

Oak Farm Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102431
Local Authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	308003
Inspection date	5 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Nicola Davies

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	358
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Cliff Bergdahl
Headteacher	Mr David Chalk (Acting)
Date of previous school inspection	13 September 2004
School address	Windsor Avenue Hillingdon Uxbridge UB10 9PD
Telephone number	01895 238812
Fax number	01895 258298

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the progress of pupils particularly in mathematics, the quality of academic guidance and pupils' personal development and well being. Evidence was gathered from the analysis of pupils' test results, observation of lessons and pupils' work, parents' questionnaires and discussions with the acting headteacher, staff, governors and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a three form entry junior school. Most pupils join the school from the infant school on the same site and attainment on entry is above average. Whilst the majority of pupils are of White British heritage, around a quarter are from a range of other ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is lower than average. This includes pupils who have difficulties with literacy and numeracy as well as some pupils with more complex difficulties. The school is nearing the end of a major building programme, which will provide it with six new classrooms and shared use of a new hall and kitchen. It is currently led by the acting headteacher following the retirement of the previous headteacher in April 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Oak Farm Junior provides its pupils with a good education. The school is popular with parents and pupils alike who appreciate the good teaching, curriculum, care, guidance and support it provides. Parents particularly value the dedication of teachers in providing a very wide range of extra-curricular activities and the 'all round' opportunities the school provides. As one parent wrote approvingly, 'The wide breadth of activities before, during and after school help my children gain a broad education'. Pupils enjoy a host of sporting activities ranging from handball to hula. Such activities not only contribute to their excellent understanding and uptake of healthy lifestyles but also provide extra opportunities for them to make an outstanding contribution to the life of the school community. For example, older pupils take an active role in organising games and sports at lunchtimes whilst all pupils have a chance to sell fresh fruit on 'Fruity Fridays'. The school listens carefully to suggestions from pupils on how to improve its work overall. Girls and boys relish being involved in these consultations and discussions and their views are very well represented by the effective school council. Such opportunities contribute to their mature and considerate behaviour and to their good overall personal development and well-being. Their good social and academic skills means they are well equipped for their eventual move to secondary school.

Pupils make good progress overall and do well in national tests at the end of Year 6. Standards are significantly above average and a dip in results in mathematics in 2007 has been considered carefully. Staff have undertaken a thorough review of the way that teachers record pupils' progress and have implemented a new system to help them quickly identify those who may need extra support or challenge in the subject. This is working well. Teachers have appreciated the way that it helps them to see exactly where pupils are and to develop targets to ensure they all make good or better progress. This is already paying dividends as the school's records show an increase in the percentage of pupils working at higher levels in mathematics by the end of Year 6, and more pupils across the school who are 'on track' to meet their targets. However, the school has yet to ensure that well matched support and challenge for pupils in mathematics is consistent. For example, support for pupils experiencing difficulties with reading and writing or with more complex difficulties is very well organised and helps these pupils to make good progress. In contrast, support for pupils who are struggling with mathematics is not as comprehensive. As a result, pupils do not always get as much help they need. Similarly, the school has identified that not enough is done to ensure that pupils who are particularly mathematically able are offered consistently good opportunities to extend their skills.

Pupils enjoy their education a good deal and their attendance is excellent. They develop good relationships with their teachers and with other pupils, which contribute to their learning and to the happy atmosphere around the school. A strong feature of the good teaching at the school is the way that pupils often have opportunities to discuss their ideas in lessons and so clarify their thinking. In addition, teachers find interesting ways to present information, which means that pupils feel that 'Teachers make learning fun'. Basic skills are well taught and there are particular strengths in pupils' creative development. Many pupils are involved in additional musical activities, such as the choir, and art and drama work has a high profile. Both teachers and pupils are looking forward to the completion of the new building, which will allow the school to give full rein to its ambitions in these areas.

The school is well led and managed. Parents praise the 'team spirit' that pervades the school and involves teachers, support and administrative staff and pupils alike. Staff include pupils

well in discussions about their work and progress and pupils enjoy being involved in setting their own targets which they then understand and work hard to meet. Academic guidance is good and has been significantly strengthened by the acting headteacher through regular meetings with teachers to discuss the progress of groups and individual pupils. Similarly, staff work together well in groups to support the development of different subjects within the curriculum. This has helped the school to accurately identify its weaker areas and enthusiastically implement any changes that are required. These successful collaborations have meant that the change in leadership and the inevitable challenges posed by the major building project have not disrupted work on improving the school and are a clear indication of its good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate progress in mathematics by ensuring that activities and support are consistently well matched to the needs of groups of pupils.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	2
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

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

¹ 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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

17 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Oak Farm Junior School, Uxbridge, UB10 9PD

It was lovely to talk to so many of you when I visited your school recently. Thank you for helping me with the inspection. I also met representatives from your School Council so I would like to pass on my particular thanks to them. I was very impressed with the way that your councillors represent your views and get involved in the work of the school on your behalf. This is just one way that you make an excellent contribution to making the school such a happy community.

Your acting headteacher, teachers, governors and parents provided me with a lot of information about the school. I agree with them that you go to a good school. You and your parents told me how much you enjoyed all the extra activities the school provides. I am pleased to pass on your thanks to all your teachers and the other adults at the school for all their hard work in providing these activities.

Your acting headteacher and all your teachers have been working particularly hard this year on the way they check that you are all doing well. This is having a good impact and your teachers are using this information well when they help you decide on your targets to improve. I have asked the school to look at the way that it provides you with extra support or challenge in mathematics. For example, if you are having difficulties with reading or writing, the school provides you with very well organised help to overcome these. As yet, they do not provide you with such good support in mathematics. Improving this will help you make even better progress in mathematics. You can read more about these issues in the report that accompanies this letter.

I know that you are all looking forward to the completion of your building work. Your teachers have lots of plans for your extra space. Together with your new headteacher coming in September, I am sure there will be exciting times ahead for the school. I am sure you will enjoy these.

With best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely,

Nicola Davies

Lead Inspector