

Oakhill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	130341
Local authority	Barnsley
Inspection number	381262
Inspection dates	4–5 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Mark Colley

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	312
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roger Evans
Headteacher	Elaine Nolan
Date of previous school inspection	11 June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 24 lessons taught by 11 teachers and one cover supervisor. They also held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, members of the governing body, teaching staff and pupil groups. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation, including that relating to pupils' attainment and progress, their safety and welfare, and that concerning self-evaluation and development planning. The responses to questionnaires completed by pupils, staff and by 127 parents and carers were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether more-able pupils are making sufficient progress across school.
- Has the school halted the downward trend in attendance and is its attendance improving for different groups?
- Are pupils fully involved in their learning and do they understand their achievements and how to make further improvement?
- Do pupils have an effective understanding and respect of other faiths and cultures in the wider community?

Information about the school

This is a larger than average primary school. Almost all pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average, as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school hosts a specialist resource provision catering for up to eight pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties from across the local authority. The Early Years Foundation Stage is currently provided in a dedicated unit within school as well as in a split Reception/Year 1 class. The school has had a newly structured leadership in place since September 2011.

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

This is a good school. It serves its community well. Since its last inspection, it has improved a number of areas from good to outstanding. These include safeguarding arrangements and the care, guidance and support it provides for pupils. The impact of these positive features is evident in many aspects of pupils' conduct and development, including their exceptional behaviour and attitudes to learning and their extremely well-developed understanding of how to keep safe. Very strong partnerships nurtured by the school broaden pupils' experiences and the support available to them and their families.

These are the other main findings of the inspection.

- Oakhill Primary is a fully inclusive school where pupils' unique and individual needs are known by all staff. The school ensures support and resources are in place to allow pupils to fully engage with all aspects of its work and as a result, pupils take pride in their school and community.
- In recent years, attainment for Year 6 pupils has been predominantly above average. This is reflected in the current attainment seen in Year 6 and classes across school, although more-able pupils do not always attain as highly as they should. Progress in mathematics and English is good across the school and improving. This is as a result of good teaching, tailored support in lessons and a range of one-to-one and group literacy and numeracy sessions.
- Pupils are keen to contribute to the work of the school and relish opportunities to work in groups and lead their own learning. They display good literacy and numeracy skills across a range of subjects and are further developing good information and communication technology (ICT) skills through the school's investment in child-friendly laptops. Pupils display a realistic understanding of the immediate world in which they live. Their knowledge of different cultures within the United Kingdom is limited.
- Teaching is good overall, although its quality varies from satisfactory to outstanding. The school has introduced good systems for identifying and recording pupils' targets in English and mathematics but teachers' marking does not always build on these targets. Some new teaching initiatives such as a programme developed by the deputy headteacher which is focused on

accelerating the progress of more-able pupils is improving pupils' investigation and enquiry skills across subjects. Senior leaders have improved the way that teachers and pupils keep track of progress in writing and mathematics.

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have developed a clear vision and passion for improvement in the school. This has been a key factor in ensuring that the school has regularly and accurately evaluated its performance and successfully implemented improvements where needed. The strengths in school leadership and its good track record of improvement since the last inspection show its good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to be consistently good or better by:
 - ensuring that work for more-able pupils always provides the right level of challenge so they achieve as well as they should
 - making sure all teachers in their marking build on pupils' targets in English and mathematics to identify the next steps in their learning
 - sharing the existing outstanding practice between all teachers.
- Develop an increased awareness and understanding of cultural diversity beyond the immediate locality by creating more opportunities for pupils to fully engage with culturally diverse groups.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

From generally below expected levels of knowledge and skills on entry to Nursery, teachers ensure that pupils achieve well and enjoy their time at school. Pupils show real interest in their work, listen carefully and settle down quickly to their learning. Overall attainment is above average. The school's analysis of pupils' progress shows that those currently in Year 6 are on track to attain above the level expected for their age in English and mathematics when they leave the school. Currently, most pupils across the school, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make similarly good progress in relation to their needs and starting points. In a few lessons observed during the inspection insufficient challenge for more-able pupils limited their ability to make rapid progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those in the resourced provision, are well supported in lessons. Steps taken to further support pupils falling behind in literacy or numeracy are effective.

