

# Oak Wood Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	134110
<b>Local Authority</b>	Warwickshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	341430
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 March 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judith Charlesworth

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>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	88
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Bob Gilbert
<b>Headteacher</b>	RoseMarie Scott
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	Morris Drive Nuneaton CV11 4QH
<b>Telephone number</b>	02476 740907
<b>Fax number</b>	02476 740921
<b>Email address</b>	scott.r@we-learn.com

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Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

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E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. About one third of their time was spent looking at learning in all nine classes and in additional special groups. Ten teachers and two teaching assistants were observed leading these lessons. Additional time was spent looking at and discussing records of learning. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, governors and educational and administrative staff. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents including the school's safeguarding policies and procedures, analyses of progress, systems for tracking and improving teaching and learning, and the school improvement plan. Fifty parents' and carers' questionnaires together with comments were read, and the analysis of staff and pupil questionnaires evaluated.

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

- the effectiveness of provision and quality of outcomes for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties
- why achievement in science has been less good than in English and mathematics
- how well the school is doing in its aim to establish a 'communication-friendly environment' to support pupils' understanding and communication skills.

## Information about the school

Oak Wood Primary School opened in January 2006 in a new purpose-built building that it shares with Oak Wood Secondary School. Each school is housed in a separate wing and they have a number of specialist facilities in common. The two schools are federated and share the same headteacher and governing body. The headteacher is retiring at the end of the forthcoming summer term.

The school caters for pupils with a wide range of difficulties. Half the pupils have severe learning difficulties (SLD), one fifth have moderate learning difficulties (MLD) and about one pupil in ten has profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). Over one quarter of pupils also have autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) and this number is increasing steadily. Small numbers of pupils have other complex needs such as challenging behaviour and significant medical needs. Four pupils are looked after by the local authority. The great majority of pupils are of White British origin with very small numbers of pupils from four minority ethnic backgrounds. There are three times as many boys as girls at Oak Wood, which is typical for schools of this type. There are nine children in the Early Years Foundation Stage who attend the school's Reception class full-time.

A local authority specialist Nursery is located at the school. Up to ten children attend part-time in either the mornings or afternoons while their special educational needs are assessed and suitable school placements are determined. Children may have dual placements with mainstream settings. There are currently 17 children in the Nursery. The school also hosts a privately-run after school club on three days a week.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Oak Wood is a good school that puts pupils' learning and well-being at the heart of its work. Their achievement and personal development are good. The school has improved considerably since the last inspection and has good capacity for further sustained improvement. The outstanding senior leadership team is driving the pursuit of excellence, and has set an ambitious agenda for improvement and development. This has been very successful and has, for example, resulted in considerable improvement in the quality of teaching and learning over the past three years. Pupils make good progress overall. An increasing number of staff from all disciplines contribute effectively to the school's developing practices. Self-evaluation is robust. Data on a number of aspects, such as pupils' and teachers' performance and parents' attendance at events, are regularly gathered. Analysis is extensive and presented to the staff and governors in reports that underpin challenging targets and help all to understand what needs to be done to improve the school further. This is a significant improvement. New policies and practices are often put into place as a result of such analyses. For example, a focused drive to improve pupils' attendance has resulted in attendance that is broadly in line with the national average, which is a considerable achievement for a special school of this type. The governing body has provided effective support and challenge in establishing and taking the new school forward. Members understand the school's strengths and weaknesses and what it needs to do to improve. However, some aspects of the governing body's work are insufficiently systematic for them to have maximum effect. For example, not all governors' visits have a clear focus to support the first-hand evaluation of the school's work, and the impact of policies and practices on the school's effectiveness is not sufficiently well considered.

The school promotes equal opportunities for pupils' learning and well-being extremely well. There is a strong drive for inclusion, both within school and outside. For example, previously identified inequalities in the progress of pupils with PMLD and in science are being effectively addressed through careful planning, action and monitoring. Improvements are already evident and the path for further improvement, particularly in provision for pupils with PMLD, is clearly set. The school has outstanding local links and mutually beneficial partnerships which support pupils' education and well-being. It is effectively developing further national and global links in order to support the pupils' social and cultural development and the school's duty to promote community cohesion in wider contexts. Some excellent work has taken place to develop a 'communication-friendly' environment that supports most pupils' understanding through the extensive use of symbols, signing, and attractive, purposeful, uncluttered classrooms. However, support for the understanding and communication of pupils with

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PMLD is variable. The rich and creative specialist nursery provides an outstanding service for the children, their parents and carers and the local community.

