

Inspection of Oakdale School

Cheetham Hill Road, Dukinfield, Cheshire SK16 5LD

Inspection dates:	29 and 30 April 2025
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are well cared for at Oakdale Primary. Staff's welcoming smiles and warm greetings each morning ensure that pupils benefit from a positive start to each school day. Staff know pupils and their needs well. This helps pupils to feel safe and happy.

The school provides pupils with the support that they need to manage their behaviour in lessons and around the school. Staff respond calmly and understand pupils' individual needs. They support pupils to positively respond to the school's high expectations of behaviour.

The school also sets high expectations for pupils' achievement. However, these expectations are not met fully. This is because, over time, pupils have not benefited from an ambitious curriculum that builds their knowledge. Pupils' achievement is uneven as a result.

Pupils benefit from a wide variety of experiences. This includes opportunities to take part in the outdoor learning activities in a neighbouring school. They also enjoy meeting visitors to school, such as from a local brass band at Christmas.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school has recently reviewed the design of the curriculum to better meet the increase in pupils' complex special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, this has led to a curriculum that is over complicated and in places difficult for staff to understand. At times, the revised curriculum lacks sufficient ambition for pupils' learning in Years 1 to 6 and in the early years.

The school has not made clear what pupils should learn and when this content should be taught. This hinders teachers from designing learning that successfully builds pupils' knowledge and skills over time. This means that, in some subjects, pupils are not prepared for future learning. This is also true in the early years, where weaknesses in the curriculum mean that some learning activities are not successful in helping children to secure the skills and knowledge they need.

The school has prioritised the teaching of phonics. A love of reading begins in the early years, where children experience a wide range of stories, songs and rhymes. The introduction of a new phonics scheme has had a positive impact on pupils' reading success. Staff deliver the school's phonics programme well. Effective support helps pupils who find reading difficult to catch up and develop their reading skills and fluency.

The lack of clarity within the curriculum beyond phonics, means that staff are not clear enough about how to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. As a result, pupils' misconceptions are not addressed as swiftly as they should be. Pupils continue to develop gaps in their knowledge. This makes their future learning insecure.

The environment around the school is calm. Pupils who struggle to regulate their behaviour during the school day receive prompt and effective support from staff, who are sensitive to their needs.

Pupils' attendance at school is a high priority. Effective processes are in place to challenge any absence. The school supports pupils and their families to find solutions to improve attendance when it falls short of the high expectations that are set.

The comprehensive personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme supports pupils' personal development effectively. Pupils benefit from a wide range of experiences and opportunities that enhance their learning. This includes working alongside pupils in other primary schools and taking part in inter-school competitions in the local area.

Governors understand their responsibilities. They carry out their statutory duties appropriately. The school has listened to staff concerns. It is taking effective actions to support staff's workload and well-being. Many staff appreciate the changes that have been made to support them.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The revised curriculum is over complicated, which makes it difficult for teachers to know what pupils should learn. Sometimes, it lacks sufficient ambition for pupils, including children in the early years. This hinders some pupils from achieving as highly as they could. The school should ensure that the curriculum provided enables all pupils to gain the depth of knowledge and skills they require for their next stage of learning.
- In some subjects, the school has not considered the most important knowledge that pupils should learn and the order in which subject content should be taught. This prevents teachers from designing learning that builds pupils' knowledge over time. The school should finalise the curriculum content in these subjects, to ensure that teachers are clear about the most important knowledge and skills pupils must learn and when they should learn it.
- The checks on pupils' learning do not fully identify gaps in their knowledge. This prevents pupils from achieving as highly as they could. The school should ensure that teachers are able to check that pupils have gained the knowledge that is intended and that any gaps are identified and addressed effectively.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	106281
Local authority	Tameside
Inspection number	10337640
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	171
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sara Rodway
Headteacher	Tina Tray
Website	www.oakdale.tameside.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	13 and 14 September 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school caters for pupils with specific and profound learning difficulties and autism. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school does not make use of alternative providers.
- At the time of the inspection there were no two-year-old children attending the school.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation of the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in these subjects: early reading, physical development, communication and interaction and PSHE. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders and teachers. They visited lessons, looked at examples of pupils' and children's work and talked with groups of pupils about their learning.
- The lead inspector observed pupils read to a familiar adult. Inspectors also spoke with pupils about their learning and evaluated their work in some other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other school leaders.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative the local authority, the school improvement partner and members of the governing body.
- Inspectors talked with staff about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors met with the leaders who are responsible for attendance, behaviour, early years, SEND and pupils' personal development.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture of safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils and observed their behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start of the school day and took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses.

Inspection team

Lee Comber, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Gary Anders	Ofsted Inspector
Cath Cooke	Ofsted Inspector

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