

Inspection of Oak Green School

Oak Green, Southcourt, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP21 8LJ

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 February 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Oak Green is a place where everyone feels welcome. Inclusion is at the heart of leaders' work, particularly for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff care deeply for pupils, starting with the two-year-olds in Nursery, who confidently settle into a school environment.

Enriching experiences excite pupils. Leaders widen pupils' horizons through West End theatre trips, and seaside and museum visits. There are many clubs for pupils to choose from. Staff keep pupils active through different sports. At lunchtimes, the vibrant playground is a hub of activity. Happy pupils play volleyball, dance and enjoy the climbing equipment.

Pupils feel safe and they proactively say 'STOP' to bullying. Generally, pupils understand leaders' behaviour expectations and many try their best. Staff teach these rules and routines from the beginning of early years, but across year groups there remain inconsistencies in enacting a good behaviour culture.

The ambition for what pupils will learn has not been high enough. Pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. This includes in English and mathematics. Furthermore, many pupils, including some of the most disadvantaged, do not attend school regularly. This means these pupils are not well prepared educationally.

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

The school has been through different leadership changes since the last inspection. The new interim co-headteachers understand the significance of the school improvement challenges they face, including remedying the impact of the disruption caused by COVID-19. Strategically, leaders and governors have set key academic priorities, but these do not effectively address the weaknesses to overcome. Consequentially, leaders have not always recognised where pupils are not achieving as well as they could.

Pupils' performance in reading, writing and mathematics declined significantly in 2022. Leaders have revisited the curriculum to lift ambition across subjects. This has begun from Nursery in outlining what knowledge pupils must learn. Leaders have rightly unpicked this important knowledge in the core subjects first. However, effective planning is not yet in place. In English, for example, knowledge is not fully sequenced in a logical order. While leaders have strengthened mathematics in Year 6, they are yet to roll out the updated mathematics curriculum for the rest of the school. They know this is urgently required.

Recent intensive training for all staff in the teaching of phonics is beginning to have an impact. External expertise is ensuring adults are better skilled to teach pupils to read and write. Daily catch-up sessions are provided for pupils who need extra

practice. However, many pupils are not able to keep up with the pace of learning. Additionally, the youngest pupils are not learning to write successfully because staff are unclear about the building blocks in writing that need to be taught first. Consequently, pupils are not learning to read and write as quickly as they should.

Leaders are improving teachers' skills in delivering the curriculum to raise pupils' attainment. For example, teachers regularly revisit content that pupils have previously learned. This is helping more key knowledge stick in pupils' minds. Teachers know to check on pupils' understanding and they quickly reteach pupils who have any misconceptions. Beyond this, however, teachers are often setting lesson activities that do not help pupils practise the knowledge they need to gain.

Pupils' behaviour is not securely good across the school. In lessons, some pupils' actions can interrupt the flow of learning for all. Staff can be slow to address pupils not following the school's rules and routines that leaders set out.

The school's specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND provides helpful support for those pupils who have complex needs. These pupils access the same curriculum as their peers in mainstream classes as far as possible. Leaders pinpoint pupils' specific needs accurately. Nevertheless, leaders understand that they need to strengthen assessment in early years so that staff are consistently accurate in identifying and meeting the needs of children.

Determinedly, leaders are tackling poor attendance head on because many pupils, including the most disadvantaged, are missing out on their education by not attending well enough. Leaders communicate these attendance expectations strongly and consistently to parents.

Pupils are tolerant. They know it is important to not judge others. They learn about current affairs and actively support local charities. Pupils are keen to join the school council and are determined to make a tangible impact in the school.

Governors are committed and passionate. However, they recognise that they need to be more scrupulous in checking pupils' learning of the curriculum. This includes scrutinising carefully what leaders are doing to improve educational standards.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Thorough training ensures staff are clear about spotting potential signs of harm. Leaders send out weekly briefings which keep staff and governors' knowledge up to date. Leaders are tenacious in securing the right help for pupils and they take appropriate action. They rightly challenge other professionals if support is not provided. All records are meticulously documented. Leaders ensure information is written factually and impartially. The safer recruitment checks of adults are robust.

The curriculum teaches pupils how to keep themselves safe both in person and when online. Pupils learn about risk and how to report things that are not right.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the knowledge pupils should learn has not been precisely identified or sequenced logically. Pupils are not learning a coherently planned English curriculum and they do not get the provision they need to improve and develop their writing. This has led to many pupils not achieving well across the curriculum, including learning to confidently read and write. Leaders need to identify the steps of knowledge required for pupils to learn the intended curriculum.
- Teachers' pedagogical knowledge is not strong across different subjects. Leaders recognise that curriculum implementation is not matched well enough to the planned curriculum. Often, pupils complete work that does not enable them to develop detailed knowledge. Leaders need to continue with developing staff's expertise in teaching the school's curriculum.
- Expectations of pupils' behaviour are not consistently high enough. Leaders have not ensured that all staff rigorously uphold agreed routines and expectations. This has led to some low-level disruption in lessons and pupils not always moving around school in a calm and orderly way. Leaders need to train all staff to manage behaviour effectively so that pupils behave consistently well across all aspects of school life.
- Leaders and governors do not have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. School improvement priorities are not sharp enough about the necessary changes needed. Governors have not challenged leaders enough about pupils' learning of the taught curriculum, particularly pupils learning to read. Leaders should ensure that improvement planning is well matched to enable pupils to successfully learn an ambitious curriculum and that governors access further training in how best to check the impact for pupils.

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.

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	110206
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10242168
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	704
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Abida Khokher
Headteacher	Nicola Beesley and Donna Kelloway (Interim Co-headteachers)
Website	www.oakgreen.bucks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The interim co-headteachers started their new roles in September 2022. Previously, they were both deputy headteachers at the school. This is the second change in senior leadership of the school since the last inspection.
- Oak Green has a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND. All pupils have an education, health and care plan with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. There are 16 pupils across the age ranges accessing this provision. It has significantly expanded in recent years because of the number of places required by the local authority.
- The school has provision for two-year-olds in the Nursery.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 met with the co-headteachers, staff and pupils. The lead inspector met five governors, including the chair. He also spoke with a school improvement adviser from the local authority and a local headteacher supporting the school.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, history and physical education. To do this, they met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, had discussions with staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work.
- Inspectors talked to pupils from different year groups about their learning and experiences at school. This included hearing pupils read.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors spoke with staff and pupils. The lead inspector met with three designated safeguarding leads to examine records and actions. This included sampling a range of safeguarding documentation. A team inspector reviewed checks on the safer recruitment of adults. Inspectors considered a qualifying safeguarding concern from 2019 as part of the evidence base.
- The views of staff, pupils and parents were gathered through discussions and Ofsted's online surveys.
- The inspection team scrutinised a range of documentation provided by the school. This included leaders' self-evaluation and school development priorities, policies, curriculum documents, published information about pupils' performance, the pupil premium strategy, reports of visits from the local authority, and minutes of governors' meetings.

Inspection team

James Broadbridge, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Alison Ashcroft	Ofsted Inspector
Martin Smith	His Majesty's Inspector
Mo Galway	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023