The quality of teaching and use of assessment to support planning for learning are good overall. Consequently, activities are usually well matched to pupils' needs and they enjoy their lessons and learn well. The curriculum is enriched by the school's numerous links, partnerships and creative opportunities which contribute very effectively to pupils' real enjoyment of school. Pupils' good personal development is due to excellent relationships with staff and the outstanding support, care and guidance they receive. Many give support back to their peers, for example, by being advocates for one another. As a result, pupils feel completely happy and safe at school and most understand clearly what they should do to live healthy lives.

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

- Improve governance by
  - developing a more systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating the school's work and progress through governors' visits
  - evaluating the impact of the school's policies and practices on its effectiveness.
- Improve the consistency of support for pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties to ensure that every opportunity to promote understanding, communication and learning is fully used.
- Develop cultural links and partnerships to increase pupils' experience and understanding of our multicultural and multi-faith world.

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

**2**

Pupils' attainment on entry varies very widely, but it is always below that expected for their age and usually low due to their complex needs. Despite good progress, pupils' attainment, understandably, remains low. Records show that most pupils in all groups reach their personal, annual and statutory targets, and make good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities. The school identified slower progress made by pupils with PMLD and in science. These are being addressed by a number of changes to provision, such as curriculum development, staff training and the way in which pupils' developing skills are assessed and tracked. Pupils build up their skills, knowledge and understanding systematically and learning in lessons is generally good. This is evident in the pupils' good behaviour, enjoyment and positive attitudes. On one occasion, for example, a small group of pupils laughed with pure joy as they joined in the chorus of a number story 'Roll over! Roll over!' They successfully counted the number of bears left after one had 'fallen out of bed' and selected the correct numeral to indicate how many were left.

Pupils' questionnaire returns indicate that they feel safe in school and have a good understanding of what constitutes safe behaviour. There have been no incidents of bullying or harassment and members of the school council said firmly that their friends

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are always nice to them. Higher attaining pupils are confident enough to ask staff for help and to approach them about anything, including making suggestions about how to make the school better. Pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable show complete trust and confidence in the staff to interpret their needs. Pupils' views are constantly sought. For example, they have just voted between two possible formats for new playground equipment using symbol-based voting sheets. Pupils understand that eating sensibly and plenty of exercise helps them stay healthy. They participate enthusiastically in sporting, playground and physical activities such as Rebound therapy. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their self-confidence and self-esteem grow as they mature. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong, take responsibility for their own actions and are proud of their achievements. Their behaviour is good. Pupils are benefiting from the school's developing national and global links. During the inspection, for example, pupils received their first letter from a Ugandan boy who described how dogs chased away monkeys at their school - a rather different picture of school life from that at Oak Wood.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	*
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</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>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3

<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.

\* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

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<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>
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### How effective is the provision?

Teaching is effective because lessons are generally well planned to help pupils learn and make progress. Occasionally, however, learning objectives are not specific enough to support individuals to the maximum, or to be able to measure tiny steps of progress. However, improving this has been a focus of the leadership team, and such incidences are decreasing. Teachers, including support staff who lead lessons, are enthusiastic and creative. They make excellent use of resources such as symbol communication systems which, for example, support some pupils to read simple sentences and help many to understand the structure of the day to minimise anxiety. Behaviour is very well managed and teaching assistants provide good and sometimes outstanding support for behaviour and learning. These factors make a strong contribution to pupils' positive attitudes. Throughout the school the curriculum is well planned to meet individuals' needs. The curriculum has an appropriate topic-based approach which links subjects together and makes them enjoyable for pupils. A strong emphasis is placed on the development of key skills such as communication and problem solving, and on pupils' personal development. Good use is made of the community to provide real-life experiences in which pupils can practise their developing skills. The curriculum is currently under extensive redevelopment in preparation for the introduction of the New Primary National Curriculum in 2011.

The school has outstanding consideration for the well-being of each pupil and they are very well safeguarded and cared for. The school has gained the Healthy Schools and Bronze Eco awards which have benefited pupils considerably. Child protection is very robust and partnerships with numerous external agencies support pupils, and parents and carers very effectively. Partnerships with parents and carers are given a high priority and they and their children are given very good support at times of transition in and out of the school. Additional support and guidance are offered through activities such as Early Bird (for parents of pupils with ASD) and the work of the pastoral support manager.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

