



Oaklands Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109809
LEA Wokingham District Council
Inspection number 278276
Inspection dates 10 November 2005 to 11 November 2005
Reporting inspector Charalambos Loizou AI

This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Junior	School address	Butler Road
School category	Community		Crowthorne
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		RG45 6QZ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01344773496
Number on roll	255	Fax number	01344750604
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Alison Mitchell
Date of previous inspection	29 January 2001	Headteacher	Mrs S Stevens

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Oaklands is a popular, average size junior school situated in the village of Crowthorne near Wokingham. Nearly all the pupils are from white British backgrounds and join the school from the neighbouring infant school. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is very low compared with most schools as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs. However, the proportion of pupils with a statement of special need is currently above average. Attainment on entry to Year 3 is above average.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's own evaluation that it provides a good education and good value for money. The pupils achieve well and attain high standards in English, mathematics and science. Achievement in science and information and communication technology (ICT) is outstanding. The teaching is good because it maintains high standards. Teachers' assessments are accurate and the pupils meet the targets set for them. However, assessment is not always used to provide tasks that match different abilities so, for some pupils, the work is sometimes too easy. Pupils with learning difficulties make rapid progress and their achievement is outstanding as many of them reach the standards expected for their age. The personal development and welfare of the pupils are outstanding and contribute to their very good behaviour, attitudes to school and high levels of attendance. The leadership, management and governance of the school are good and have brought about good improvements to the school since its last inspection. Although the large majority of parents think well of the school and what it offers their children, a small but significant number of parents feel that the school does not always consult them when changes are made. The school is well placed to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

* Sharpen up the way teachers use assessment to improve the teaching further;*
Improve the partnership with parents to ensure that all are confident in the decisions made by the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The school judges achievement as outstanding and to some extent this is true. There is outstanding achievement in science and ICT as well rapid progress made by pupils with learning difficulties. However, taken overall achievement is good in relation to the pupils' starting points. Most pupils start school with above average standards. The Year 6 national test results show that the pupils achieve high standards in English, mathematics and science. A larger than average proportion of pupils achieve the higher levels in English and science compared with schools nationally with very high numbers doing so in science. The proportion achieving the higher levels in mathematics is good but varies from year to year. This highlights weaknesses in the way teachers assess and plan work for different abilities. Pupils with learning difficulties make outstanding progress. A significant number reach the standards expected for their age in national tests. For other pupils, teachers use assessments to provide them with challenging targets. However, these are not always being used to set tasks that are specifically matched to different abilities, so some pupils could do better. Standards in ICT are high because this subject is very well taught with good links made to other subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Standards of pupils' personal development are outstanding. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The pupils show a very clear sense of right and wrong. They have a good understanding of British cultural traditions and are developing a greater understanding of the diversity of ethnic groups in British society today. This is an area that the school has identified for further development. The pupils do well because they are very well behaved and show real enthusiasm for learning. Relationships are extremely good. Pupils say that bullying is rare and are confident that the staff will deal with this effectively. Consequently, the pupils feel safe and well cared for. Younger pupils said they learn from older pupils and look forward to being elected as school councillors. The election process helps the pupils to see at first hand how democracy works as they write their own manifestos for submission to their classmates. Attendance is very good and the pupils arrive punctually. The school has a well established tradition of promoting healthy lifestyles. The high standards achieved in literacy, mathematics, science and ICT help contribute to the pupils' development of citizenship and their economic well-being in the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The teaching is good and results in pupils achieving well. During the inspection some of the teaching was of high calibre. Teachers have high expectations so pupils behave very well and are enthusiastic learners. Teachers use ICT and multimedia equipment very effectively to engage learners. In most lessons teachers challenge and consolidate pupil's thinking and give them opportunities to discuss and express their ideas. When two pupils were asked to comment on a multi-media presentation, a pupil said, 'I like what we have done so far but now that I've learned about hyperlinks and other (ICT) skills I think we can make it (the presentation) much better'. The pupils with learning difficulties achieve very well because they are supported by highly skilled teaching assistants. In general, the many pupils of higher ability do well because teachers give them challenging tasks. For example, in a Year 6 lesson on data handling the teacher constantly reinforced pupils understanding through ever more challenging questions and tasks. Teachers assess pupils' work thoroughly so that they know what they have to do to improve. They generally use assessment information well to plan for the next stage of learning. However, in a few lessons teachers set the same task for all pupils, which means that some find it a little too easy and others struggle without adult support. This was evident in some mathematics lessons. For example, in Year 4, although this was a good and effective lesson, the planned extension work for more able pupils could have been done earlier to give the pupils more time to reflect on their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Oaklands Junior offers its pupils a rich curriculum which promotes pupils' personal development and allows them to achieve well. The provision for basic skills is particularly good and ICT is being used very effectively to support work in different subjects. There are good opportunities for the pupils to research and compare localities and cultures different to their own in subjects such as geography and religious education and, increasingly, this work relates to ethnic diversity in Britain today. The school recognises that it needs to challenge its high achievers and has successfully introduced 'thinking skills' into the curriculum to help pupils look at problems in creative ways. The school enhances pupils' enjoyment and awareness through weeks when the timetable is suspended for more innovative activities. For example, the recent 'through the window' project combined a variety of artistic techniques with environmental issues such as sustainability and recycling. The curriculum is further enriched by a wide range of opportunities for pupils to take part in a good range of sporting, musical, cultural and more esoteric clubs such as stamp collecting.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support provided for the pupils are outstanding. The school makes good and accurate assessments of the pupils' progress in all subjects and this helps to guide teachers' planning and support the pupils' learning. Teaching assistants are highly skilled and are particularly effective in supporting pupils with learning difficulties. Child protection procedures are fully in place and are reviewed systematically. Pupils' views and ideas are valued and acted on through the school council. The school has achieved national recognition for its highly effective work on developing healthy living in its curriculum. The pupils feel safe and secure. The school has a supportive ethos which promotes enjoyment in learning so the pupils are confident learners, resulting in the achievement of high standards. Good quality information is provided for parents and pupils in the form of regular newsletters. Surveys are conducted to gauge both pupils' and parents' views. However, some parents feel that they are not being consulted enough when changes are made and inspectors agree that the school could improve further this aspect of its work. There are very good opportunities for the pupils to participate in a range of sports and activities, including learning to play musical instruments. There are many opportunities to take part in fund raising which enable the pupils to contribute to their community and influence the lives of others.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, staff and governors have managed improvements to the school well and ensured that high standards have been maintained. Teaching mentors are used very well to support those new to the school

