

Oakfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115993
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	326304
Inspection dates	8–9 July 2009
Reporting inspector	Margaret Dickinson HMI

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	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	203
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	Mr Andy Sutton
Headteacher	Mrs Elizabeth Smith
Date of previous school inspection	26 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Sylvia Crescent Totton Southampton SO40 3LN
Telephone number	02380 862530
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school serves families who live in and around Totton, to the west of Southampton. The balance of boys and girls is uneven in some classes, particularly Year 2, where there are many more boys than girls. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than average. The needs of these pupils are wide-ranging. There is a very small proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Reception class. The school has gained several awards, including the Activemark and the Sportsmark. A breakfast and after-school club is run on the school site. This is managed by a private provider and is inspected separately by Ofsted.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Oakfield Primary is a satisfactory school. Pupils reach average standards by Year 2 and Year 6, and achieve satisfactorily during their time in the school. The school cares for pupils well and offers them good guidance and support. This is confirmed by many parents and pupils. A notable feature is the particular help and support for pupils who have more complex needs, or may be vulnerable or are encountering challenging times in their lives. There is a strong commitment to including these pupils in school life and giving them every opportunity to experience success.

Leadership is satisfactory. There is a firm focus on pupils' well-being and enjoyment and on attention at all levels to raising standards and supporting pupils' academic achievement. This is particularly important, as pupils have not always made secure progress in recent years. The school has put energy into accelerating pupils' progress in mathematics and this has picked up considerably over the last two years. Leaders have established an effective system for tracking and monitoring pupils' progress in English and mathematics, and targeted support is provided for individual pupils where needed. A good example is reading, where most pupils who have received additional help have made accelerated progress. The school is improving and has satisfactory capacity to improve further. Leaders have rightly identified that pupils' progress in writing is not yet consistent enough between Years 3 and 6. Standards in writing are lower than they should be and some pupils, particularly in Year 5, have a lot of ground to make up to reach their target levels by the time they leave.

The school's curriculum has developed well over the past year. The school staff have revised the planning to focus more on the specific skills that pupils will learn and to develop greater links between subjects. Pupils are finding this work increasingly interesting and enjoyable. Many show very good commitment to following a healthy lifestyle and a high proportion participate in clubs, both in and out of school, that help them to keep active and fit. Pupils feel very safe in school and show very responsible attitudes to caring for themselves and for each other.

Teaching is satisfactory overall and has good features. Teachers establish good relationships with pupils and manage them well. Teaching assistants support pupils well and draw upon a range of strategies to involve individual pupils. Teachers routinely identify what is to be learnt in lessons but this is not always sufficiently sharp and focused, or varied enough, to promote effective learning. Linked to this, leaders' monitoring, while mostly accurate, does not focus rigorously enough on how well the teaching brings about secure learning for different groups.

The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. Pupils' direct support of a school in Zimbabwe is a good example of the school enabling pupils to learn about a very different community. Nevertheless, it has rightly identified that more could be done to broaden pupils' links with other areas in this country that have a greater cultural diversity than their own.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start in the Reception class and make good progress in their learning and development. They are happy to come to school each morning and learn in a welcoming and lively classroom, where routines are well established. Adults provide good support for children. Although standards do vary from year to year, children generally leave Reception exceeding the expectations for their age and with a positive approach to school life and learning.

Adults in the Reception class have good links with parents and welcome contributions from parents on their child's learning and development in the home context. A broad range of activities is planned to promote learning and development and the children's independence. The outdoor environment is also used well to encourage children to learn, explore and experiment, on their own or in a group. Children show curiosity and interest in what they are doing. They talk enthusiastically to visitors about their activities and invite them to join in. There have been some changes in teaching staff this term, as a result of the promotion of the Early Years Foundation Stage leader, and teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory. On occasions, adults miss opportunities to intervene with questions or discussion to take children's learning further, in both indoor and outdoor provision.

Children with particular learning or medical needs are supported well and their ongoing progress is recorded appropriately. However, the school does not have a sufficiently full record demonstrating the steps in individual children's progress across the six areas of learning. Despite this relative weakness, many of the systems and plans are well established and provision is good overall and is leading to good outcomes for children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and accelerate achievement in writing by ensuring that pupils make consistent progress between Years 3 and 6.
- Ensure that teachers focus sharply on what they intend different groups of pupils to learn and that they help pupils to be clearer about their own progress in lessons.
- Strengthen the rigour and impact of leaders' monitoring by ensuring a greater focus on how well pupils from different groups are learning.

