

# Oakfield Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108332
<b>Local Authority</b>	Gateshead
<b>Inspection number</b>	324745
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 September 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joan Elton

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>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	180
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>	Ms Rachel Llewellyn
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Janet Jacques
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 January 2006
<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>	Chowdene Bank Low Fell Gateshead Tyne and Wear NE9 6JH
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 4870354
<b>Fax number</b>	0

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<b>Age group</b>	4–7
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Oakfield Infant School is a smaller than average sized school. It serves a community of average socio-economic advantage and the number of free school meals is well below the national average. Pupils are largely of White British Heritage and 60% of these live outside the catchment area. There are a very small number of pupils with English as an additional language and the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also below the national average. The school has Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision. It manages a Parent and Toddler Group, which meets every Wednesday morning.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Oakfield Infants School is outstanding. It fully lives up to its vision of providing 'a high quality education that enables each child to develop to their full potential, preparing them for the next stage in life.' Its popularity with parents is richly deserved. Comments describing 'the highly committed staff,' 'the safe, friendly atmosphere,' 'the excellent communication between home and school' and 'the personalised class support to challenge pupils' learning appropriately,' are typical.

The school is very well led by its headteacher, who communicates exceptionally well with parents and who successfully develops and motivates staff to raise individual pupil achievement both academically and personally. The school also benefits from a hard working and very knowledgeable governing body. It is committed to raising achievement by the effective use of resources to ensure that the school is continually seeking ways of improving.

When children enter the EYFS, their skills are typical for this age group but because of outstanding provision the majority of pupils enter Year 1 with skills exceeding expectations for their age. This outstanding achievement continues through Key Stage 1 and pupils leave the school with exceptionally high standards in comparison with national averages. Personal development and well-being are outstanding. Pupils are very well behaved and have very positive attitudes to learning, as is shown in their very good attendance. They enjoy school and feel safe. They know the essential features of a healthy life-style and appreciate that visits, community projects and after-school clubs give them new interests, which add greatly to their general enjoyment. Great care is taken with children's induction into school, their transition within it and their move to junior school. Induction is most critical as children enter from fourteen different pre-school settings and the school liaises effectively with every one. The addition of a parent and toddler group within the school is also helping to ease transition and foster community cohesion.

The school provides excellent care, guidance and support: all safeguarding and child protection policies are firmly in place; staff are very vigilant; an excellent system of praise and rewards motivates pupils whilst effective tracking of progress enables early identification of their needs and more accurate targeting of resources. Teaching and learning is outstanding because work matches individual needs and interests, teachers and teaching assistants are highly knowledgeable and there are effective catch-up programmes for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Feedback to pupils after lessons and in marking also ensures they appreciate their achievements and understand their areas for development. Parents are kept well informed of their child's development through workshops, targets and newsletters. The curriculum is outstanding. Planning links subjects together and makes learning exciting and creative. It also ensures that the basic skills of reading, writing, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) are developed in new situations. Lessons are enhanced by the inclusion of exciting visits and stimulating visitors. Pupils enjoy the variety of after-school clubs and these are well attended.

The school has dealt successfully with all issues from the previous inspection, and is well placed to improve in future. It provides excellent value for money.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 1

The Early Years Foundation stage (EYFS) is outstanding. Children enter the Reception class from fourteen pre-school settings. Children quickly establish secure friendships, follow the class procedures and identify with the class group. This is the result of outstanding leadership and management, excellent teaching and learning and a warm, stimulating environment, where children are encouraged to develop the confidence to make their own decisions. When children enter Reception class, their skills are typical of this age group. By the time they enter Year 1, a large number have exceeded expectations for their age. Standards of care are exceptionally good: staff are most vigilant and children receive many prompts about safety. Staff also set good models of courtesy and insist on good manners. Induction is handled sensitively and staff quickly establish good relationships with the children, accurately assessing their needs. This assessment continues throughout EYFS. This enables staff to provide very effectively for the interests and abilities of all children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities using the resources of outside agencies. Staff work particularly well as a team. They provide a curriculum, which has a good balance of teacher-led and child-chosen activities and work enthusiastically alongside children to extend their learning. The staff achieve this by encouragement, challenging questions and supportive commentaries. The extensive outside environment is used imaginatively to support all aspects of learning and the school has plans to make it even more exciting.

### What the school should do to improve further

- There are no areas for improvement that the school has not already identified.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 1

Achievement is outstanding and standards are very high by the end of Year 2. Excellent progress in the EYFS results in a higher than average proportion of pupils exceeding the expectations for their age by the end of Reception. Outstanding progress continues through Key Stage 1 because excellent teaching consolidates and extends learning to meet the needs of all pupils. National assessment results at Year 2 have been exceptionally high from 2003 to 2007 for reading, writing and mathematics. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels has been well above the national average. Teacher assessments in science indicate similar high standards. In 2008 there was no significant difference in the scores of boys and girls except in the higher levels of mathematics. Here, although both performed very well, boys were more successful. The school carefully monitors all assessment results to evaluate its own performance and to adapt what it does where necessary. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve as well as their classmates, as do pupils with English as an additional language. This is due to the school's highly successful inclusion policies.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

