

Oakfield Primary School

Sylvia Crescent, Totton, Southampton, Hampshire SO40 3LN

Inspection dates

5–6 June 2018

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- There has been an absence of effective leadership during the four years since the last inspection. The school has lacked direction, purpose and vision. Leaders had not sustained good teaching and learning or halted the decline in pupils' outcomes or behaviour.
- Until recently, leaders and governors have not had an accurate view of the school's performance. Their ability to check the quality of teaching and keep a close eye on pupils' progress has been constrained by the lack of reliable assessment information.
- Progress in reading, writing, mathematics and science is too variable. The standards achieved by pupils in key stage 1 and key stage 2 are lower than those expected for their age.
- Although parents and pupils think that behaviour has improved, many consider the attention given to pupils' concerns, including bullying, is not consistently effective.
- Teachers in key stage 1 do not routinely use assessment to plan learning and set tasks that meet the individual needs of pupils. They do not have sufficiently high expectations of pupils, particularly the most able.
- Leaders and governors have not ensured that the school provides a curriculum that leads to good progress in different subjects and systematically promotes pupils' personal development.
- Teaching in the early years is not strong enough to ensure that children are sufficiently challenged to achieve well, especially when choosing their own activities.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher and subject leaders have an accurate picture of the school's weaknesses and are beginning to bring about improvements. They have united the staff team and injected a sense of common purpose.
- Teaching in key stage 2 is improving rapidly, resulting in pupils making stronger progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities benefit from effective support.
- Behaviour is improving. Pupils are polite and friendly and feel safe. Attendance has improved and is above average.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' achievement in reading, writing, mathematics and science so that all groups of pupils reach their potential.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - assessment systems provide accurate information to enable leaders and governors to gain a precise view of the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' performance and plan accordingly
 - the school's curriculum is tailored so that it meets the needs of pupils and includes planned opportunities for the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and their understanding of fundamental British values.
- Improve teaching and learning, particularly in key stage 1, by ensuring that:
 - staff have high expectations of what pupils, including the most able, can achieve
 - activities in reading, writing and mathematics are appropriately matched to pupils' abilities and previous learning
 - teachers have a clear understanding of what pupils need to learn next
 - teachers check pupils' learning in lessons and, where work is too easy or too hard, amend learning activities appropriately
 - pupils' understanding of what they are reading is checked effectively to strengthen their vocabulary and comprehension.
- Improve early years provision by ensuring that adults:
 - help children to select activities which will challenge and develop their skills and understanding
 - ensure that children's work in mathematics is sufficiently challenging.

An external review of the school's use of pupil premium funding should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, pupils' achievement declined significantly. Leaders and governors were slow to pick this up before the local authority stepped in and prompted decisive action.
- The newly appointed headteacher has been quick to develop an accurate view of the school. She has identified areas for development and prioritised them appropriately. She has high aspirations for pupils and staff and is committed to improving teaching in all classes and accelerating all pupils' progress. In the short time that she has been leading the school, she has had a significant impact on pupils' behaviour and staff morale.
- The recently appointed English and mathematics leaders have begun to check the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. They have led several training sessions for staff. The impact of these is evident in the improving teaching in key stage 2. The high level of staff turnover in key stage 1 has meant that leaders' influence in this phase has been minimal.
- Leaders acknowledge that assessment is not accurate enough to provide a clear overview of pupils' progress in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The work in pupils' books does not reflect teachers' assessments, which are typically over-generous.
- Until recently, leaders and governors have not carefully evaluated the impact of pupil premium funding on disadvantaged pupils' outcomes. They do not have a clear view of which strategies work best to ensure that additional funds are used effectively.
- In the past, leaders have not held teachers to account for the progress that pupils make. The headteacher has rightly identified this as a priority. She has instigated a more rigorous system to check pupils' progress at regular intervals and to identify where teachers need further training.
- Strong leadership of the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities helps to ensure that they are well supported and that their progress towards their individual targets is tracked. This helps leaders to check how effective the provision is in raising the achievement of this group of pupils.
- Pupils' books indicate a widening of the curriculum. This was evident as pupils were enjoying a day in role as pupils in a Victorian school. Curriculum plans include enrichment activities such as this, but lack information about the knowledge, understanding and skills pupils are intended to acquire. Pupils said they were disappointed in the recent decline in the number of extra-curricular clubs.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is not planned systematically. Similarly, pupils gain an understanding of fundamental British values on an ad hoc basis rather than through a carefully planned approach.
- Until recently, the impact of the primary physical education (PE) and sport premium was not evaluated. The PE leader took on the role of overseeing the use of the additional funds in January. He has produced a succinct action plan, with measurable targets. A 'golden mile' challenge has been introduced and the school is now linked

with a local sports partnership. This is providing more opportunities for inter-school competition and training for pupils in sports leadership.

