

# Inspection of Oakfield Academy

Sylvia Crescent, Totton, Southampton, Hampshire SO40 3LN

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Inspection dates: 26 and 27 September 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The executive headteacher of this school is Haydn Mitton. This school is part of the Gateway Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Gwennan Harrison-Jones, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Judith Houghton. There is also a head of school, Lucy Bray, who is responsible for this school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Oakfield Academy has improved significantly in recent years. Leaders have taken significant action to raise aspirations and outcomes for all pupils. Their positive and decisive actions have led to strong, sustainable improvements for pupils. The school remains ambitious to improve further still.

Pupils want to do their best, both in their work and behaviour. They are now achieving the academic outcomes they are capable of in many curriculum areas. Children in the early years get an excellent start. This underpins their future learning. Support for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is well considered.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school. The focus on pupils' personal development is highly impressive. Everyone is living up to the core 'Habits of Mind at Oakfield', which include being empathetic, creative and curious. From the day pupils start, the emphasis is on building strong relationships between staff and pupils. Through carefully crafted opportunities, all pupils develop a strong sense of character and belief in themselves. This enables pupils to leave ready for the next stage of their education.

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

The pace of improvement has been rapid since the appointment of new leaders at the school and trust. They have wasted no time establishing a dedicated team of staff who work together to improve outcomes for pupils. Parents greatly appreciate the efforts staff make, and this makes for a very positive environment for pupils to learn in.

The school has developed a well-sequenced curriculum that details the key knowledge, skills and vocabulary pupils will learn in all subjects. Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. They ensure that disadvantaged pupils, including pupils with SEND, make equal gains in their learning. Teachers check how well pupils have learned, but do not put all this information to best use when planning future lessons. This means that, despite their efforts, teachers miss some opportunities to build on pupils' previous learning.

The school understands the fundamental importance of pupils' learning to read well. It has embedded an early reading scheme that enables pupils to learn phonics quickly and effectively. Teachers make sure that the books pupils read are ones they can understand and read well. Pupils who are struggling to learn to read are given high-quality support to help them catch up. Across the school, the sense of pupils' love of books is clear. Older pupils talk with pleasure about the novels they choose to read from the well-stocked library.

A very well-organised transition helps children in early years get into the school's routines with no delay. Parents appreciate this greatly. Children become immersed in

a highly ambitious and developmental curriculum in Reception. This focuses strongly on learning how to communicate with others.

Pupils' behaviour in the classrooms and around the school is good. This helps create a calm and conducive learning environment. There is very little disruption caused to learning by the behaviour of other pupils. However, teachers need to ensure all pupils fully engage in the classroom learning. Some pupils lose concentration and do not retain focus in some lessons. Pupils' attendance is high. The school works with families effectively to ensure few pupils miss school frequently.

The school and trust are right to be proud of the excellent impact the curriculum has on pupils' wider development. They place a high priority on this. Pupils enhance their life skills very effectively. They also develop greater knowledge of themselves as individuals. For example, the school has developed a strong 'Outdoor Woodland Learning' ('OWL') environment. The aims of this provision blend seamlessly with the school's values. 'OWL' learning encompasses both forest school activities and the learning that has been taking place in the classroom. For example, Year 1 pupils learn about structures in design and technology and apply this by building dens outside. Pupils also access a very wide range of activities and clubs. Pupils enjoy the many and varied class trips, including residential trips which become progressively adventurous as pupils get older.

The vast majority of parents appreciate the great efforts made by the school. One parent, who reflected the views of many, said: 'This school has done wonders for both my children. It has changed for the better immeasurably. The staff are amazing and we cannot thank them enough.'

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- In foundation subjects, teachers do not use assessment strategies fully effectively to inform future learning. This hinders some teachers from rectifying misconceptions and gaps in pupils' knowledge as quickly as they could. The school should continue to refine its approach to assessment in these subjects in order to support teachers to identify and address any gaps in pupils' knowledge.

## 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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	147021
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10288080
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	170
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Judith Houghton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Haydn Mitton (Executive Headteacher) Lucy Bray (Head of School)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.oakfield.hants.sch.uk">www.oakfield.hants.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Oakfield Academy converted to become an academy school in April 2019. When its predecessor school, Oakfield Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- The school is part of the Gateway Multi-Academy Trust.
- 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.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and physical 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 met with the executive headteacher, the head of school and other leaders. The lead inspector also met with the chair of trustees, the chair and other members of the local governing board, and the chief executive officer of the trust.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including self-evaluation reports, minutes of local governing body and trustee meetings and behaviour incident logs.
- The inspectors considered the views of parents shared through Ofsted Parent View, and an inspector also talked with parents on both mornings of the inspection.
- The views of staff were gathered through surveys, interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors gathered pupils' views throughout the inspection, including through the online pupil survey, during classroom visits and at playtimes and lunchtime.

### **Inspection team**

Chris Parker, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Judith O'Hare

Ofsted Inspector

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