

Inspection of Oakbank

Hyde End Lane, Ryeish Green, Reading, Berkshire RG7 1ER

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 November 2023

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Steven Jump. This school is part of Anthem Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Mohsen Ojja, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jay Bhutani.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is ambitious for all pupils to thrive. However, regular staff changes have meant that the teaching pupils receive does not always enable them to learn well. Some pupils have gaps in knowledge and skills. This means that they cannot always apply what they know to new contexts and build learning over time successfully. The school has not trained staff to check pupils' learning effectively. As a result, the school's higher aspirations for pupils' achievement are not yet realised.

The school has raised standards of pupils' behaviour. Everyone understands the clear and consistent behaviour expectations introduced in September. As a result, pupils' conduct has improved. Behaviour between lessons is calm and orderly. Pupils are respectful of each other. In lessons, pupils remain focused and listen attentively to their teachers.

Careers information, advice and guidance is a strength of the school. The programme of careers education is ambitious and thoughtfully designed. Pupils learn how to make informed choices about their next steps in education, training or employment through authentic opportunities, such as exploring apprenticeships and engaging in work experience. Older pupils relish the opportunity to take on leadership positions, such as being 'student councillors' or house captains. This teaches them beneficial skills of responsibility and diligence.

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

The curriculum is well designed. The school's work to identify what pupils need to learn and when is complete. This has strengthened the curriculum. Pupils study a broad curriculum at key stage 3. However, not enough pupils at key stage 4 gain qualifications in the English Baccalaureate. The school's aspirations to address this are not yet realised. Some consistent approaches to teaching are developing, for example how some teachers help pupils recall key knowledge effectively. However, the teaching of the curriculum is not yet implemented consistently well in all subjects.

The school has identified the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) accurately. This information is readily available to staff. A small number of teachers use this helpful guidance to meet pupils' needs effectively. However, pupils with SEND experience variability in teaching. As a result, pupils with SEND are not achieving as well as they should.

Recently, the school has identified pupils who have fallen behind with their reading. The support to help them catch up and keep up is in its infancy. Expert staff teach a weekly literacy lesson in key stage 3 for all pupils. This includes support for pupils' fluency and comprehension. The school is working hard to improve pupils' reading for pleasure. The impact of this is not yet evident.

Crucially, pupils' attendance is improving. However, some pupils still miss too many days of essential learning. The school works diligently to address individual issues where they arise. There is a kind culture evident in school. Relationships between pupils and staff are respectful and constructive. Occasionally, relationships are not as positive where teaching is less effective.

The wider development of pupils is a strength of the school. Pupils learn personal, social and health education (PSHE) twice a week. Well-trained staff deliver the thoughtfully structured PSHE curriculum. Pupils learn about healthy relationships appropriate to their ages. Older pupils demonstrate a thorough understanding of consent. All pupils learn vital lessons about how to keep safe, both online and in person. Helpful signposting at the end of each lesson provides pupils with extra support should they require it.

The school has experienced many staff changes since the last inspection, as well as turbulence in leadership. This has had an impact on the school's rate of improvement. Trust leaders, together with senior leaders, have identified the areas that need addressing to improve the school. They are starting to bring about the necessary improvements. The recent changes to monitoring and review form part of this crucial work. This work is still at an early stage and has not yet brought about the required improvements to the quality of education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Staff do not adapt their teaching to meet the needs of pupils with SEND effectively enough. This means that pupils with SEND are not supported to build knowledge and skills consistently well. The school should ensure that all staff receive the necessary training to meet the needs of pupils with SEND.
- The teaching of the curriculum is not strong enough across all subjects. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge and do not achieve as well as they should. The school must ensure that the curriculum is implemented effectively so that pupils learn more and remember more.
- Teachers do not check pupils' understanding systematically to help them identify pupils' misconceptions accurately. As a result, teachers do not always provide clear, direct feedback to pupils or modify their teaching because of where gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills are. The school must ensure that teachers are trained to check pupils' understanding, provide helpful feedback and adapt their teaching as necessary.
- The school does not monitor the quality of education effectively enough. This means that some aspects that the school is working on are not having sufficient

impact on teaching and learning. The trust must ensure that their systems for monitoring and review are embedded rapidly and securely.

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

Unique reference number	138367
Local authority	Wokingham
Inspection number	10288022
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	529
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jay Bhutani
CEO of trust	Mohsen Ojja
Headteacher	Steven Jump
Website	www.oakbank.anthemtrust.uk
Date(s) of previous inspection	28 and 29 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current headteacher has been in his post since Easter 2022.
- There have been other recent changes to the senior team, including the appointment of two deputy headteachers during the last year.
- There have also been changes to the leadership of the trust. The chair of trustees has been in post for just over a year.
- An executive team of leaders at the trust have been appointed during the previous year. This includes the chief executive officer who joined the trust in January 2023.
- The school uses three registered and four unregistered alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

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 held meetings with senior leaders of the school, members of staff and pupils. The lead inspector held a meeting with the chair of the trust and executive officers of the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science, history, physical education and art. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum, looked at samples of pupils' work and visited lessons in mathematics, music, geography and design technology.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 and puts pupils' interest first.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation provided by the school. This included the school's self-evaluation, published information about pupils' performance and minutes of trustee's meetings.
- Inspectors spoke to a wide range of pupils and observed their behaviour in lessons and at social times.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, including free-text responses. They also took account of the responses to the staff and pupil surveys and gathered the views of parents, staff and pupils throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Linda Culling, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sarah Brinkley

Ofsted Inspector

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