

# Inspection of a good school: Oaktree School

Chase Side, Southgate, London N14 4HN

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Inspection dates:

3 and 4 July 2023

## Outcome

Oaktree School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils like coming to this school. They get on well with staff and the other pupils. From the moment pupils arrive in the morning, they approach their lessons with energy and enthusiasm. Relationships at the school are warm and positive. Pupils feel safe and they know who they can talk to if they are worried about anything. Leaders are quick to sort out any unkind behaviour, including any rare instances of bullying.

Leaders expect all pupils to work hard and to become as independent as possible. As well as academic subjects, pupils learn important social and communication skills so that they are prepared for their future life after school. Pupils learn how to keep physically fit and healthy, to look after their mental health and well-being and to become more confident. Pupils are also taught about the world of work, including horticulture, animal care, media work and hospitality.

The school is a calm and settled environment. Occasionally, pupils need help to manage their emotions, but this does not happen very often. If a pupil does need help with their behaviour this is provided in a calm and sensitive way to minimise disruption to learning.

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

Leaders have ensured that there is an ambitious curriculum in place that meets the needs of all pupils. Leaders have set out three main routes through the curriculum. For each of these routes there is clarity about the content that should be taught and the order it should be taught in. Leaders frequently review the curriculum content and make adjustments. However, some pupils need more flexibility than the current model allows, for example some pupils need more time to work on their social and emotional goals, or to be able to access more than one pathway. Leaders are fine-tuning the curriculum so that pupils consistently learn the most important things for their future lives.

Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subjects that they teach. They deliver interesting lessons that keep pupils engaged in their learning and build up pupils'

knowledge and skills in a logical order. At each stage of the curriculum, teachers check that pupils have understood what they have been taught before moving on. Pupils regularly revisit areas of the curriculum to make sure that key skills and knowledge are retained in their long-term memory.

Pupils receive the pastoral support they need to achieve well. Staff understand the specific needs of pupils very well and respond quickly if help is needed. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Sometimes pupils need extra help to manage their emotions. Staff use their expert knowledge of pupils' needs to support them quickly so that pupils get back to learning as quickly as possible. Pupils like receiving rewards and praise for behaving well.

Leaders have ensured that there is a well-organised approach to teaching pupils to read. Staff are well trained in this approach, and they teach lessons which follow a clear order, building skills and phonic knowledge. Pupils continue to develop their reading as they get older, including in the sixth form.

Leaders have set out a rich programme to support pupils' personal development. For example, pupils learn about the difference between right and wrong, tolerance and the importance of respecting other people's beliefs and ways of living. Well-organised activities at break and lunchtimes give pupils opportunities to develop their interests, learn how to cooperate and gain important social skills. Pupils have many opportunities to learn about future careers. Leaders have developed positive and meaningful links with local employers who offer job tasters and work experience, and the curriculum teaches pupils about the skills they need for work. The curriculum for pupils in the sixth form includes a broad and interesting range of vocational subjects including media, horticulture and hospitality.

Leaders have ensured that staff are well trained in the specialist approaches that they need to meet pupils' individual needs. Leaders have embedded a culture where staff feel safe at work. Leaders make sure that teachers have time to prepare for the lessons they teach and to check pupils' progress through the curriculum. Leaders, including governors, have responded to any concerns about well-being or workload raised by staff in an appropriate and constructive way.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Governors and leaders have established strong systems to support their work to protect pupils. Staff have regular training on safeguarding matters. They know how to spot the signs that a pupil might need extra help and they understand the reasons why pupils at the school may be especially vulnerable. Staff report any concerns immediately.

Through the curriculum pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils learn about safe relationships and about staying safe online. Staff report any concerns immediately.

Leaders have ensured that there are secure systems to check on the suitability of staff who work at the school. Leaders work well with external safeguarding partners, sharing information and escalating concerns if necessary.

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

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

- Sometimes, pupils' journey through the curriculum is not closely matched to what they need to learn next as a priority. This means that some pupils do not gain all of the skills and knowledge they need to move on. Leaders should fine-tune the curriculum so that pupils can follow a flexible route through it, concentrating on the most important bits of learning.

## **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 March 2014.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	102069
<b>Local authority</b>	Enfield
<b>Inspection number</b>	10268903
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	137
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	33
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Alex Busandri
<b>Headteacher</b>	Russell Davey
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.oaktree.enfield.sch.uk">www.oaktree.enfield.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	30 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- All pupils at the school have special educational needs and/or disabilities. All pupils have cognition and learning needs. Some pupils also have other needs including communication and interaction difficulties or autism.

## Information about this inspection

- 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.
- As part of the inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and assistant headteachers. Inspectors also met with two governors.

- Inspectors met with a representative of the local authority and with therapists who work at the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and personal, social and health education. 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 spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- When inspecting safeguarding, inspectors met with designated leads for safeguarding, scrutinised the school's policies, systems and processes and checked safeguarding records.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Gary Pocock, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Tom Canning

Ofsted Inspector

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