

# Oxhey Wood Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	117170
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	312523
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Nigel Cromeey-Hawke

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	235
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr James Brown
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Darren Aisthorpe
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 February 2004
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Oxhey Drive South Oxhey Watford WD19 7SL
<b>Telephone number</b>	02084284828
<b>Fax number</b>	02084216089

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 November 2008
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is an average sized primary school in an area of social disadvantage. It is made up of largely White British pupils whose first language is English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average and forms approximately one third of the school. The proportion eligible for free school meals is very high. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision is located in the nursery and reception class. Other pre-school children attend the on-site children's centre, which is on the same site but managed independently. Over the last six years the school has had nine acting or permanent headteachers, with the current postholder having been in place since September 2007. There has been considerable staff turnover. Over this period the intake of the school has changed due to the closure of a local school. The school is expanding rapidly, with pupils now coming from increasingly far away. The school has recently gained Healthy Schools and Basic Skills awards and become the hub school of an extended schools community consortium.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school. It has improved significantly following a period of considerable upheaval and lack of continuity. Parents are overwhelmingly in support of it, with one typically commenting that, 'There is never a dull day at school. I highly recommend this school to any parent.' Achievement is good, often from low starting points. This is because of the high levels of support provided for the pupils, their positive attitudes to learning, the good curriculum, the effective teaching and the good pastoral care.

The headteacher and his staff have taken significant steps to improve the quality of teaching and the behaviour of pupils. This has brought about improvements in learning, although writing needs further development. All pupils now make good progress through the school and standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are broadly average. Currently, both Year 2 and Year 6 are on track to meet, and in many cases exceed, the challenging targets the school has set.

Teaching is good, helped by the large number of capable support staff. Lessons focus strongly upon key literacy and numeracy skills, and the good curriculum provides a broad range of experiences to interest and motivate pupils in their learning. The planning of teaching within the main school is good, but is underdeveloped within the EYFS, as is the use made of outdoor learning. The school's use of information and communication technology (ICT) is outstanding. It is carefully planned across all subjects, delivered by specialist staff and it supports the move to improve writing, especially well. It contributes to pupils' enjoyment of their learning, the recent rise in standards and provides them with an invaluable life skill.

The level of pastoral care provided by the school is good and contributes well to pupils' good personal development. This is reflected in improved attendance and good behaviour since the last inspection. In this supportive environment pupils say they feel valued and safe. They know what it means to lead a healthy lifestyle. The school has good links with the local community and a wide range of support agencies and partners through its extended links with the community. Pupils are beginning to work independently of adult support and take responsibility for aspects of the school community. Their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is promoted well.

The leadership and management of the school is good. The recently appointed headteacher provides strong leadership. He has built around him a highly committed staff who ensure that the school provides a caring and stimulating learning environment where achievement is promoted and celebrated effectively. The school's self evaluation is wide ranging and of good quality and the school has a good understanding of, and plans for, further improvement. Governors have a good grasp of the strengths and needs of the school and support it well.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Provision in the Nursery and Reception class is effective in ensuring that children make good progress overall in their learning. Attainment on entry in the past has been well below national averages but has recently risen to broadly average. Teaching and learning are good overall and more consistently so in the Reception class. Staff know the children well. They are particularly adept at questioning them about what they are doing so that they extend their understanding and language skills. Children are taught effectively about the relationship between sounds and the letters that represent them.

The welfare of all of the children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language, is promoted well. As a result, children are happy and confident, quickly make new friends and extend their social skills. They enjoy school because of the relaxed and friendly atmosphere. A suitable range of activities are planned. However, the balance of these activities for Nursery children is heavily weighted towards communication, language and literacy, and knowledge and understanding of the world, with more limited emphasis on planned physical, creative or mathematical activities. The coordinator, in conjunction with the headteacher has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement. She has identified the need to develop planning, particularly for the Nursery, and also the importance of a greater emphasis on outdoor learning, in line with the recommendations. The school has been unable, as yet, to appoint a qualified teacher for the Nursery class this term.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Develop planning, especially for Nursery provision, and extend the use of outdoor learning within the EYFS.
- Raise standards in writing across the school and in all curriculum areas.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

By the end of Year 6, standards are average but achievement is good. This is a result of more stable staffing and leadership, the good curriculum and significant improvements brought about in teaching over the last two years. Having made good progress in the EYFS, pupils are entering Key Stage 1 generally at the levels expected for their age, but below in their literacy skills. In the past, as pupils started Year 1 their skills and levels of understanding have been below national expectations, reflecting their lower attainment on entry and also the school's weaker provision. Good progress is now being made through Key Stage 1, with reading and mathematics especially strong, but with writing remaining weaker. Past problems of slower progress through Key Stage 2 have also been overcome. Standards by the time pupils leave school have risen and are broadly in line with national averages, with those in reading and science exceeding them. This represents good progress given the legacy of these pupils' below average starting points. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress in line with others. The robust tracking system also shows that current pupils are on track to meet and in many cases exceed the challenging targets the school has set.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The school places a great emphasis on pupils' personal and social development and promotes it effectively. Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay healthy and keep safe, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Because of this, pupils enjoy coming to school and are beginning to take more responsibility for their own learning. Attendance has improved recently and is now in line with the national average. Any bullying is dealt with effectively, and pupils say relationships are good and school is a fun place to be. Behaviour has improved and is now good, with exclusions dramatically reduced. As a result of their enjoyment of all the school has to offer, pupils work hard and standards have risen significantly. They make a good contribution to the community through charitable work. The school council is increasingly active in helping shape the life of the school, often taking advantage of the good