Pupils are keen to help one another and as a result, behaviour is exemplary in and out of lessons. A good example of this was when an older boy intervened to settle a minor dispute among younger pupils playing basketball. A resolution was found quickly and the older boy supported the group in playing more effectively as a team. Pupils make a good contribution to school life taking on roles such as interviewers in a number of recent staff appointments. Pupils say that they feel very safe at school and are very knowledgeable about safety issues linked to fire, traffic and the use of the internet. Pupils are aware of the importance of a healthy diet and of taking plenty of exercise. Attendance in school is above the national average and improving.

Pupils help and support one another well. They are involved in a range of cultural activities within school based around music and art and are involved in raising money for a number of national and international charities. Pupils are confident in expressing their well-honed views on moral and social issues but they are far less confident when involved in discussions about the multicultural nature of modern society in the United Kingdom.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

The large majority of teaching is good. Good planning and the effective use of assessment information by teachers mean that most lessons build well on pupils' prior learning. In the exceptionally effective lessons seen, extremely well-pitched activities in which pupils had good opportunities to discuss and share their ideas with each other ensured all pupils made good and better progress in their learning. In a very well-taught lesson based upon doubling and multiplying two-digit numbers, for example, a wide variety of engaging activities made this a motivating activity which pupils enjoyed greatly. Highly effective questioning challenged pupils and extended their understanding. Learning support assistants fulfil a crucial role as part of the teaching team and contribute skilfully to pupils' good learning and progress, particularly for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. In less effective lessons seen during the inspection, teachers did not provide sufficiently challenging tasks for more-able pupils, limiting their progress. Assessment to support learning is good overall. However, teachers' marking in both English and mathematics does not always clearly identify how pupils could make further progress and focuses predominantly on praise. Occasionally, in otherwise well-taught lessons, teachers talk for too long, leaving too little time for pupils to practise and apply their skills independently.

The well-planned curriculum enables pupils to make good progress in their learning. Meaningful links are being made between subjects and a number of pupils stated that this made learning enjoyable. The school is developing outdoor learning, as seen

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

in a good lesson where pupils walked through the school's woodland recalling the story of the 'Ginger Bread Man'. This brought pupils' learning to life and helped them to develop their literacy skills further. An excellent range of well-attended extra-curricular clubs, which also includes a variety of sports, promotes the pupils' excellent attitudes and good adoption of healthy lifestyles.

The school builds early and constructive relationships with pupils and their families. It gathers detailed information on the context to pupils' learning, using this extremely well to ensure that even the most complex of needs are met. Pupils who face considerable difficulties in their lives are exceptionally well supported through expertise within the school and effective partnerships beyond. The school can point to examples where it has had exceptional success in helping these pupils to overcome the issues they face. The expertise from within the resourced provision for pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties is used to benefit pupils across the school and within the resourced provision itself. Transition arrangements are strong in school and pupils are well prepared for their next stage in education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and new senior leadership team have accurately identified the challenges facing the school and have developed appropriate plans which are proving effective in securing further improvements. Enhanced procedures for monitoring the achievement of all groups of pupils are rigorous as is the monitoring of teaching and learning. As a result, self-evaluation is well informed and is effective in ensuring that planning accurately identifies the right areas for improvement. The outstanding care, guidance and support for pupils are modelled well by senior leaders and there is a good sense of teamwork among all adults. Well-trained staff and a clear management structure across school further enhance this. There is convincing evidence that the school's stronger leadership at all levels is helping to drive standards up even further and support the shared ambition to become outstanding overall.

The school is well supported by the governing body, which offers a good level of support and also challenge when required. Members of the governing body play an active role in school life. Governors work with senior leaders in school to build a first-hand picture of the progress being made in key areas for improvement. Relationships with parents and carers are good: almost all who responded to the inspectors' questionnaire agreed that their children are happy and safe at school.

