



# Oakdale South Road Middle School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 131691  
**Local Authority** Poole  
**Inspection number** 293815  
**Inspection dates** 23–24 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Anthony Shield

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Middle deemed primary	<b>School address</b>	School Lane
<b>School category</b>	Community		Poole
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	8–12		BH15 3JR
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01202 685800
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	544	<b>Fax number</b>	01202 685247
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	David Mann
		<b>Headteacher</b>	R W Sutcliffe
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 January 2002		

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<b>Age group</b> 8–12	<b>Inspection dates</b> 23–24 January 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 293815
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This is a large middle school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is broadly average. Most pupils are White British, with small numbers of pupils from minority ethnic heritages. The local authority is currently consulting on a possible reorganisation of its schools. If agreed, this would have significant implications for the school.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory but with some good and outstanding features. In particular, the careful attention given to all aspects of pupils' personal development encourages them to grow into confident and ambitious young people. Polite and courteous to others, their personal development is very good. Pupils talk warmly of belonging to the school community and are proud to be part of it. They take especial delight in helping others and making a contribution to the school. Their understanding of healthy lifestyles is excellent, as is demonstrated by their enthusiastic participation in the many sporting activities.

The headteacher has done much to create this strongly supportive culture. His confident leadership has been at the heart of the school's progress since the last inspection. Clear values characterise the school's approach, and shared leadership ensures a pooling of expertise. All staff respond with energy and dedication. However, monitoring of the school's work often lacks rigour and consequently has not led to consistent improvements in standards and provision. As a result, leadership and management overall are judged satisfactory, as is the school's capacity for further improvement. The school's own view of its effectiveness is overgenerous, but it recognises that sharper monitoring is needed to inform more realistic self-evaluation.

When pupils join the school in Year 4, they are attaining standards that are a little above average. Their achievement is satisfactory and standards remain above average when they leave. However, there is some variation in how well different groups of pupils achieve and how well they do in different subjects. Progress in English and science is good, but in mathematics progress, while improving, is satisfactory. In addition, not all able pupils are achieving the highest standards of which they are capable. Teaching is satisfactory overall. While some teaching is good and imaginatively planned to excite and make learning relevant it is not consistently so. Detailed and well planned activities within a friendly and supportive atmosphere characterise the learning. Pupils respond with a lively enthusiasm to the encouraging approach of teachers. However, not all work is challenging enough to stretch the most able pupils in particular.

The school's good curriculum enriches pupils' experiences and contributes to their good personal development. Good use of specialist teachers and facilities encourages wide ranging provision and the very good range of enrichment activities and clubs, particularly in sport, is a strength. Care, guidance and support are good and underpin the school's approach to ensuring the well-being of every child. The personal commitment of staff to individual pupils is very much a strength.

Parental confidence for the school's work is strong. Typical of many comments from parents was this: 'Our child is very happy and has thrived in such a rich environment.....thank goodness for the dedicated and tireless efforts of the staff'.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement in mathematics.

- Provide more consistently vibrant and effective teaching which ensures that all pupils, particularly the more able, are challenged to do their very best.
- Establish more rigorous monitoring and make certain that any follow-up leads to improvements in pupils' progress.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Given their good attainment on entry, pupils' achievements overall are satisfactory. In both English and science, many pupils make good progress. Pupils' achievements in mathematics are improving but remain satisfactory; there is scope for further improvement. More able pupils do not all achieve as well as they might in both English and mathematics. Standards are above average at the end of Year 6 and Year 7, though better in English and science than in mathematics. The school has worked hard to raise standards in mathematics and this is beginning to make a difference. Results in Year 6 national tests in 2006 improved on previous years and were above average. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress through Year 7. Pupils take pride in their work and many take care with their presentation. Some even say sorry when they make mistakes; 'Sorry about the mess' was the apologetic plea from one child in her mathematics book. Boys and girls both make similar progress and pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress. The small number of pupils with English as an additional language also makes satisfactory progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Excellent relationships within the school community help pupils to become confident and well motivated learners. They are keen to succeed and do well at school. Behaviour is good and many examples of thoughtful and considerate behaviour were observed. The school atmosphere is one of warmth and friendliness. The comment of one parent that 'pupils are unfailingly polite... children are encouraged to be well organised and self sufficient' sums up key elements of pupils' good personal development. Pupils work and play well together and feel safe. They know that bullying will be dealt with quickly and wisely. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural is good with particular strengths in their social and moral development. Older pupils enjoy showing initiative and taking responsibility; many make an outstanding contribution to the school and the wider community. Whether as office monitors or helping in the library, pupils respond sensibly and with maturity to opportunities to help. Others show a sensitive concern for others through acting as playground buddies or helping younger pupils with their reading. Pupils know their views are valued and the school council is a good forum for discussion. Pupils are proud of their contribution to, for example, the selection of new playground equipment.

