

Oakwood Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112767
Local Authority	Derby
Inspection number	338015
Inspection dates	12–13 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Marion Thompson

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	323
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ray Huckle
Headteacher	Julie Carter
Date of previous school inspection	15 November 2006
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Age group	3–7
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Nineteen lessons and parts of lessons were seen and 10 teachers were observed at least once. Informal discussions were held with a sample of parents and carers who brought their children to school. Meetings took place with the Chair of the Governing Body and one other governor, staff and groups of pupils. The inspection team observed the school's work, and looked at documentation, including that related to safeguarding, termly school improvement plans, assessment information, curricular planning, samples of pupils' work and an audit undertaken by the school. Inspectors analysed the results of the 77 Ofsted questionnaires completed by parents and carers and took account of the views expressed in staff and pupil questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the progress made by boys, pupils who are in vulnerable situations and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the contribution of subject coordinators to improving achievement in English and mathematics
- the contribution of the governing body in monitoring and supporting the work of the school.

Information about the school

This school is larger than average, with part-time Nursery provision for 78 children in a morning and afternoon session. There are three Reception classes and children come from a large number of Early Years settings. The vast majority of pupils are of White British origin. The governing body is responsible for the provision of a breakfast club catering for a small number of pupils on the school site. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average and their difficulties span a wide range of needs. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. The headteacher was appointed in January 2008 and the deputy headteacher in September 2008. Subsequently, four of the 10 teaching staff left and new appointments have been made, including the leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage who was appointed in September 2009. The vast majority of governors have joined the governing body recently.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory education. Following a period of extensive staff turnover, attainment has begun to rise. Pupils reach broadly average standards, representing satisfactory progress and achievement from their below-average starting points. Improvements have been driven by the determined leadership of the headteacher and other senior staff. Sound self-evaluation and planning have resulted in:

- robust action and skilful coaching which has ensured that teaching is satisfactory overall and none is inadequate, with an increasing proportion that is good
- careful tracking of pupils' attainment so that interventions are put in place more rapidly for those who are below national levels
- a curriculum which, although satisfactory overall, is increasingly well matched to individuals' needs
- the implementation of strategies which have improved progress, especially for boys
- effective systems which have contributed to better behaviour, reduced levels of exclusion and a significant rise in attendance to the national average
- improvement in governance, which is now satisfactory.

This clearly demonstrates that the school has sound capacity for further improvement. However, in a minority of satisfactory lessons, tasks are insufficiently challenging for the most able pupils. Despite recent improvements, boys still do not make quite as much progress as girls, especially in writing. This is often when lessons lack pace or fail to fully engage pupils' interest.

Planning in the Early Years Foundation Stage, while satisfactory, does not consistently ensure that there are sufficient opportunities for children to develop their independence by initiating activities. The use of assessment to plan activities that match children's needs is satisfactory, but inconsistent. Opportunities to develop children's skills, especially in reading and writing, in the outdoor area are somewhat limited.

Throughout school, pupils' personal development is satisfactory because of the sound support provided by staff. Pupils feel secure because their concerns are dealt with well. Pupils' broadly average skills in literacy, numeracy and information communication technology, their regular attendance, and good social skills prepare them satisfactorily for the next stage of their education.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By January 2011, improve progress by ensuring that:
- lessons consistently provide a good level of challenge for the most able pupils

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- activities, particularly those related to writing, interest all pupils, especially boys
- pupils consistently work at a brisk pace.
- By September 2010, ensure that planning in Nursery and Reception classes consistently:
 - provides sufficient opportunities for children to initiate activities and to develop independence
 - provides interesting opportunities for children to develop their skills in the outside area, especially in reading and writing.
- By Easter 2011:
 - - use assessment information to match activities closely to children's needs.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Boys do not make quite as much progress as girls in reading and writing, though the gap has narrowed considerably over the last two years, especially in relation to reading. Speaking and listening skills have also improved rapidly. Talking through ideas has contributed to significant improvements in writing, especially for boys. However, there is further to go. The few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make the same progress as their peers. In the large and increasing number of good lessons, pupils of all abilities make rapid progress. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson linked to the topic of mini-beasts, pupils of all abilities worked with great enthusiasm, developing their research skills, organising information and providing explanations. They extended their vocabulary and improved their writing skills, working confidently both independently and in groups. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are in vulnerable situations make satisfactory progress. Their needs are clearly identified and effectively targeted support is provided in lessons, often by teaching assistants. More able pupils occasionally do not make as much progress as they should, for example in developing the higher reading skill of inference or in problem solving in mathematics. Pupils enjoy their learning, contribute well to discussions and usually work hard. Occasionally, when left to work independently, they waste time, especially the boys. Behaviour is satisfactory and parents comment on how much it has improved. Pupils develop a sound understanding of how to stay healthy and enjoy the regular opportunities provided for exercise. However, they do not consistently adopt healthy eating habits at lunchtime. They have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe. Pupils make a good contribution to the school community, with even the youngest children taking responsibility for tidying up, but contribution to the wider community is more limited.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. In a Reception class children responded with wonder when observing snails and Year 2 pupils showed a good understanding of morality in discussing the need for rules. However, pupils

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understanding and experience of the range of faiths and cultures within the United Kingdom is rather limited.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

The respectful relationships between teachers and pupils provide a good basis for learning. In the growing number of good lessons, such as a Year 2 investigation into the life cycle of butterflies, exciting practical activities like taking care of caterpillars stimulate pupils' interest. In these lessons, teachers have high expectations and provide a good level of challenge for all pupils. Clear feedback in class and through marking helps pupils to improve their work but this is not consistent across the school. In satisfactory lessons pupils occasionally spend too much time listening passively. Occasionally, set tasks provide insufficient challenge for the most able although this is improving as teachers' subject knowledge improves. At times, pupils, especially boys, are allowed to work at a casual pace when they are supposed to be working independently. However, occasional difficult behaviour is managed skilfully so it does not disrupt learning.

