

Inspection of Oakley Primary Academy

Station Road, Oakley, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK43 7RE

Inspection dates:	1 and 2 October 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The principal of this school is Callum Brown. This school is part of Meridian 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 (CEO), Mark Woods, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Shirley Jamieson. There is also an executive principal, Shelley Flynn, who is responsible for this school and others.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils experience a highly supportive school environment. They know and follow the school values of being ready, responsible and respectful. Pupils feel safe and valued. They know their well-being is a top priority for staff. Children in the early years respond positively to the kind and caring relationships adults build with them.

Expectations for pupils' achievement are high. They benefit from a broad, well-structured curriculum. This helps them build rich knowledge over time. They are motivated by knowledgeable teachers who provide clear, interesting and engaging lessons. While there is some variability in how well individual pupils' needs are met, pupils generally receive the support they need to achieve well.

The school has a clear emphasis on exemplary behaviour and strong values. Pupils are highly respectful, tolerant and kind to each other. Right from the start of early years, children learn how to sit politely and share an enjoyable lunch together.

Beyond the classroom, pupils enjoy a range of activities that help their personal growth. They enjoy participating in clubs such as karate, sports fixtures and community events such as the harvest festival. These help pupils to develop a strong sense of belonging and togetherness as a happy school community.

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

The school has a strong commitment to supporting all pupils to feel valued as part of the school. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This supportive environment helps pupils, including children in early years, feel confident and cared for.

The trust has developed an ambitious and well-structured primary curriculum. It provides extensive training for the school in how to use this curriculum well. For example, staff work together in regional groups to share best practice. This means that teachers have the subject knowledge they need to teach the curriculum well. As a result, pupils build and secure their knowledge in each subject securely.

Teachers provide clear explanations and check what pupils know. However, on occasion, the school does not make the adjustments pupils need to access the learning fully or extend their learning further. This means that some pupils, including pupils with SEND, do not always produce work of as high quality as they could.

Pupils learn to read well. The trust has supported the school to put in place an effective phonics programme. Staff have received ongoing training for this. Adults are knowledgeable in how to teach children to read. As a result, children quickly build reading fluency from the start of Reception. In the early years, there is an increased focus on developing children's communication and language skills. Staff model speech through the activities children choose. This helps children, including those with SEND, to develop the communication and language skills they will need to learn to read well.

Pupils develop a love of reading right from early years. Pupils regularly visit the reading corners in each classroom and the well-stocked library. Pupils talk enthusiastically about what they read. Older pupils are well supported to read challenging texts. This helps them to successfully develop more complex vocabulary and comprehension skills.

Pupils attend extremely well. They want to come to school. The school teaches pupils how to be kind and considerate. This is reflected in pupils' exceptional behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are accepting of differences between themselves and others. They learn the value of respect for all. This was evident as pupils happily worked alongside their grandparents during 'grandparents and extended family afternoon'.

The school provides a range of opportunities that broaden pupils' horizons and understanding of society. For example, pupils' cultural and social understanding is developed through the learning about the Windrush experience. This involves pupils hearing first hand from someone who was part of it. Pupils also enjoy a range of trips and experiences that enhance the curriculum. This has included meeting their local Member of Parliament to learn more about democracy. Pupils' mental health is well supported, especially when they read to, or stroke, Nova, the school dog.

The trust provides an extensive programme of training for governors. This enables them to challenge and support the school effectively. The trust ensures the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities such as safeguarding. The school engages extensively with parents and the wider community, who are highly positive about the school. Staff feel well supported in terms of workload and value the resources and collaborative opportunities the trust provides to help them develop their teaching.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school does not always provide precise enough adaptations for pupils' individual needs, including for some pupils with SEND. As a result, not all pupils access their learning as well as they could or have the opportunity to extend their learning and deepen their knowledge further. The school needs to ensure that it puts adaptations in place to meet all pupils' individual needs precisely and effectively so that all pupils achieve as well as they should.

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	143561
Local authority	Bedford
Inspection number	10345472
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	261
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Shirley Jamieson
CEO of the trust	Mark Woods
Headteacher	Callum Brown
Website	www.oakley.beds.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	2 and 3 October 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The headteacher took up their post in September 2023.
- The school joined the trust in September 2021.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 met with the trust deputy CEO, trust executive headteacher, headteacher, deputy headteacher, special educational needs coordinator, middle leaders and class teachers across the inspection.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, early reading, mathematics, history and science. 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 some other subjects, which included geography and art and design. Inspectors spent time in early years and met with early years staff.
- 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 chair of trustees, chair of local academy council and a member of the local academy council regarding governance.
- Inspectors met with pupils and visited break times, lunch times, assemblies and the meet the grandparents event.
- Inspectors conducted further meetings on behaviour and attendance, personal development and SEND.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and Ofsted's staff survey. They considered responses to the parent survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text messages.

Inspection team

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