- Most parents and carers who spoke to inspectors were generally positive about the school. In contrast, parents' responses to Ofsted's online survey were very mixed. Although the large majority felt their children were happy and safe, around half did not agree that the school was well led. A similar proportion did not agree that behaviour was managed well. Parents' written comments were also variable. A common theme was the positive impact of the new headteacher and the improvements she has made, particularly in pupils' behaviour.
- Responses to the pupil survey were generally positive, although some questions drew more negative replies, including pupils' involvement in activities outside of lessons. Individual concerns raised by pupils were followed up during the inspection.

Governance of the school

- The governing body commissioned a review of governance at the beginning of the school year. Since then, they have taken effective steps, with the support of the local authority, to bring about improvements. They have recruited a new headteacher and have strengthened leadership through the appointment of a temporary deputy headteacher and subject leaders.
- Governors are now aware of the school's underperformance. They have gained deeper insight by visiting the school alongside subject leaders and through feedback from specialists brokered through the local authority.
- Minutes of governing body meetings show that governors are asking more challenging questions of leaders about the actions taken to raise achievement. Governors receive comprehensive reports from the headteacher on pupils' performance. However, they are aware that doubts about the accuracy of assessment information constrain their ability to hold the school to account.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Meticulous background checks are made on staff, governors and regular visitors, and detailed records are maintained. All staff receive annual update training for safeguarding. Leaders who are responsible for safeguarding work effectively alongside external partners and agencies to ensure that pupils and families get the support they need.
- A governor is trained in safer recruitment procedures. All staff and governors are trained in safeguarding, including the 'Prevent' duty.
- Pupils are taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including how to stay safe online. Risk assessments are in place to keep pupils safe in school and when they leave the school's site.
- The site is secure and maintained in a safe, clean and tidy condition.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- The quality of teaching in key stage 1 is not effective enough and, as a result, pupils are making inadequate progress. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. Pupils are not sufficiently challenged. This is especially the case for those pupils whose attainment was broadly average as they entered Year 1.
- In Year 1, pupils too often complete the same tasks regardless of their different abilities. Support staff are generally deployed well and provide effective guidance for small groups during lessons. Other pupils, including those who find learning difficult, are often left to their own devices with no support or prompts to help them get started.
- Phonics skills are not taught effectively enough to enable most pupils in Year 1 to become confident when reading or writing unfamiliar words. Pupils with broadly average starting points are not given sufficient guidance in using their phonics skills when writing. Pupils said they would like teachers to hear them read more frequently. Inspectors found that some pupils read without fully understanding the text.
- Following frequent staff changes, more effective teaching in Year 2 is leading to more sustained progress in writing. For example, pupils are being challenged and supported to use different tenses and construct more complex sentences.
- During mathematics lessons, pupils are not typically provided with practical apparatus to support their understanding of key number facts, and their basic skills are not always firmly established before teachers move on to something new. Pupils in key stage 1 have too few opportunities to apply their numeracy skills to solve mathematical problems.
- Improvements in the quality of teaching are evident in key stage 2. Pupils develop mature attitudes to learning and most try hard. When discussing the use of rhetorical questions, for example, one pupil in Year 5 remarked, 'They pull you in like a fishing line.' Teachers in key stage 2 frequently pitch work which challenges all groups of pupils, although, occasionally, pupils find starting activities too easy or too difficult.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are supported well in the classroom. Pupils who have social, emotional and mental health needs benefit from sensitive support which, for the most part, enables them to be included in lessons and work calmly alongside their classmates.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils who spoke to inspectors, and the vast majority who responded to the Ofsted survey, said that they feel safe in school. Most parents agreed, although some raised individual concerns. The views of parents and pupils regarding the school's response to bullying were less positive. Some felt that their concerns were not followed up

appropriately.

- Vulnerable pupils and those with highly complex needs are looked after with great care and attention. Pastoral staff liaise with external agencies, ensuring that the most appropriate support reaches families in a timely manner.
- Staff have taken part in a range of appropriate training, including aspects of behaviour management, giving feedback to pupils and e-safety. The recently introduced behaviour policy is being implemented effectively by staff. Incidents, the actions of staff and their follow-up are recorded systematically.
- The well-attended breakfast and after-school clubs provide a safe haven and contribute to pupils' welfare. Pupils were unhappy about the reduction in after-school clubs, and older pupils said they missed opportunities to work alongside younger children.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Parents, staff and pupils said that behaviour had improved significantly since the appointment of the new headteacher. However, over half of the pupils responding to the inspection survey indicated a concern about behaviour, selecting the response that behaviour around the school was 'sometimes good'. A similar proportion of parents did not feel that the school makes sure pupils are well behaved.
- During the inspection, pupils were friendly, polite and courteous. They typically behaved well, for example in corridors, during lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Occasionally, pupils disengaged from learning when tasks were not well matched to their needs.
- When discussing behaviour with inspectors, pupils said that behaviour is mixed. They felt that behaviour had improved since the new headteacher had arrived. One remarked, 'Behaviour has really picked up and is dealt with now.' Pupils said that racist and homophobic comments are rare.
- Pupils' attendance has improved and is now above the national average. The attendance of those pupils who were frequently absent has also improved.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Pupils' achievement has declined in recent years. In 2016 and 2017, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standards in all three of reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 was well below average. Progress through key stage 2 was much slower than average, particularly in reading. Current pupils in key stage 2 are making better progress, although weaknesses remain, particularly in reading and writing.
- Although key stage 1 pupils have recently begun to make stronger progress, the overall progress of current Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, from their starting points, is weak. Outcomes at the end of key stage 1 have significantly declined in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check remains below the national average.

