

# Oakridge Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115974
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	338696
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 November 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael Barron

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	8–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	201
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tim Hendle
<b>Headteacher</b>	Diane Charman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 September 2006
<b>School address</b>	Oakridge Road Basingstoke Hampshire RG21 5RR
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 12 lessons and held meetings with the chair of the governing body, the school's senior leadership team and also groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work and looked at school development planning, minutes of governors' meetings, school policies, including those associated with safeguarding procedures, assessment and tracking documentation, pupil records and samples of pupils' work. Inspectors analysed the views of parents and carers in the 49 questionnaires returned.

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

- the standard of pupils' work, especially those in Year 6, and how well teaching contributes to pupils' progress and achievement
- the impact of the school's work to promote community cohesion, especially in regard to the multicultural nature of modern British society
- the impact of changes to the leadership and management in bringing about improvements to the overall effectiveness of the school.

## Information about the school

This is an average size junior school. Pupils are almost all from White British backgrounds and nearly all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average. The school holds several awards including the Activemark award and is working towards gaining the Healthy Schools award. There have been several changes to the teaching staff since the arrival of the present headteacher, who joined the school in September 2008.

**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**

**2**

### Main findings

This is a satisfactory school which is recovering rapidly after a short period of decline following its last inspection. At the heart of this recovery is the inspirational leadership of the headteacher who has provided both the vision and driving force that underpins the improvements at the school since her appointment in 2008. She has been particularly effective in monitoring all aspects of the school's work and devising plans to address weaknesses in provision. This is reflected in rigorous and accurate school self-evaluation. She has worked well with staff and governors to embed ambition and drive improvement in a relatively short period of time. As a result, pupils are making better progress because the quality of teaching and learning has improved and standards are rising. This confirms the school's good capacity for future improvement.

Parents are very supportive of the school and praise the headteacher for the crucial role she has played in improving the quality of education provided for their children. Several parents commented that they had real concerns about the quality of teaching before the appointment of the new headteacher. The vast majority believe that teaching has improved considerably. One comment aptly summed up the positive views of the vast majority of parents. It simply read, 'There has been a marked change for the better over the last year with the appointment of the new headteacher.'

Pupils enter the school in Year 3 with standards above average for their age. They then make satisfactory progress and attain above average standards by the end of Year 6. This has not always been the case. The school's own records show that pupils have not always made the progress of which they are capable. The school has successfully eliminated any remaining pockets of underachievement by improving the quality of teaching and learning. Even so, pupils say that there are still some occasions when the work they are expected to complete in lessons, especially numeracy and literacy sessions, is either too easy or too hard. When this occurs, pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to other pupils because of the effective support they receive, as do the very small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Pupils enjoy school and this is shown in their good behaviour and attitudes to learning. They fully realise the need to stay safe and to adopt healthy lifestyles. They say they look forward to lessons because teachers usually make learning interesting. Although nearly all pupils have good attendance records a few do not. As a result, the school has implemented a series of measures to improve the attendance of pupils who go on holiday in term time. These actions have had some effect on improving the school's attendance figures, which are similar to the national average, but much still needs to be done.

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Whilst the school's creative curriculum is helping to widen pupils' horizons, pupils' knowledge and awareness of the multicultural nature of modern British society is far less well developed.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Increase the level of challenge, especially in numeracy and literacy, by ensuring that pupils are provided with work that accurately matches the different abilities within each class.
- Increase pupils' awareness and understanding of the multicultural nature of modern British society by developing links with schools or other settings in the United Kingdom which display a greater ethnic diversity.
- Raise pupils' rates of attendance by implementing effective strategies as soon as possible to ensure that fewer pupils go on holiday for extended periods within term time.

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

The school prepares pupils satisfactorily for the next stage of their education and it is evident that pupils enjoy all aspects of school, especially the wide range of extra activities provided for them in the popular after-school clubs.

Pupils believe behaviour in the school is good and has improved substantially during the last year. They fully realise the need to adopt safe practices and a healthy lifestyle and are keen to point out the benefit of a healthy diet. They are well mannered and polite and their attitudes to learning are good. However, this is not wholly reflected in their average attendance rates. Pupils say they feel very safe and well looked after and that any instances of unsocial behaviour are dealt with quickly and fairly by adults. They like their teachers and describe them as 'nice' and 'kind'. They say that the headteacher has made a real difference to the school and think that learning is now fun and that most lessons are exciting. There are occasions, however, when some pupils find the work they have to complete is too easy.

Pupils' personal development is good and this is reflected in the good quality of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In particular, the moral and social elements are strong and are fully reflected in the consideration pupils have for each other. Although pupils discuss confidently their involvement in local community events, they are far less confident when discussing the multicultural nature of modern British society.

Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to try hard and do their best. Pupils respond well when work is suitably challenging and stimulating. This was evident during a Year 6 lesson when pupils worked successfully at solving a series of ever more complicated mental arithmetic problems. Pupils in Year 3 thoroughly enjoyed the challenge to locate hoards of pirate treasure by plotting coordinates on a map; Year 4 pupils were determined to improve their dancing skill during a physical education session linked to a study of Ancient Egypt.

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Although standards in Year 6 are above average, pupils are only now beginning to make the steady progress they are capable of as they move through the school. It is evident from school tracking and assessment records that pupils have not made consistent progress in the past. However, pupils' progress is now satisfactory in all year groups. This is because the school is increasing its effectiveness under the leadership of the new headteacher. Even so, there are still occasions when pupils are not provided with work which offers them a correct degree of challenge.

Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and the very small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make satisfactory progress in learning because of the effective level of support they receive. The more able pupils make similar progress to all other pupils and there is no difference in the achievement of boys and girls.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

## How effective is the provision?

Although the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, several lessons that were observed during the inspection were of good quality. This reflects the recent

<sup>1</sup> 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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improvements in teaching noted in the parents' questionnaire replies. Teachers know their pupils well and are good at motivating them. Pupils say they enjoy learning because teachers make it 'fun'. As a result, pupils have good attitudes and work hard. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and regularly check how well pupils are coping with their work. However, there are occasions when the tasks are not sufficiently well matched to the pupils' different abilities. When this happens some pupils lose interest in what they are asked to do and their progress slows.

The school has made a good start at developing the curriculum. Subjects are being linked together to make learning more interesting and to provide more opportunities to use literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. A range of interesting visitors to the school and visits to places of interest enrich pupils' experiences and increase their understanding of the immediate world around them. Provision for personal, social and health education is good and ensures pupils are aware of the importance of keeping fit and healthy. However, pupils are not provided with regular opportunities to develop their understanding and appreciation of the diversity of cultures within modern British society.

The good level of care, guidance and support underpin the pupils' good personal development. Effective induction and transfer arrangements help pupils settle quickly into new routines. Child protection procedures are robust and meet current government requirements, whilst health and safety routines and risk assessments are fully in place. Parents value the very supportive way the school looks after their children and are confident they will always be safe and well looked after. The school works effectively with outside agencies to offer a good level of care and support to families and pupils who are facing challenging circumstances.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

The good quality of leadership and management is reflected in the thoroughness of the school's self-evaluation and also the quality of development planning. The headteacher has worked hard to successfully improve the effectiveness of the school since her appointment. She has been well supported by the governing body, which offers a good level of support and challenge to the school and takes its duties seriously. However, even though governors admit that, 'We took our eye off the ball and let standards slip,' during the period preceding the appointment of the present headteacher, individual

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governors are once again playing an active role in monitoring the school's performance. Much work has been done to re-build links with parents, particularly those who have criticised the school in the past or who have had doubts about becoming involved in school life. Parents value the way in which the school is now keeping them informed and including them in their children's learning. They appreciate the effective way in which the school tackles discrimination and makes sure all pupils are given equal opportunities to succeed. This has been a key factor in building pupils' self esteem, regardless of their backgrounds or abilities, so pupils feel they are an important part of the school and enjoy learning. As one girl in Year 3 stated, 'I really like school and enjoy learning and I even try to come when I am ill'.

Links with external agencies and partnerships with other institutions are used effectively to support pupils' learning and well-being. Resources are used well and safeguarding procedures are good and meet all current requirements. All staff and governors receive regular training about safeguarding and child protection and are well aware of the importance of their roles in keeping pupils safe and well protected.

The school's work in promoting community cohesion is satisfactory. Links with the local community are used well to develop pupils' understanding of different types of people and also shared community values. However, pupils' appreciation of the diversity of cultures and beliefs in the wider national community is not as well developed as their understanding of the range of cultures and beliefs in other countries.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

**Views of parents and carers**

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The overwhelming majority of the parents hold very positive views about the school. Several parents commented favourably about how well the school had improved since the appointment of the present headteacher and all parents thought that the quality of teaching was now good. A few parents expressed some concerns. Of these, some felt the school did not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour, although pupils thought that behaviour had improved considerably over the last year. A very small minority of parents felt the school did not prepare their children effectively for the future or always take their views into account. Inspectors considered these comments and judged that the school deals with unacceptable behaviour well, prepares pupils effectively for the future, and takes parents views into account on a regular basis.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Oakridge Junior 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 49 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 207 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	25	50	23	46	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	25	50	24	48	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	27	54	21	42	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	50	22	44	2	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	24	48	24	48	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	48	23	46	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	34	27	54	3	6	1	2
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)	18	36	20	40	4	8	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	48	24	48	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	32	24	48	6	12	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	36	25	50	3	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	25	50	21	42	2	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	52	22	44	1	2	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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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 November 2009

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Oakridge Junior School, Basingstoke RG21 5RR

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. Everyone was really friendly. We enjoyed talking to you about what you like the most about school and seeing you all working hard in lessons. We found your school to be a satisfactory and improving school.

Here are some of the highlights of your school.

- Your school takes good care of you and makes sure that you are all safe and well looked after.
- Your teachers try to make lessons interesting.
- You behave well and you are very friendly, caring and polite.
- You have a very good understanding of the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle.
- You enjoy school and you all say that you like your teachers.
- Your headteacher, teachers and governors lead and manage the school well and are working hard to make sure it continues to improve.

We believe your headteacher and teachers can make your school even better. We have asked them to do three things:

- ensure that the work that teachers plan is challenging for everyone in the class and that it is not too hard and not too difficult. This will help all of you learn even faster
- help you to find out more about the customs and traditions of people in the United Kingdom including those from different cultural backgrounds than your own
- make sure that pupils do not go on holiday during term times.

Once again, thank you for making us feel so welcome in your school and remember you can help your school to get even better by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Michael Barron

Lead inspector

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