

Oakridge Parochial School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115674
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	326246
Inspection date	23 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Alison Grainger

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	40
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
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary Fern
Headteacher	Lisa Austin-Harrison
Date of previous school inspection	18 October 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Oakridge Lynch Stroud GL6 7NR
Telephone number	01285 760269
Fax number	01285 760269

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	23 June 2009
Inspection number	326246

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This small primary school serves the village of Oakridge Lynch and the surrounding communities. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and no pupil has English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Currently, children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Reception class in the mornings. They are in a class with pupils in Years 1 and 2 in the afternoons. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught together in one class.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. It ensures that pupils make satisfactory progress. Most parents are very pleased with the school, particularly the way in which staff guide and support their children. As one parent commented, reflecting the views of many, 'Oakridge is a happy school that provides a caring and secure working environment for the children.' Care, guidance and support are strong, resulting in pupils' good personal development and well-being.

Across the school, standards are generally above average. These standards represent satisfactory achievement in relation to pupils' starting points and capabilities. Taking the intake as a whole, children enter Reception with attainment above the levels expected. There is some variation, however, in how well pupils progress through the school. Currently, progress is most significant in Years 3 to 6, where the quality of the provision is strongest. Although adequate gains are made in Reception to Year 2, pupils are not consistently challenged in these years.

Pupils' progress is satisfactory because teaching and the curriculum are satisfactory. Much good practice is evident in Years 3 to 6. Here, expectations of the standards all pupils are capable of attaining are high and teaching is focused on meeting individual learning needs. In Reception to Year 2, expectations of pupils are not always high enough and teaching is not sharply focused on the next steps in learning for each pupil.

By the time pupils reach Years 5 and 6, they are mature and sensible young people who are friendly and polite. Parents of older children speak positively of the way in which the school has helped their children to develop into 'well-rounded' individuals and of how their children's 'characters have been nurtured and enhanced'. Pupils gain a good awareness of the importance of making sensible and healthy lifestyle choices and of how to stay safe. Pupils' contribution to the school community is good, as is their involvement in the local community and in fundraising for charities. Older pupils do much to support younger ones. A less secure aspect of pupils' personal development is their understanding of the diversity of modern multi-ethnic society. While children's personal development in Reception is satisfactory, they do not have enough opportunities to develop independence and initiative.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Strengths are evident in the way in which the school runs calmly and smoothly and promotes pupils' welfare. Although initiatives are introduced and there is a commitment to providing the best for the pupils, the present quality of education is being maintained rather than being driven up. This is because the staff team does not analyse rigorously enough the impact of the school's provision, particularly teaching, on pupils' progress. This has led to the school seeing itself as more effective than it is and not always taking swift enough action for improvement. Even so, improvements since the last inspection, such as in the tracking of pupils' progress, indicate that there is satisfactory capacity to improve. Many parents say that the school communicates very well with them. A few, however, consider that they have not been sufficiently well informed or consulted about changes to the accommodation. While inspectors found communication with parents to be good overall, governors agree that there is scope for it to be better.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children settle well into school as a result of the welcoming environment, good partnership with parents and the 'buddying' provided by older pupils. They generally behave well and show

positive attitudes, although not all are well involved when activities do not capture their interest fully. Children get on well with each other and with the adults in school. However, their personal development is prevented from being better than satisfactory by too few opportunities for them to show independence and develop initiative. Attention to children's welfare is satisfactory. They are appropriately supervised in school and when outside on the village green.

A reasonable range of learning opportunities is planned to cover all the areas of learning. Children are supported to make satisfactory progress so that standards remain above average on transfer to Year 1. However, the planning of activities focuses more on what children and the adults will do rather than on the specific knowledge, understanding and skills children need to gain. Teaching is not sharply enough focused on the next steps in learning for each child in order to move learning on more quickly. The Reception provision is satisfactorily led and managed. Adults work effectively together. However, the impact of the provision on learning is not evaluated carefully enough and the school has judged it as better than it is.

What the school should do to improve further

- ensure that teaching in Reception to Year 2 is based on high expectations and focuses sharply on the next steps in learning for each pupil
- increase opportunities for Reception children to develop independence and initiative
- develop pupils' awareness of the diversity of modern multi-ethnic society
- rigorously analyse the impact of provision, particularly teaching, on pupils' progress and ensure that improvements are made where necessary.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards across the school are generally above average. Given that these standards match the attainment levels on entry to the school, they represent satisfactory progress. Progress is greater in Years 3 to 6 than lower down the school, and many pupils are moving on at a good rate in these years. The reason why progress is not better lower down the school is that the pupils are not consistently challenged at the right level. Across the school, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities progress at a similar rate to others. Satisfactory support is provided for pupils whose progress may be slower than expected in order to help get them back on track.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Most pupils enjoy school and behave well. Older pupils are self-assured and independent. This is evident in lessons, when pupils in Years 5 and 6 work in a focused and industrious way without direct adult support. It is also apparent, for example, when the older pupils lead the daily 'wake and shake' physical activities. Pupils of all ages participate enthusiastically in the exercises, demonstrating their good understanding of the importance of keeping fit and healthy. Pupils are safety conscious when moving about the school. They are aware of the dangers posed by traffic when playing on the village green and know how to stay safe when using the internet.