- Pupils in Year 1 lack confidence in writing and mathematics because of their weak basic skills. Their ability to write simple sentences independently is limited. Pupils' instant recall of number facts, such as $6+4=10$ and $7+3=10$, is weak. Although pupils' progress in Year 2 has recently accelerated, gaps in their previous learning are evident, indicating a slow rate of progress.
- In recent years, pupils whose attainment was broadly average at the end of Year 2 have not typically reached their potential in reading, writing or mathematics by the end of Year 6. Due to improvements in teaching, pupils' progress is stronger through key stage 2, but a legacy of underachievement means that gaps in pupils' learning remain.
- In the current classes in key stage 2, pupils' comprehension skills, such as drawing inferences from text and identifying the literary devices authors use, are not well developed. Although some pupils write with considerable flair, using language and complex sentences effectively, this is not typical. The standard of pupils' written work varies in quality, with limited evidence of high-quality work.
- Much of the pupil premium funding has been spent on additional staff, nurture groups, subsidising educational visits and enrichment activities. This is having some impact on improving outcomes in writing and mathematics, but differences in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally remain wide in reading.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities benefit from effective support to help them overcome social, emotional and physical barriers to learning. The school's records indicate that these pupils generally make at least adequate progress.
- There is no accurate assessment information about achievement in science across the school. Pupils' science workbooks include examples of practical work and some good opportunities for them to use skills such as data-handling. However, the standard of work evident does not correlate with school's assessment that attainment in science is above average.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- There are no reliable records of the assessments of children's personal development, language and numeracy skills as they enter Reception. This limits leaders' ability to evaluate the impact of teaching on children's development.
- The proportion of children expected to reach a good level of development is broadly in line with the national average. The school's assessment records indicate that children's progress has improved recently due to improvements in the quality of teaching. From observations of children during lessons and looking at their current work, inspectors found that the rate of children's progress is improving.
- Leaders have ensured that early years provides children with a safe and happy learning environment. Children behave well and share strong, trusting relationships with adults so that they develop confidence and resilience.
- Children enjoy learning in the indoor and outdoor areas, although teaching is not consistently strong enough to enable children to make good progress. Planning does not set out what teachers expect children to learn from the range of activities on offer. Adults allow children to drift from activity to activity without sufficient challenge or communicating clearly what they are intended to learn from each experience.

- The small outdoor space has a reasonable range of resources, but leaders acknowledge that it does not provide a stimulating environment for learning. Some resources are poorly maintained and do not excite or encourage pupils' learning. Where staff set up tasks with specific objectives, children's learning improves. Children were fascinated, for example, when tracing the paths of snails to see which kind of vegetation attracted them. The teacher effectively encouraged their use of descriptive language, using words such as 'slowly' and 'slimy'.
- Due to well-planned phonics teaching, children make a good start in using letters and sounds to read and write simple words in preparation for their transition to Year 1. During other adult-led activities, expectations are sometimes too low. For example, in their numeracy work, children were using the numbers one to 10, rather than being challenged to work up to 20 and beyond.

School details

Unique reference number	115993
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10040708

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	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martyn Ashmead
Headteacher	Marcella Dobson
Telephone number	023 8086 2530
Website	www.oakfieldpri.co.uk/
Email address	admin@oakfield.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5–6 March 2014

Information about this school

- The school is larger than average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- Around a quarter of the pupils are disadvantaged, which is broadly average.
- There are breakfast and after-school clubs managed by the governing body and run by the school's staff.
- The school does not meet the government's floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress for the end of key stage 2.
- The school was led jointly on a temporary basis by two headteachers from September 2017 to the end of the spring term. The current headteacher took up post at the beginning of the summer term.

- The local authority is providing support for school leaders.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all year groups, visiting 15 lessons and a range of small-group activities. Most observations were undertaken jointly with the headteacher or acting deputy headteacher.
- Inspectors met with members of the governing body and had discussions with two representatives of the local authority.
- Meetings were also held with pupils to discuss their views on their learning and well-being, and with parents to gain their views about the school.
- Inspectors met pupils from Years 1, 2 and 6 to discuss their reading. They talked to pupils at breaktimes, in lessons and as they moved around the school.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents, including: information on pupils' performance across the school; improvement plans; school leaders' evaluation of teaching and learning; and curriculum plans.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of pupils' books to see what progress had been made across a range of subjects.
- Inspectors took account of the 69 responses to the Ofsted parent survey, Parent View, including 35 free-text comments, the 22 responses to the staff survey, and the 68 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

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