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 in national tests are broadly average at both Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall from their starting points, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Test data have shown that pupils have not always made expected progress between Years 3 and 6 in the past and this is partly owing to some shortcomings in provision, which have been largely overcome. Nevertheless, pupils' progress is steadily improving. Some, particularly in Year 2, make good progress. The school is using assessments effectively to track each pupil's progress from term to term and this means that those at risk of underachieving are picked up quickly. The greatest improvement has occurred in mathematics. For example, pupils in Year 6 have made considerably better progress than in recent years, based on their test results from the end of Year 2, and more pupils have reached the nationally expected level this year in mathematics. Progress in writing has shown some improvement over the past year but it is not yet sufficiently consistent.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to school life, and their attendance is satisfactory. They are considerate towards one another and value other pupils' ideas and contributions. They

take part in activities readily and talk enthusiastically about key events such as school productions, helping to develop the school grounds and collecting donations for their friends in a Zimbabwean school. Pupils have good relationships with one another and respond well when they are asked to work with a partner in lessons. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils develop good personal and social skills. Their average standards in basic skills means they are adequately prepared for the next stage in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

In most cases, pupils show good levels of interest and motivation in lessons. Pupils in Year 5 have had several changes of teacher during this year and this has slowed down learning for some of them. This is in stark contrast to Year 2, where there is a strong emphasis on learning and succeeding. Pupils rise to this and enjoy the variety and pace of lessons. Throughout the school, some teaching makes successful links across subjects and this motivates pupils to work hard. Most activities are adapted to cater for different abilities but these are not always sufficiently clear and precise to help pupils know what they are learning and how well they are making progress in the lesson. There are some examples of effective feedback, both oral and written, although some teachers have yet to make this a consistent part of their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school has taken positive steps to develop its curriculum and has made a good start in identifying the specific skills that are to be taught through each subject. The school has also taken good account of pupils' views and responded to their ideas and suggestions on how they think their learning can be improved. The more integrated approach to planning lessons is having a positive impact on pupils' enjoyment of school and their involvement in learning. It is rather too early, however, for the revised plans to have had a clear impact on pupils' standards and achievement. Shorter-term plans, usually covering a week, do not always identify specifically enough exactly what pupils of different abilities will learn. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of additional activities and clubs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school has secure systems for ensuring pupils' welfare and to promote their well-being. The school's arrangements for appointing staff and keeping pupils safe meet requirements. Links with external agencies are well established and are used well to support pupils' individual needs. The nurture group works well, providing pupils with additional social and emotional support within a supportive atmosphere. Academic progress is satisfactorily promoted. This is an improving area for the school, as teachers focus more sharply on pupils' progress over time and take steps to address any underachievement. Many teachers set helpful targets for pupils, to involve them in their learning and let them know exactly what they need to focus on next. However, this good practice is not yet a routine part of all teachers' work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership promotes good outcomes for pupils in respect of their personal development and well-being. The school improvement plan this year has focused on improving reading, mathematics and the curriculum, and there are clear signs that actions have had an impact. The increased focus on pupils' progress has sharpened accountability and the termly meetings between senior leaders and staff, to review pupils' ongoing progress, are proving effective. Teachers know how well each pupil in their class is achieving and are alert to those who need intervention and support. Senior leaders and staff know the school has further to go to improve the consistency of pupils' progress and have rightly identified writing as a key priority next year. Governors are supportive and are developing their knowledge of standards and pupils' progress. They provide satisfactory challenge for the school.

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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?	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?	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?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
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	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?	2
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	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

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

20 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Oakfield Primary School, Southampton, SO40 3LN

It was lovely to meet you when we came to visit your school recently. Thank you very much for talking to us about your work and what it is like to be in your school. A special thank you goes to the groups of pupils who met inspectors. We would also like to thank your parents for completing our questionnaires and adding their comments.

Your school is satisfactory and is improving all the time. This is because your headteacher and senior leaders are concentrating on the right things. We saw that many of you are making better progress in mathematics and in reading. We have asked the school to work hard now on helping you to make better progress in your writing. Those of you in Year 5 need to work especially hard on this next year and do your very best when your teachers ask you to write.

We were pleased to see how committed you are to keeping healthy and we know you feel safe in school. All the adults care for you well and give you good support. We judged your behaviour to be good and were pleased to see how positive you are about school life. The new curriculum is really helping with this, as well as the clubs and extra activities that the school organises for you.

We saw some lessons where you were working really hard and enjoying learning. We have asked the teachers to be specific about what they want you to learn in all your lessons so that you are clear about what you are learning and know what you can do to make good progress. We have also asked your headteacher and senior leaders to keep an extra careful eye on how well each of you is learning when they visit lessons or look at your work.

We hope you will continue to work hard and to enjoy your school.

Yours faithfully

Margaret Dickinson

Her Majesty's Inspector