

Inspection of a good school: Oak View Primary and Nursery School

Woods Avenue, Hatfield, Hertfordshire AL10 8NW

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 June 2023

Outcome

Oak View Primary and Nursery School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe at Oak View Primary and Nursery School. They are proud of their school. They learn and play happily in the school's inclusive classrooms and extensive grounds. Bullying is rare, and pupils trust adults to resolve any problems that arise.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and learning. Pupils know what these expectations are. Pupils appreciate the routines that help them learn and play safely. Year 6 pupils say they learn better when it is 'pin-drop quiet' in their classroom.

Relationships throughout the school are respectful. The culture of respect extends to learning. Pupils celebrate each other's achievements. They are highly motivated to earn stickers or 'golden tickets'. These enable them to choose a special reward, such as going for a walk with Bella, the school dog.

Pupils enjoy the trips they go on. Leaders plan these carefully to enhance pupils' learning and life experiences. For example, Year 6 pupils had a World War Two experience day, Year 3 pupils visited a local nature reserve and Year 1 pupils discovered the human and physical features of Hatfield town centre. Pupils thrive in the school's forest school area, where they can climb trees or sing songs around the campfire.

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

Leaders are conscious of the challenges the school and its pupils face. The number of pupils who do not speak English at home is higher than average. Many pupils arrive at the school mid-year, often from another country.

Leaders have taken steps to develop the curriculum so that it suits the school's diverse and ever-changing community. Curriculum leaders have set out what they want pupils to learn in each subject by the end of each year. They have planned the steps of learning and the order in which these should be taught. The curriculum in the early years is

designed to offer children language-rich learning experiences. These prepare them well for key stage 1.

Teachers deliver series of lessons that are highly practical, often involving experiences outside the classroom. They revisit knowledge and concepts they have already taught regularly. Pupils say this helps them remember what they have learned. Teachers explain things clearly. They use assessment effectively to check pupils' understanding and to adjust their teaching if necessary. Teachers ensure pupils learn the language they will need for each subject. Pupils use this well when talking about their learning.

Leaders have made early reading a priority. High-quality texts support learning in every subject. Leaders have introduced a new programme for teaching phonics. In the early years and key stage 1, this is delivered consistently by well-trained staff. Children in Reception and Year 1 practise the sounds they learn in phonics lessons by reading well-matched books. If they struggle, they are given the help they need to keep up or catch up. Pupils in key stage 2 develop fluency and extend their reading skills in high-quality, daily reading lessons. Leaders plan to extend the new phonics programme to key stage 2. The support for older pupils who are still in the early stages of reading is not as precise as it could be.

Classrooms are calm and orderly. Pupils from early years to Year 6 have positive attitudes to learning. They behave well in lessons and around the school. A small number of pupils whose behaviour does not meet adults' expectations receive help to improve.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) generally access the same curriculum as their peers. Leaders' systems for identifying these pupils' needs are effective. Leaders liaise with external professionals, where appropriate, to ensure the right adaptations and additional resources are in place. These enable pupils with SEND to fulfil their potential.

Leaders are determined to develop pupils' skills and talents beyond the curriculum. They offer pupils opportunities to follow their interests, or to develop new ones. A team of dancers recently reached the national finals of 'The Great Big Dance Off'. Year 5 pupils experience paddleboarding and rock climbing at nearby outdoor venues. Year 4 pupils took part in a singing festival at the O2 arena. A programme of assemblies teaches pupils about values such as gratitude. The diversity of the school community means pupils' understanding of difference and equality is strong.

Governors support leaders' drive for improvement. Governors and senior leaders are very conscious of the pressures on staff. Leaders take steps to reduce staff's workload and look after their well-being. Staff feel valued. They appreciate the way leaders prioritise their professional development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school's systems for keeping pupils safe are robust. Staff and governors receive appropriate safeguarding training. Staff know their pupils and families well. If they have any concerns about safety, they report these promptly. Leaders take action on concerns. They liaise with external agencies where appropriate. Leaders and external professionals put support in place if this is needed.

Vetting checks are carried out on adults before they come to work at the school. Records of these checks are carefully maintained.

Pupils learn about keeping themselves safe. They have a very good understanding of issues around online safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's chosen phonics programme has not yet been rolled out across the whole school. Staff do not all consistently use the language and routines of the programme. This means that the support for some pupils, especially less confident readers in key stage 2, is not as precise as it could be. Leaders should prioritise staff training and the implementation of a consistent approach to supporting emerging readers throughout the school.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour, or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 2013.

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	135223
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10288484
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	435
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Anthony Kent
Headteacher	Neil Richardson
Website	www.oakview.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current headteacher joined the school in September 2020.
- There is before- and after-school care, run by members of school staff and managed by school leaders.
- At the time of the inspection, the school was not using any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. The inspector listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.

- The inspector met with a range of leaders, including senior leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and governors, including the chair of the governing body. She held a telephone meeting with a representative from HFL Education.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector met with the designated safeguarding leads and reviewed safeguarding records. The inspector scrutinised the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks. She also spoke with staff, pupils and governors about safeguarding.
- The inspector reviewed a range of school documentation and policies, including the school development plan and minutes of governing body meetings.
- The inspector reviewed 55 responses to Ofsted’s pupil questionnaire and spoke with pupils during lessons and at lunchtime.
- The inspector reviewed 57 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire for parents and carers, Ofsted Parent View, including 31 free-text responses. The inspector also gathered parental views at the end of the school day.
- The inspector reviewed 48 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire for staff and gathered the views of staff during the inspection.

Inspection team

Caroline Crozier, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

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