

Inspection of a good school: Oatlands Community Junior School

Beechwood Grove, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG2 8QP

Inspection dates:

12 and 13 July 2023

Outcome

Oatlands Community Junior School continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love everything about this vibrant and welcoming school. They enjoy their learning, both in and out of the classroom. They are curious, keen to find out more and to share their knowledge with others. Pupils are happy and safe. They are well looked after by very kind staff. Pupils are exceptionally well behaved, polite and respectful. Bullying is extremely rare. When it does happen, it is short lived because leaders manage it well.

Leaders have provided a curriculum that is broad and interesting. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and for life in modern Britain. Leaders and staff have very high expectations of everyone in school, including themselves. They help every pupil, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to be the very best that they can be. Staff know pupils well and provide what each one needs to be successful. Pupils' endeavours, in and out of school, are valued and celebrated. As a result, pupils do very well and take great pride in their achievements.

Pupils have many opportunities to develop their talents and interests. Every pupil learns to play several musical instruments. The wide range of after-school clubs on offer means there is something to interest everyone. Pupil leadership is a valued part of school life. Pupils take great pride in helping to make the school even better.

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

Leaders have given careful thought to what pupils should learn. They have linked the curriculum, school values and life skills by three threads. These are to promote equality and diversity, to provoke curiosity and to embed safe behaviours. Leaders' unwavering aim is to prepare pupils for the next stage of their education and for life as useful, active and caring citizens. As a result, pupils receive a highly effective, well-rounded education.

Teachers present information in ways that are interesting and informative. Pupils learn exceptionally well and thoroughly enjoy lessons. They remember what they have learned and apply it to new learning. Pupils in Year 5 have a firm grasp of mathematics. For example, they use their knowledge well to calculate the volume of three dimensional shapes. Pupils learn outdoors, take part in educational visits and meet interesting visitors. This enhances their learning in the classroom. For example, a professor of geography helped pupils in Year 4 to take measurements at a local stream. Pupils are able to explain what they have learned about rivers. They use vocabulary such as 'source' and 'confluence' with great confidence.

Teachers use assessment information effectively. For example, they use quizzes to check what pupils have remembered and to help them remember more. Teachers remind pupils of prior learning at the start of every lesson. Teachers adapt their lessons to cover any gaps in pupils' learning. Pupils with SEND are fully included in lessons. Teachers make thoughtful changes to help them. For example, some pupils record their learning by taking pictures on electronic devices. As a result, they are able to concentrate on following the curriculum.

Leaders have prioritised the enjoyment of reading. Teachers read to pupils every day. Carefully chosen texts pique pupils' curiosity and expand their knowledge and vocabulary. Pupils who are behind in reading receive daily, precisely focused phonics teaching. When their phonics knowledge is not secure, pupils receive extra help to develop reading fluency. As a result, the pupils catch up quickly.

Behaviour in lessons is exemplary. Pupils are highly motivated, curious learners. They are not afraid to make mistakes. This is one of their school values. Pupils help each other in and out of lessons. They work and play together harmoniously. There is no sense of inequality. Pupils value the contribution that each must make. Equality, diversity and British values weave through the curriculum and everyday school life. As a result, pupils value and respect difference. They relish finding out about a diverse range of positive role models. Pupils learn about their digital footprint. They understand the importance of making good choices about what they look at or share online. Pupils have a mature understanding of how to keep safe in the physical world and online. They each have a booklet which explains risks and how to manage them.

Staff are extremely positive about the support that they receive from senior leaders. There is a collaborative culture among leaders, staff and other schools within and outside of the trust.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff are knowledgeable and vigilant. They report concerns promptly. Leaders take swift and appropriate action to keep pupils safe when necessary. Leaders make sure that staff and visitors who come into contact with pupils are suitable to do so.

Pupils feel safe in school. They trust the adults to take care of them, both physically and emotionally. They know they can talk to any of the adults in school if they have any worries. They particularly appreciate 'the hub' and see it as a safe place, which is always there for them if needed.

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 September 2012.

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	142204
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10290293
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	357
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Chris Tulley
Headteacher	Estelle Scarth
Website	https://www.oatlandsjunior.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	24 April 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a larger-than-average-sized junior school. It is part of the Red Kite Learning Trust.

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 their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector had several meetings with the headteacher during the inspection.
- Meetings were held with members of the local governing body, a number of trustees and the chief executive officer and chair of trustees of Red Kite Learning Trust.
- 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 to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour throughout the school day, including during lesson visits and at lunchtime.
- Pupils talked to the inspector, formally and informally, about their learning, their views on behaviour and the wider experiences they receive at school. The inspector also considered responses received through Ofsted's pupil survey.
- Safeguarding documentation and records for behaviour and attendance were considered.
- The inspector spoke with a number of parents in the playground and reviewed the responses received through Ofsted's survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses.
- The inspector considered responses received through Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Janet Keefe, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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