance and advice to parents of children with SEND, who feel well supported by the school.

Oakridge pupils know they have a voice in the school. They feel that the school council works on their behalf to make improvements that are meaningful. For example, pupils have recently begun to raise money for a defibrillator and to provide funds for the local hospital. Trips and visits play an important part in the wider life of the school. Enriching activities, as well as extracurricular clubs, are beginning again. Pupils really value these opportunities to extend their learning.

Leaders know the strengths of the school well and have a clear plan for continuing to develop the curriculum. Staff have made considerable efforts to improve the school. During these improvements, some staff feel that leaders have not always considered their workload and well-being. All staff, including governors, share the same moral purpose, 'to enhance the life chances of all our children'. Governance of the school is a strength. Governors have worked closely with leaders to ensure that improvements have continued despite the pandemic.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff understand their responsibilities regarding safeguarding. They receive regular and timely training. Staff know how to identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. They are clear about how to share information in accordance with school policy. Procedures are thorough and robust.

The safeguarding team meets regularly and responds appropriately to secure the appropriate help that pupils may need. The school teaches pupils how to keep themselves healthy and safe.

Leaders ensure pre-employment checks are thorough. They manage safeguarding concerns sensitively and with the appropriate level of care.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Assessment is not sufficiently embedded in all subjects yet. Teaching is not always informed by what pupils demonstrate they know and can remember. Evidence that teachers collect from checking what pupils understand in lessons should be used, consistently across all subjects, to plan next steps of teaching and help pupils understand what they need to do to improve.
- Some staff feel that leaders have not always considered the required extra workload that new policies and procedures place on staff well-being when they are launched. This sometimes leads to staff being placed under extra pressure and increased workload. Leaders must ensure that the well-being of staff is considered when continuing to improve the school in its next phase of development.

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	110289
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10211702
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	431
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Valerie Osbaldeston
Headteacher	Stuart Cook
Website	www.oakridgehighwycombe.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 and 3 May 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school does not 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 received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders of the school, members of staff, pupils and parents. Inspectors also met with governors and spoke by telephone to a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science, geography and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also heard pupils read.

- Inspectors also looked at the curriculum, visited other lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work in some other subjects.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors reviewed a wide range of safeguarding documents and records, including the school's record of recruitment checks. Inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils.
- Inspectors spoke with staff, pupils and parents to gather their views. They considered 52 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 29 free-text comments. Inspectors also took account of 41 responses to the staff survey and 131 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

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