This is outstanding, along with spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Most pupils love school and are very happy. This is reflected in their very good attendance and excellent behaviour. Pupils find school a very friendly place, where staff are approachable. They enjoy their learning, whether it involves mathematical games, researching with the internet or reading

a story. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy living and have achieved several Healthy School Awards. Pupils appreciate the contribution school clubs make to their general enjoyment. They feel safe in school; they know doors are locked to keep them secure and understand the importance of safety procedures. Pupils express themselves very confidently and enjoy community involvement with the church, local gymnastics and dance festivals, charity fund-raising and environmental work. Their sponsorship of a child in Malawi and their regular communication with him is helping develop their understanding of shared values in different lifestyles. Visits and visitors extend their understanding of job opportunities and this is further developed by the school's involvement with Business Enterprise. Pupils work together and express their opinions well, notably through the school council. This, along with their excellent acquisition of basic skills, prepares them extremely well for junior school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Pupils learn rapidly because they are taught extremely well. Pupils' progress is assessed regularly and they benefit from an inventive way of organising lessons. This uses the considerable talents of both teachers and teaching assistants to create small teaching groups where the pace and level of learning is accurately tailored to meet pupils' needs. The more able often have exacting challenges and problem solving work. Where pupils' progress is not meeting the teacher's very high expectations, special catch-up programmes are introduced and this is an important factor underpinning the excellent progress at the school. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities have excellent support with tasks finely tuned to build on previous learning. This helps pupils succeed and grow in confidence.

Staff are very effective in questioning and in encouraging discussion. Lessons often include games, challenges or practical tasks that motivate pupils well and help to develop thinking skills. Teachers provide excellent encouragement and help for pupils during lessons. Marking clearly indicates what pupils have done well and where they need to improve. Parents are encouraged to share in their children's education. Useful workshops and target sheets keep them well informed about their children's progress and how they can extend that learning.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

Careful planning and commitment keeps enjoyment at the heart of learning and results in a balanced and exciting curriculum. This is recognised through the Artsmark, Activemark and Basic Skills awards. Creative work features strongly and helps to develop pupils' talents. For example, all pupils have opportunities to play the ocarina and violin. Links between subjects ensure that writing, reading, numeracy and ICT skills are consolidated very well throughout the curriculum. An outstanding programme for personal development supports awareness of citizenship and, together with varied opportunities for physical exercise, teaches pupils how to stay safe and healthy.

Enrichment for learning is excellent. Interesting visits, visitors and special theme events are highlights of the curriculum. A good variety of lunchtime and after school activities are well attended and described by pupils as being 'good fun'. They make a major contribution to pupils' physical development and also encourage them to take up new interests.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 1

The school takes excellent care of its pupils and their welfare is at the heart of its work. Excellent links with pre-school providers, families and the junior school ensure pupils have a happy introduction to school life and a smooth transition to the next phase of learning. Staff constantly praise and reward pupils so they are highly motivated. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils, including those for child protection, meet requirements. Supervision is good at all times. The school goes to great lengths to provide resources and expert support for pupils with learning, physical or sensory difficulties. As a result, they are able to take a full and active part in school life.

Guidance to help pupils with their learning is excellent. The school tracks progress closely so teachers can identify the next steps for learning and set challenging targets. These are communicated very effectively to pupils in lessons so that they understand what is expected of them and how they can improve.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher is ably supported by a very capable and hard working deputy. The headteacher is an inspirational leader, communicating her vision for the school to governors and staff and successfully motivating and developing staff to their maximum potential. Together with all staff and governors an excellent overview exists of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school is exceptionally well run with excellent procedures that focus on pupils' academic and personal achievement. As a result, despite recent staffing changes, disruptions to pupils have been minimal and continuity has been secured. Whenever initiatives are introduced they are adapted to pupils' needs and explained to parents. As a result pupils grow in confidence and their achievement is raised. Staff morale is particularly high and very effective teamwork secures the school's highly supportive family ethos.

Governors have an excellent knowledge of the school from working in classrooms, monitoring alongside coordinators and pupil discussions. They use finances very well to improve resources, providing additional focused support for individual pupil needs. The leadership team of headteacher, staff and governors have successfully sustained high achievement and make an excellent contribution to community cohesion. The school has improved since the last inspection and has an excellent capacity to continue to improve in future.

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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?	1
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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1

### Achievement and standards

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

<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>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	1

## The quality of provision

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

20 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Oakfield Infant School, Gateshead, NE9 6JH

Thank you for the welcome you gave us when we inspected your school. We were very pleased with your friendliness and good manners. You were most helpful to us, as were your parents in their questionnaires. Please thank them on our behalf; their comments were very interesting and your school received a lot of praise.

Oakfield Infants is an outstanding school. It is very well organised and your headteacher, teachers and governors take great care of you. We saw some excellent lessons, with interesting activities, where you made great progress. We also saw some of your work, which was also very good. You are very keen to learn. You listen well, have imaginative ideas and speak with great confidence. You know much about keeping healthy and safe. You also told us how much you have enjoyed the many visitors, visits and projects you have studied. Your teachers work very hard to make your learning as exciting as possible. They are very successful because you are clearly very happy and enjoy learning. By the time you leave for the junior school, you have achieved some very good skills and knowledge. You also work very well with other children.

Your headteacher, staff and governors make a very strong team. They work well together and have helped improve your learning, the school building and its grounds. They are always trying to make improvements because they want you to have the best possible education and to enjoy it. We have seen their plans for the future and are confident that your school will continue to be very successful.

Please continue to enjoy your learning.

Our very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Joan EltonLynne Read

Inspectors