Attention to pupils' safety and safeguarding is excellent and integral to the school's work; high-quality assurance and detailed risk assessment systems have been established. The school is rigorous in monitoring its site, ensuring a safe and secure

environment. Procedures for vetting all adults working in school are exemplary. Staff are extremely well trained and communication surrounding the school's most vulnerable pupils is outstanding. Through exceptional partnerships with local services and agencies, the school is able to enhance the well-being of pupils experiencing difficult circumstances and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Discrimination is not tolerated and the similarly good levels of achievement by different groups of pupils reflect the school's good commitment to equal opportunity for all. The school recognises that more-able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently and is taking steps to address this. The school's work in promoting community cohesion is satisfactory. Links with the village community are used effectively to develop pupils' understanding of the local world in which they live. However, pupils' appreciation of the diversity of cultures and beliefs in the wider national community remains in need of development.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Parents and carers talk positively about the friendliness of the Early Years Foundation Stage staff and about how they encourage children to do well. The strong induction procedures and caring staff help children to settle quickly into the daily routines and they are soon making good progress particularly in their attitudes to learning, and social and emotional development. Although effective, the progress of children and particularly boys in developing their writing skills is not as strong as in other areas. Stimulating and well-organised resources and activities meet the needs of all children. Facilities in the Early Years Foundation Stage unit are inspiring both indoors and out drawing pupils into their learning and play with a real sense of awe and wonder. In one instance an inspector saw the obvious delight and pride on children's faces as, in a construction area, they effectively mixed and dispensed cement from a mixer for other children to build a brick wall. There is some variation in facilities from the main Early Years Foundation Stage unit to those in the split Year 1 and Reception class. While provision in this split class is good overall, the outdoor environment is not as well developed and this places some restriction on the flow of children's activities.

Leadership and management are good and this has been an important factor in ensuring that children make consistently good progress during their Nursery and Reception Years. Adults are well trained and enthusiastic and provide great encouragement for the children. Leaders ensure that the environment is kept safe and that children's learning is carefully monitored and evaluated.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	2
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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire, including those who spoke to inspectors expressed agreement with all its statements. All parents that responded agreed that the school keeps their child safe and that it helps them to have a healthy lifestyle.

Very small minorities of parents and carers expressed dissatisfaction with the way the school communicated with them. A smaller number of parents raised concerns about bullying and the quality of homework. Inspectors examined these matters thoroughly but found no evidence to support the concerns expressed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Oakhill 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 127 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 312 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	73	57	52	41	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	84	66	43	34	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	55	43	64	50	6	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	59	46	57	45	8	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	65	51	57	45	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	62	49	58	46	5	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	58	46	65	51	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)	57	46	58	46	4	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	65	51	52	41	7	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	53	42	62	49	5	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	51	40	62	49	5	4	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	56	44	63	50	5	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	70	55	55	43	2	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 all 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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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. Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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:	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. ■ 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 pupils' 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.



6 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Oakhill Primary School, Barnsley, S71 5AG

Thank you for welcoming both myself and the other inspectors to your school. We enjoyed talking to you about what you like the most about school and seeing you working hard in lessons. You were all very friendly and polite and helped us to understand why you thought your school was good.

We agree that yours is a good school. Here are some of the main things we found out about it.

- Your school gives you a good start to your education and makes sure you make good progress in learning.
- Your attainment is above average and you achieve well.
- You have an excellent understanding of the need to stay safe and you help one another in doing this.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you all get on really well together.
- Your school provides you with outstanding care, guidance and support and takes the greatest care to safeguard you.

We believe your teachers can make your school even better. We have asked them to:

- make sure that pupils who could be really good at learning are given work that they do not find too easy to complete
- ensure that when teachers mark your work they always give you ideas about how to improve which will help you to make even better progress
- help you to find out more about the customs and traditions of people living in this country who are from cultural backgrounds that are different to yours.

Thank you for making us feel welcome. We hope you continue to enjoy school and work hard.

Yours sincerely

Mark Colley
Lead inspector

