

Inspection of Oakfield Junior School

Chowdene Bank, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear NE9 6JH

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 March 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have created a school that is highly inclusive. Pupils in the school are well cared for. They form very positive relationships with one another and with adults. Adults have high expectations for pupils. Many pupils strive to achieve these expectations. Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school.

Leaders have recently made changes to some areas of the curriculum. These changes are bringing about increasingly positive attitudes to learning. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their learning. They are articulate and confident.

Pupils behave well in school. They are very clear that bullying is not a problem. Adults ensure that pupils understand the behaviour policy and the rewards and consequences associated with it. All classrooms have a 'calm corner' and there is a sensory room. Pupils say that they can access these if they feel anxious about something. They know that there are adults in school who will support them to manage their behaviour and feelings.

Leaders have placed emphasis on developing pupils' character. 'Golden threads' of ambition, character and diversity run through the curriculum. Pupils can talk about the character assemblies that they attend. They say that through these they learn about, for example, kindness and equality.

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

Leaders have recently made several changes to the curriculum to bring about consistency in teaching. The curriculums in most of the foundation subjects, for example history and computing, are now coherently sequenced and ambitious. Learning is broken down into small steps to help pupils to acquire new knowledge. Leaders have put lesson structures in place to ensure that pupils revisit and build on prior learning. The impact of this is beginning to be seen in the way that pupils can talk about their learning. However, pupils sometimes remember isolated facts rather than more detailed knowledge. The systems for checking what pupils can remember in some subjects are in the early stages of development.

Leaders understand the importance of ensuring that pupils are confident, fluent readers. The same phonics programme as the infant school is used for those pupils who still require phonics teaching. All adults have been trained in how to teach the programme. Where necessary, pupils' phonic knowledge is checked when they start school. Leaders put carefully planned programmes of intervention in place to support pupils to catch up quickly with their peers. Pupils' reading books are matched to their reading ability. During whole class reading sessions, pupils have opportunities to develop their fluency and comprehension skills.

With the help of the 'reading champions', leaders have invested in new books for the school library to promote reading for pleasure. The reading champions take great

pride in their role. They recommend books to other pupils and organise events such as an author hunt for World Book Day.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. Leaders have high ambition for pupils with SEND. There is a sharp focus on enabling these pupils to become as independent as possible. Leaders have put strong transition arrangements in place with both the infant school and the local secondary schools. They draw upon the skills and expertise of external agencies for support when needed.

Through the curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE), pupils learn about topics such as different types of family structure, how to stay safe and how to keep healthy. There are a range of extra-curricular opportunities on offer to pupils, including sporting activities and music tuition. While there is a curriculum in place for religious education, some pupils' knowledge and understanding of different faiths is more limited. This lack of understanding means that pupils cannot fully embody the traits of tolerance and respect that leaders are so keen for them to exhibit.

Leaders are supported effectively by the governing body and the local authority. While many governors are relatively new to the role, they have an accurate oversight of the school. Governors recognise that they need to be more rigorous in the way that they hold leaders to account for the quality of education in the school. The local authority is supporting them to be able to do this.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff and governors have received appropriate levels of safeguarding training. Leaders and staff are acutely aware of pupils in school who may be vulnerable. Leaders hold weekly 'care meetings' to ensure that vulnerable pupils are monitored closely.

Staff are aware of risks that pupils may face locally, for example, county lines. Through the curriculum, pupils are taught how to resist pressure and develop their resilience and confidence to mitigate against these risks. Pupils can talk about different ways to stay safe both online and offline.

Safeguarding records are accurately maintained. Appropriate procedures are in place to ensure that the right staff are recruited to the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- While leaders have put systems in place that provide pupils with opportunities to revisit prior learning, these are not currently embedded across the curriculum. This means that sometimes pupils do not make links between their learning, or they remember isolated facts or pieces of information. Leaders should ensure that pupils continue to receive opportunities to revisit and consolidate prior learning to enable them to develop detailed knowledge across the curriculum.
- Pupils' understanding of different faiths and religions is limited. This means that they are less well prepared for life in the wider community beyond the school and in modern Britain. Leaders should ensure that pupils' knowledge of different faiths is developed further to enable them to fully demonstrate respect and tolerance for others.

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	108329
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	10240404
Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rachel Mason
Executive headteacher	Kate Chisholm
Website	www.oakfieldschoolsfederation.org
Date of previous inspection	21 and 22 September 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of a federation with an infant school. The two schools share the same site. Several staff work across both schools, including the executive headteacher.
- Leaders have entered into a partnership agreement with an academy trust.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- Before- and after-school childcare provision is available, however, this is not led and managed by the school.

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 held meetings with the executive headteacher and executive deputy headteachers. Inspectors also met with subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, governors and the local authority school improvement partner.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, computing and history. 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 reviewed the curriculum for PSHE.
- Inspectors observed pupils reading to familiar adults.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils in lessons and during breaktimes.
- Inspectors examined the single central record and looked at how safeguarding incidents are reported. Inspectors spoke to leaders, teachers, support staff, governors, the local authority school improvement partner and pupils about the culture of safeguarding in the school.
- Inspectors considered the responses made by parents to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. This included any free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Philippa Kermotschuk, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Olie Flitcroft	Ofsted Inspector
Rowena Sykes	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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