The spiritual, moral and social aspects of pupils' development are good, as seen in the positive relationships almost all children enjoy with others. Cultural development is not as strong. Pupils do not have a well-developed awareness of the rich diversity of ethnic backgrounds and the varied cultural traditions of people living in Britain today. All in all, pupils' personal qualities, together with their rate of academic progress and understanding of the wider world, prepare them satisfactorily for their future lives. The attendance rate has returned to above average this year, having fallen a little over the previous two years.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Although teaching is satisfactory overall, there is much good practice in Years 3 to 6. The teaching in these years is clearly focused on the outcomes expected for different groups of pupils. Pupils are carefully grouped to take account of their needs, for instance, ensuring that the most able are given more demanding work. Adults are effectively deployed to give support matched to learning needs.

For younger pupils, lessons run to plan and relationships are supportive. This was evident, for instance, in Years 1 and 2 when the teacher read a story she had helped some of the pupils to write. Her good reading with expression gave value to the pupils' ideas and helped to bring the story alive. However, learning is slowed in Years 1 and 2 when the whole class undertakes the same activity at a slow pace. This happens when not enough account is taken of the steps that each pupil needs to take next in learning. In addition, expectations of pupils are not always high enough.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' progress but does not provide consistent challenge for all pupils. It includes all the required subjects, and links are starting to be made between subjects to add interest for pupils. This development is particularly enlivening the learning in Years 3 to 6. Satisfactory action has been taken since the last inspection to implement the plans in place at that time to develop the use of information and communication technology. The school accommodation is used well, although there is no hall or outdoor area. Good efforts are made to overcome the limitations of the accommodation through use of the village hall for physical education. The village green and local areas are used effectively to give outdoor learning opportunities.

Enhancement of the curriculum is good, particularly through visits and visitors. Some special events have a focus linked to other cultures and some visitors extend pupils' awareness of the wider world. Nevertheless, pupils do not have enough opportunities across the curriculum to gain a real understanding of the diversity of modern society.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral care is good and almost all pupils feel that they have an adult to whom they can turn should they encounter any problems. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet requirements. Pupils are carefully supervised when crossing the road to the village green and when on the

green at playtimes. The school is a clean and safe environment. Pupils' ideas are valued. Through the pupil council, for example, they chose the colour scheme for the newly refurbished toilets.

Good partnerships with external agencies help the school to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The tracking of pupils' progress ensures that those needing extra help are identified and given an additional boost when necessary. Assessment information is used better in Years 3 to 6 than lower down the school to meet pupils' needs and to help them to take responsibility for their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Strengths in leadership include the close working relationship that the school has with almost all parents. Staff work well together to ensure that the school runs smoothly and that pupils are cared for. Community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily. The school occupies a central role in the village but is not involved sufficiently with other communities. Governance is good and governors are very supportive. Governors have some good strategies for finding out about the work of the school. One governor, for example, has interviewed all pupils about homework. The governing body is well organised, with involvement of governors in working parties as well as committees. Even so, there is scope for governors to view the school more objectively in order to sharpen the governing body's role in asking challenging questions of the headteacher and staff team.

A main reason why the school is not more effective in meeting pupils' needs is that self-evaluation is too positive. It is insufficiently analytical of the school's impact on pupils' progress. Even so, the school is readily taking on new initiatives and is keen to do the best for each pupil. It has made adequate progress since the last inspection and has maintained above average standards.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
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	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	3
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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

How good are 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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	3

The quality of provision

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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	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**

24 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Oakridge Parochial School, Stroud GL6 7NR

Thank you for helping us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you, looking at your work and seeing you in lessons and at other times. We saw that you are friendly and polite. The older pupils were particularly good at welcoming us and we were impressed by how well they led the 'wake and shake' session. We found that your school is providing you with a satisfactory education. It does some things well but there are also some things it needs to improve.

The school ensures that your personal development is good. By the time you reach Years 5 and 6, you have developed as sensible and well-rounded young people. We know that this is something that your parents are pleased about. Behaviour is good in your school and most of you behave well all of the time. You enjoy school and this can be seen in your good attendance. You know a lot about how to stay fit, healthy and safe. You do a lot to help your school. It was good to hear so much about how those of you who are older look after the younger ones.

Many of your parents told us that they appreciate the approachability of the adults. They like the family atmosphere in your school and are pleased that you are looked after well. These are the things that we have asked the school to do:

- Make sure that teaching in Reception to Year 2 is closely matched to your learning needs and that expectations of you are high enough.
- Give Reception children more opportunities to develop independence and initiative.
- Help all of you to know more about the many different backgrounds and traditions of people living in Britain today.
- Carefully check how well the school is helping you to learn so that improvements can be made quickly when necessary.

Thank you once again for helping us. You can help in future by always doing your best, by behaving well and by being kind to others.

Yours faithfully

Alison Grainger

Lead inspector