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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The curriculum is increasingly tailored to meet pupils' needs, for example the boys' reading club. A growing number of enrichment activities enhances pupils' learning and the good range of extra-curricular clubs offered are popular. Cross-curricular topics are being developed and motivate pupils to learn, although work on this is at an early stage and the curriculum occasionally lacks challenge for the most able. An increasing focus on speaking and listening, for example through role play, is contributing to improved writing skills. Attention to emotional development is beginning to support boys' learning. The school works well with other partners to provide pastoral support for pupils and their families where they are in vulnerable circumstances. Arrangements to enhance personal development, such as the promotion of healthy lifestyles, are satisfactory, as is the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are effective links with other agencies, including medical professionals, to support pupils with physical impairment.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, supported well by the senior team, provides a strong lead in raising expectations. She has won the respect of parents and the school works well with other partners. Planning is sound and is based on accurate self-evaluation, including tracking of pupils' attainment. Subject coordinators in English and mathematics support teachers well in improving their subject knowledge. Governors provide satisfactory support to the school. They ensure that safeguarding systems operate soundly and that policies and systems, including those for child protection and recruitment are satisfactorily monitored. New governors are undergoing training to help them monitor and challenge the school more vigorously. Providing equal opportunities is central to the school's actions and discrimination is tackled rigorously on the few occasions it occurs. However, pupils' achievement remains satisfactory and there is some variation between the performance of different groups. The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. The school has audited its provision and successfully promotes shared values, such as respect for others. The needs of the local community are catered for well, for example, through the breakfast club. However, pupils' experience and understanding of the range of ethnicities and religions beyond the immediate locality is rather limited.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery and Reception with skills below those expected for their age. They get off to a sound start. However the standards they reach are still below average on entry to Year 1. Boys make slower progress than girls in personal, communication and language development, but this is beginning to improve because of the strategies the school has put in place, for example the emphasis on developing hand control through practising physical movements. Children settle quickly because staff are sensitive to their needs and form productive relationships with parents and carers. Planning is satisfactory overall. Most areas of learning are covered but the balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities varies. Occasionally children do not have enough opportunities to develop independence by choosing what they do. Opportunities to develop skills, especially in reading and writing, in the outside area, are rather limited. Adult-led activities in classrooms are often well focused and develop children's language skills well. For example, in one lesson children recounted a well-known story in detail, which led to better writing. In these sessions, activities are well matched to children's needs. However, the use of assessment to inform planning is inconsistent. Children learn to share, take turns and listen attentively. In some lessons, they are fascinated, for example by closely observing, drawing, talking and writing about snails, whilst other activities are more mundane. Areas for development have been accurately identified and the plan is being implemented. Some improvements are already evident, but it is as yet too early for the full impact to be felt.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

The inspection team endorses the positive views held by the vast majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire. They feel that their children enjoy school, are kept safe and are happy with their overall experience. A few parents feel that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Several children have very challenging behaviour and inspection findings indicate that it is dealt with skilfully. On the few occasions where bullying occurs, pupils feel it is dealt with well. A very few parents feel that the school does not take sufficient account of their suggestions and concerns. However, all parents spoken to on this subject said that they felt comfortable approaching the school with concerns and suggestions.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Oakwood Infant and Nursery School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 77 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 323 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	58	75	19	25	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	46	60	31	40	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	36	47	37	48	3	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	39	51	35	45	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	43	56	33	43	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	47	35	45	2	3	2	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	43	56	29	38	3	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	33	43	35	45	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	39	51	32	42	3	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	39	42	55	2	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	42	37	48	3	4	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	41	53	34	44	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	50	65	26	34	1	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



14 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Oakwood Infant and Nursery School, Derby, DE24 0GZ

Thank you for the pleasant welcome you gave us when we visited your school. Your views and those of your parents helped us to form our opinions, so many thanks. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education and you make sound progress. The school is improving. Children get off to a satisfactory start in the Nursery and Reception classes and settle quickly because staff take good care of them.

Across the school we were impressed with:

- the sound progress you are making and especially the improvements in boys' reading, and we know from boys' comments they enjoy reading more now
- the improvement in your behaviour and attendance and your confidence that you are kept safe
- the good care the school provides when you are unhappy or worried
- the rapid improvements in teaching and the steady improvement in the curriculum
- the strong leadership of the headteacher and senior team who are working hard to make sure things continue to improve.

We want the school to make certain that work is always challenging for you, especially if you are a quick learner, by planning activities that make you think hard. We would also like all lessons to be interesting, so that boys are keen to write. In Nursery and Reception classes we would like children to have a good balance of activities, with enough opportunities for them to decide what they are going to do. We would also like teachers to plan lessons that are pitched at the right level for all children and to plan more activities in the outside area, particularly to help you develop your reading and writing, especially if you are a boy! You can help too by reading and writing regularly at home however old you are - we know you enjoy it because you told us so.

Yours sincerely

Marion Thompson

Lead inspector

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