links provided by the school's extended links with the community. The combination of pupils' good personal development, the good progress they make in their literacy and numeracy, combined with their well developed skills in ICT, results in them being prepared effectively for the next stage in their learning.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is good so pupils learn well. In the best lessons, teachers ensure that pace and challenge stimulate pupils' interest. Teachers' explanations are clear so pupils know what to do and get on quickly. Teachers use many different teaching methods, including practical activities. For example, in one outstanding lesson pupils demonstrated their understanding by teaching the rest of the class what they had learnt previously and why they had carried out various stages in their mathematics calculations. Separate classes, including those for groups with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the more able, ensure that all pupils' needs are well met. Teaching assistants are used effectively to support learning. Interactive white boards are used well to provide a range of resources. In one lesson the recent presidential election in America was used to focus pupils' thinking upon different world leaders and high quality work resulted. However, some lessons lack the same level of interest, pace and challenge and, as a result, progress is slower. Good marking ensures that pupils understand how best to express their ideas and learning appropriately.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

Within the good curriculum the part played by ICT in supporting teaching and learning is outstanding. This contributes to pupils' enjoyment, personal development and the good progress they make. The everyday curriculum is broad and balanced and recent improvements in planning ensure that it is well matched to the wide range of pupils' needs. Statutory requirements are met. Theme weeks effectively help pupils to understand the diversity of the modern world. The focus upon literacy over the last year has begun to bear fruit in terms of improved standards but writing remains underdeveloped across all areas of the school. There are good opportunities for enrichment through well supported after school activities. Pupils are able to gain a good range of experiences through the visits and visitors to the school and from the opportunities provided by the schools' good links with the community. Music is especially strong, with the schools' extensive involvement in the filming of the BBC community choir programme.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Arrangements for child protection and for safeguarding pupils meet current requirements fully. There is good support for pupils who require additional help with their work and for those who speak English as an additional language. Good use is made of strong links with other agencies, which benefit these pupils' learning. The school takes effective steps to help children settle into Nursery and Reception and to help older pupils transfer to their next stage of education. Routines are well established and known to all and pastoral care is good. As a result, pupils say they feel safe and well cared for. Pupils have targets in literacy and mathematics, which provide them with their next steps in learning, although not all pupils can confidently say what these

are. Systems to monitor pupils' progress are developed effectively for the core areas of reading, writing and mathematics. The school has now identified the need to further develop the tracking of pupils' progress in science.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The continuity, vision, enthusiasm and drive that the headteacher has brought to the school since taking up post have impacted significantly upon standards and achievement. For example the senior leadership team has been reorganised and the school is working to resolve staffing issues within the EYFS. In addition the curriculum has been revised and assessment, marking and systems for tracking progress have been introduced. A new behaviour and rewards policy has been put in place and is proving to be very effective. Subject leaders are taking an increasing part in managing their areas, and good self-evaluation means the school knows how well it is doing and what it has to do to improve further. The school is building good links with many local support agencies and partners. These help build strong relationships between the community and school which benefit pupils' learning. The governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and carry out their challenge and support functions well.

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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

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

### Achievement and standards

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

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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 learners' needs?</b>	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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

13 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Oxhey Wood Primary School, Watford, WD19 7SL

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave my colleague and I when we inspected your school. You were very friendly, polite and enthusiastic about what you do. You told us a lot of interesting things about your school and you are clearly very proud of it. Oxhey Wood Primary is a good school. These are the main things we found that are good about your school:

- your school cares for you and looks after you well
- you work hard and achieve well because of your positive attitudes, good behaviour and the good teaching
- your lessons are interesting because of the good curriculum and the frequent use of exciting ICT to help you learn
- those of you who find learning difficult are well supported by the school and you all make good progress
- the school is well led and managed and all the adults try their hardest to make it the best place in which you can learn.

These are the things that we have suggested for your school to work on to make it an even better place to learn:

- provide more opportunities within the Nursery and Reception classes to learn outdoors and support these teachers to better plan activities
- help you to further improve the standards you reach in your work, especially in your writing.

You can help by telling your teachers how you learn best and if you have any difficulties. You can also help by continuing to improve your attendance, behaving well and working hard, as you do at the moment.

Yours sincerely

Nigel Cromey-Hawke

Lead inspector