

Inspection of Oakdene Primary Academy

Low Grange Avenue, Billingham, Cleveland TS23 3NR

Inspection dates: 30 and 31 January 2024

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Early years provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The principal of this school is Elizabeth Bramley. This school is part of The Enquire Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Darren Holmes, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Delyse Turrell.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Oakdene Primary Academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Oakdene Primary School to be outstanding, before it opened as Oakdene Primary Academy as a result of conversion to academy status.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils flourish and thrive at Oakdene Primary Academy. The curriculum is underpinned by the school motto, 'Learning for Life'. Pupils are prepared exceptionally well for their next phase of learning and beyond. There is a culture of ambition and high aspiration that permeates throughout the school. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils, achieve well.

Pupils and staff are incredibly proud to belong to this school. Pupils are happy and feel safe. They understand the right of every child to an education. As a result, classrooms are calm and purposeful. Pupils are inquisitive and demonstrate a love of learning. Pupils make impressive progress during their time in school and achieve high standards.

Parents appreciate the rich and creative curriculum that the school offers. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the 'memorable experiences' that enhance their learning. There is a commitment from leaders to extend learning beyond the classroom through, for example, school visits and access to the school's beach school and forest school.

This school empowers pupils to have a voice and to understand that their opinions matter. For example, pupils led the school's accreditation of the Rainbow Flag Award. Pupils enjoy a number of leadership roles and responsibilities, such as digital leaders and reading buddies.

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

The school has crafted a curriculum that is bespoke to its pupils and the community it serves. Leaders are ambitious for pupils and frequently review plans as part of a cycle of continuous school improvement. Leaders have sequenced knowledge and skills to enable pupils to revisit, embed and build on prior learning. For example, in mathematics, children develop a secure understanding of number in the early years. This helps pupils to understand simple fractions in Year 1 before progressing to decimals and percentages in key stage 2.

Exceptional learning habits are established from the very start in the early years. Children quickly settle into classroom routines. Adults are highly skilled at developing language and communication through their interactions with children. The classroom environment entices children to learn. For example, children in Reception are excited to learn about space. They can name the planets of the solar system and talk about the different features of each planet. Children independently access non-fiction books and wall displays to support their learning.

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. Pupils love to read and talk enthusiastically about reading challenges, author visits and class texts. From Nursery, children are confident with letter sounds, and this prepares them well to begin a more formal

phonics programme in Reception. All staff are highly skilled at teaching phonics, and this is delivered consistently throughout school. Reading books are carefully matched to the sounds pupils are learning. Pupils can apply their phonics knowledge when reading unfamiliar words. Teachers make regular checks to ensure that pupils are 'on track' with their reading. They identify any pupils at risk of falling behind and provide extra help so they catch up quickly. This careful approach to reading continues throughout key stage 2. Pupils read daily and enjoy online quizzes to test their knowledge and understanding.

The school is highly effective in supporting pupils with SEND. Early identification ensures pupils receive the help that they need. Leaders deploy additional adults effectively to give targeted support. For example, by providing additional teaching for pupils in advance of a lesson, pupils can access learning successfully alongside their peers.

Personal development is exemplary. The curriculum prepares pupils exceptionally well for life in modern Britain. For example, in Reception, pupils understand democracy when they vote each day for their class story book. Pupils are knowledgeable about different faiths, cultures and beliefs and show a deep respect. Pupils learn about different types of families and relationships. They know about consent, appropriate touch and how to keep themselves safe, both offline and online. Inspirational visitors, such as a Paralympian wheelchair rugby player, enhance the careers education that the school offers.

Those responsible for governance know the school very well. They have an accurate view of its strengths and ensure that leaders are evaluative and reflective. Leaders have a relentless ambition to make further improvements. Since the school joined the trust, there have been increased opportunities for leadership development. This has been particularly beneficial for leaders new to role. Leaders value the opportunity to work collaboratively with other schools.

Staff appreciate the changes brought about by leaders to reduce their workload. They feel incredibly well supported and valued. This is a school where both pupils and staff are nurtured with exceptional levels of care.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	149007
Local authority	Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number	10315588
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	273
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Delyse Turrell
Principal	Elizabeth Bramley
Website	www.oakdeneprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of The Enquire Learning Trust.
- The school offers provision for two-year-olds.
- The school does not access 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.
- 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 that puts pupils' interests first.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and special educational needs coordinator. They met with the chief executive officer of The Enquire Learning Trust, chair of the trust board, members of the academy improvement committee and spoke to a representative from Stockton-on-Tees Council. Discussions were also held with some teachers and support staff.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science, and design and technology. 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 discussed the curriculum in history, music, and art and design.
- Inspectors gathered the views of parents, formally, in person and informally, through responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and free-text responses. The views of staff were considered through the staff survey and through meetings with them. Pupils' views were considered through a pupil survey and through pupil meetings.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classes and during breaks and at lunchtime.

Inspection team

Andy Jones, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Katie Lowe	Ofsted Inspector
Simon Ward	Ofsted Inspector

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