### How effective are leadership and management?

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The senior leaders have high ambitions for the pupils. They relentlessly seek to improve the provision so that all pupils have the best possible outcomes and do not suffer discrimination, now or in the future. Effective professional development empowers staff and spreads expertise, for example enabling support staff to take the lead in some aspects of communication teaching and therapy provision. The management and evaluation of teaching and learning are very effective and both are improving steadily as a result of the school's approach. Data analysis is rigorous and informs planning for improvement to address weaknesses. A number of management responsibilities such as health and safety and sustainability have been devolved to the business manager who is a member of the senior leadership team. This practice strengthens the overall effectiveness of the team and has supported the school in gaining several awards including the Financial Management Standards in Schools. Other members have more time to concentrate on different aspects of provision, such as curriculum development and performance management. It supports immediate, informative links between improvement planning and available financial resources, which are very well used and managed. Governors do not evaluate the impact of the school's policies and practices such as those relating to safeguarding and community cohesion sufficiently well. However, in other respects safeguarding procedures are wide-reaching and extremely rigorous. The school promotes community cohesion well. National and global links are developing and the school has a clear picture of the social, ethnic and faith contexts of its pupils. The school is working very successfully to promote equality of opportunity for pupils in all groups.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<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>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>



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## Early Years Foundation Stage

The specialist Nursery provides children with high quality care, teaching, therapy and learning support set within a rich and stimulating environment. All areas of learning are addressed effectively through focused work and well-devised play activities that are freely available to the children, both indoors and outside. These include, for example, role play, planting and watering seeds, the use of large wheeled toys and looking at books. The children very much enjoy Nursery and settle quickly. They make good progress overall, and often outstanding progress in the key skills of personal, social and emotional development and communication. There is a marked difference in the skills and development of the younger children, who have just started Nursery, and those who have been there for a year or so. Children in the Reception class make good progress and some show near age-appropriate skills, such as recognising words and playing turn-taking games. They benefit from the good quality teaching, and are secure, happy and comfortable in this environment. However, there is insufficient opportunity for these children to have free access to role play and creative activities, particularly outdoors.

Leadership and management are good. In some aspects they are outstanding. The Early Years Foundation Stage leader supports mainstream nursery settings and provides training and support for staff in the main school. All the welfare requirements for the age group are met through the school's high quality guidance, policies and procedures. The Nursery children benefit greatly from the school's provision and resources, and the specialist Nursery provides an outstanding model of practice. However, its formal position in relation to the Reception class is not always sufficiently clear as it is considered as both a separate entity and an integral part of the school's Early Years Foundation Stage. Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage, relationships with staff are outstanding and supportive partnerships are established with parents and carers. The specialist nursery's core purpose of assessment is achieved through extensive observations and numerous professional assessments. These effectively support the children's smooth transition into their next educational placement, including the Reception class, from which children leave well prepared for Key Stage 1.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

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Over half of the parents and carers responded to the inspection questionnaire. A very small number had concerns about certain aspects of the school's work, but the great majority were very positive. All questionnaires showed that parents and carers are happy with their children's experience at the school. They indicate that their children enjoy school and are safe there. All respondents consider the school to be well led and managed, that teaching is good and that it helps their children to be healthy. All say that the school takes account of their suggestions and concerns. Typical comments received include 'I can sleep well at night because I know my child is in safe hands at Oakwood' and 'The school has been my child's saviour'. The inspection findings support the parents' and carers' positive comments.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Oak Wood Primary 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 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 88 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	39	78	10	20	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	38	76	11	22	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	35	70	13	26	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	64	15	30	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	36	72	12	24	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	68	12	24	3	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	74	12	24	0	0	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)	29	59	13	27	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	40	80	8	16	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	65	12	24	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	36	72	11	22	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	36	72	10	20	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	41	82	9	18	0	0	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 pupils' 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.**



19 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Oak Wood Primary School, Nuneaton, CV11 4QH

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school earlier this week. We enjoyed talking to you and visiting some of your lessons, playtimes and the school council meeting. We are pleased to tell you that you go to a good school. Your questionnaires and conversations tell us that you know this already, and almost all of your parents and carers agree too.

These are the things that are particularly good about your school:

- you learn well and make good progress
- your personal development is good
- the way you know about staying safe and healthy is outstanding
- you enjoy school very much and behave well in lessons and when playing
- you are very kind to one another
- the staff care for you very well in all ways and keep you very safe
- teaching is good, and you get good support for learning
- the staff give you lots of interesting things to do
- the school is very well led and managed
- the staff and leaders are keen to make the school even better than it already is.

I have asked the school to do three things to improve, these are:

- to improve the work of the governors
- to make sure that those of you who find learning, understanding and communicating most difficult always get enough help
- to develop the school's links with other societies and cultures.

I wish you all the best for your future lives.

Yours sincerely

Judith Charlesworth

Lead inspector

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