or beginning their teaching career and this has enabled good quality teaching to be maintained across the school. School self-evaluation is effective because the headteacher and senior staff monitor pupils' work and lessons regularly and use this information to identify what needs to be improved. The majority of staff are clear about the progress pupils make and the impact of their teaching, but some could make even sharper use of assessment information to challenge pupils more consistently. Most notably, a review of ICT provision has resulted in very good improvements to standards, teaching and resources since the last inspection. The headteacher is an effective leader whose quiet determination is bringing about change for the better. She is well supported by the staff. The large majority of parents are pleased with what the school provides for their children. A small but significant minority of parents feel they are not being consulted when changes are being proposed. Inspectors agree that the school could do more to consult parents when significant changes are taking place. Governors conduct their business effectively and hold the school to account for the standards it achieves. The school strategy group makes accurate assessments of the school's performance to identify future priorities. The school spends its funds well and has ensured that high quality support staff are deployed effectively. The school provides good value for money because the pupils receive a good quality of education in a well resourced learning environment.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for making the inspectors feel so welcome. We enjoyed talking to many of you and were very pleased to see how much you like school. It is clear that you work hard and that you reach very good standards. Inspectors were particularly pleased with your determination to do your best and the way you help each other during the school day.

We believe that your school is providing you with a good education. Your teachers and other staff care for you very well and you are extremely well behaved and come to school regularly and on time. Inspectors are very pleased with your work about healthy living and lifestyles. The school council is very well organised and inspectors were impressed with the quality of the manifestos you wrote when putting yourselves forward for election to the school council.

Inspectors found two things that the school could be doing better. Sometimes in lessons all the pupils do the same work so I have asked your teachers to give you different tasks that will better help you to move on to what you need to learn next. I have also asked your headteacher and governors to give your parents more information when changes take place.

Thank you for helping us and we wish you further success.

Charalambos Loizou

Lead Inspector