Pupils' understanding of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle is excellent, recognised by the school gaining both ActiveMark Gold and the Healthy Schools Award. Pupils participate enthusiastically in the extensive range of sporting activities, and are

very appreciative of the teachers who give willingly of their time to provide these. The school's success in developing good levels of basic skills and promoting pupils' self-confidence prepares them well for later life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

While many lessons have good features, there are some weaknesses in the planning of lessons and in the range of activities provided that limit pupils' progress. No time is wasted at the start of lessons and pupils join their classes promptly and keen to get started. Detailed planning ensures that lessons are well structured and basic literacy and numeracy skills are promoted well. Feedback to pupils consistently encourages them with positive comment, while also pointing out to them how they can improve. Pupils said how much they appreciate this support and guidance. In some cases comments are highly detailed and provide encouragement for more sophisticated writing skills and analysis of text. Good progress is generated where teaching is enlivened by vigour, pace and humour, and teaching is increasingly enhanced by imaginative use of interactive whiteboards. In all lessons pupils are attentive, well behaved and interested. They generously share ideas with others during discussion. These good features ensure pupils never make less than satisfactory progress. However, while work usually takes account of pupils' prior attainment, even in English and mathematics, where pupils are grouped by ability, there is not enough variation of activities to make sure that the more able, in particular, are fully challenged. In addition, planning does not always set clear targets for what pupils of different abilities will achieve by the end of the lesson.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum provides good breadth and balance, and the access to specialist teaching and resources for science, design and technology, cookery, music and drama are particular strengths. Much planning is well structured and provides a firm foundation for teaching. Pupils expressed considerable delight with the school's wide variety of clubs and enrichment activities. Out of school visits, including a residential trip to France, are popular. The school's well planned programme for personal development enables pupils to talk confidently and knowledgeably about health, safety and personal issues. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties is well organised and support plans for those with particular needs are well written and easily understood by the pupils themselves. The school is aware of the need to strengthen links between subjects so that pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy are used and applied more consistently.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

A strong commitment to the care and welfare of all pupils is at the centre of the school's work. A high priority is placed on helping pupils manage their own learning and behaviour, resulting in good levels of personal responsibility. Expectations of behaviour are high and staff are good role models. Good systems have ensured attendance rates have improved over the last two years. Child protection procedures, Internet security and Criminal Record checks are comprehensive and thorough. Liaison and support from outside agencies, for example for pupils with learning difficulties, are good.

Good procedures are now in place for tracking pupils' progress, setting targets and supporting those pupils at risk of underachieving. Most class teachers are using performance data well to support their pupils, but systems are not well enough established for all teachers to be using them with the same level of confidence and effectiveness.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher leads with assurance. His commitment to shared leadership ensures that the senior team and managers at all levels work closely together. This gives the school a strong sense of shared values and common purpose. There is a strong sense of community amongst all who work and learn in the school. A strong culture of learning and good relationships is fostered by dedicated and hard-working teachers. Governors are committed and knowledgeable. They understand their roles in both strategic planning and monitoring.

Monitoring is comprehensive and recently introduced systems to analyse performance data carefully and use the information to plan more effectively are beginning to have an impact on pupils' achievement. However, monitoring is not always robust enough to secure improvements. For example, the school's senior team regularly observes teaching, but does not always draw conclusions that will help the school move forward. There is good involvement by staff at all levels in self-review and the mid term reviews of progress against the school improvement provide good opportunities for all staff to contribute to self-evaluation. The budget is well managed and efficient and effective systems are in place to ensure resources are well deployed.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed meeting you and your teachers and watching you learn. We particularly enjoyed talking to you, and were impressed by the enthusiastic and confident way you spoke about your school. Yours is a satisfactory school and has some particularly good things happening.

What we liked most about your school

- You are keen to do well and join in all the activities at school. You work hard in lessons and try to do your best.
- You are very well behaved and were very courteous and polite to us. You get on well with the teachers.
- Your understanding of how to live healthily is excellent.
- You are very concerned to help and care for each other. You are also good at taking responsibility and helping the teachers.
- Your teachers take very good care of you.

What we have asked your school to do now

- Ensure that you do as well in mathematics as you do in English.
- Encourage teachers to make all lessons interesting and fun and ensure that all of you are made to work really hard and do your very best.
- Make sure that the school checks up regularly on how things are going to help you do even better.

Thank you once again for your help during the inspection. Good luck in the future!