

Oakwood Primary Academy

Magnolia Walk, Eastbourne, BN22 0SS

Inspection dates

24–25 April 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Requires improvement
Achievement of pupils		3
Quality of teaching		3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		3
Leadership and management		2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' results at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 are too low.
- While the school keeps pupils safe, their behaviour and attitudes to learning in lessons are not always good enough. Pupils do not always focus on their learning. Staff expectations of behaviour are not yet consistently high.
- Whilst improving, teaching is not yet consistently good because it has not ensured that sufficient pupils make good progress or achieve well over time.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are sometimes too low. As a result, some pupils do not make enough progress.
- Teachers' marking does not always advise pupils sufficiently about how to improve their work or presentation.

The school has the following strengths

- The senior leadership team, supported by governors and the academies trust, has brought about rapid improvements to the school since it opened. Teaching is improving strongly as a result, and many pupils now make rapid progress across much of the school.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage experience good teaching and make good progress.
- Pupils' attendance and progress have both improved as a result of the vibrant curriculum introduced by the academies trust and senior leadership team. This curriculum gives pupils very good opportunities to gain insights into a range of cultures and religions, and to consider people's feelings and moral issues.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors saw teaching in every class. They observed one assembly, 18 lessons and pupils' behaviour in the playground and at lunchtime. One lesson was observed jointly with the head of school.
- Discussions were held with pupils, two members of the governing body, the chief executive officer of the academies trust, the executive headteacher and other members of staff.
- The inspectors observed many aspects of the school's work, including support for pupils who need extra help. They heard pupils read and examined pupils' work in their exercise books and on classroom and corridor wall displays.
- The inspectors looked at a number of documents, including plans for what pupils will learn in each subject, plans for the school's future development, the school's use of sports premium and pupil premium funding, the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe, pupils' attendance records, minutes of governing body meetings, records of how pupils' learning is checked and tracked and records of how the quality of teaching is checked.
- The views of parents were taken into account through taking note of the 44 responses to the online Parent View survey, the three letters that were submitted, and through discussions with several parents.
- Staff views were taken into consideration by looking at questionnaires completed by 24 staff members and through discussions with several members of staff.

Inspection team

Steven Popper, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Roger Fenwick	Additional Inspector
Carol Vant	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Oakwood Primary Academy converted to become an academy school on 1 September 2012. When its predecessor school, Oakwood School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be satisfactory overall. The school is supported by the Aurora Academies Trust.
- The school is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- The school meets the government’s current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations of pupils’ attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for additional government funding, known as the pupil premium, is much higher than the national average. This extra money is provided for children known to be eligible for free school meals, in local authority care, or with a parent in the armed services. There are no pupils with a parent in the armed forces or in local authority care currently on roll.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, including pupils supported through school action is above average, while the proportions of pupils supported through school action plus or with statements of special educational needs are below average. Some pupils have speech, language and communication needs, whilst others have behaviour, emotional, social difficulties or other needs.
- A very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The number of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times is higher than in most other schools.
- The head of school and deputy head of school took up their leadership responsibilities in January 2013. The executive headteacher took up his leadership responsibilities in April 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teaching is good or better by:
 - continuing to raise teachers’ expectations of what pupils can achieve, so these are consistently high across the school
 - making certain that teachers’ marking consistently gives pupils advice about how to improve their work and presentation.
- Ensure that pupils’ results at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 are at least in line with national expectations by establishing consistently good teaching across the school and high expectations for teachers and pupils across the school.
- Ensure that all staff communicate consistently high expectations of pupils’ behaviour in line with the values of the school.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because pupils' results at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 are too low, and because some pupils do not make enough progress.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills that are typical for their age. They make good progress and leave the Reception year well prepared for Year 1.
- The school's results of national screening in phonics (linking letters to the sounds they make) were much lower than in most other schools last year. However, improvements to the teaching of phonics mean that more pupils are on track to reach national figures this year.
- Pupils' results in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 are lower than in most other schools, especially in Key Stage 1. However, many groups of pupils currently in the school, especially in Key Stage 2, are on track to reach higher standards in these subjects than pupils in the previous year.
- Recent strong improvements to teaching have resulted in much rapid progress being made by many pupils currently in the school, including the most able. However, there are still some areas in the school where pupils' progress is too slow. This is because teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are sometimes too low.
- Pupils eligible for pupil premium funding make progress at least in line with, and often faster than, non-eligible pupils. The gap between pupils eligible for pupil premium funding and other pupils has been closed successfully by the school.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make rapid progress from their starting points across much of the school. This is because the support and work they are given closely match their needs.
- A very large majority of parents and carers who offered an opinion thought that their children made good progress.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement as it has not ensured that sufficient pupils make good enough progress or achieve well over time.
- Teaching is not yet consistently good. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve and of pupils' behaviour are sometimes too low, and the level of challenge offered is variable. As a result, some pupils do not make enough progress or remain focused on their learning.
- Teachers' marking does not always give pupils sufficient advice about how to improve their work or presentation. As a result, pupils do not always know how to progress further and do not consistently present their work neatly.
- However, teaching is improving strongly. Teachers monitor pupils' progress in lessons and check their work better than they did previously. Teachers and pupils have good working relationships with each other. Learning is made fun and accessible, often through the effective use of practical resources.
- Pupils learn well when teachers challenge pupils to develop and explain their thinking. However, such challenge is not seen consistently across the school.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is enthusiastic, engaging and effective. Attractively presented and well-used resources and indoor and outdoor classrooms help ensure that children use their time productively and make good progress.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well and support learning effectively, often by giving extra support to pupils where it is most needed.
- A very large majority of parents and carers who offered an opinion considered that their children were taught well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Pupils' attitudes to learning are not always good enough. When teaching fails to engage pupils, they can easily become fidgety and inattentive and not concentrate sufficiently on their learning. Staff expectations of behaviour are not yet consistently high.
- The majority of pupils are courteous to one another and to adults, but some pupils do not exhibit this good pattern of behaviour. There are times when some pupils do not always demonstrate respect to staff who give them instructions, including during lunchtime. Some pupils' behaviour in the playground is overly physical and boisterous.
- However, the school's management of pupils' behaviour is swiftly improving. Senior leaders have analysed behaviour in the school and acted to improve it. For example, the school has recently started using a behaviour specialist provided by the academy trust to help behaviour get better, and staff have recently received training that has helped them develop stronger behaviour management techniques. The school's values and expectations of behaviour are strongly promoted through assemblies, displays across the school, and messages from the senior leadership team.
- Pupils who talked to the inspectors said they 'could go to teachers if anything happens ... it is sorted out quickly', but also said that there were still a few times when behaviour was not sorted out as successfully.
- The school's records of incidents of poor behaviour show that these have been responded to effectively by the school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The school premises are safe and secure. The school has run a 'safety week' and pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in different situations, including when online. Pupils who talked to the inspectors said that they feel safe and looked after at school.
- Pupils' attendance was low during the previous year, but has improved and is now in line with most other schools. This is because the school leaders have worked strongly to improve attendance by consistently communicating high expectations in this area, rewarding good attendance and establishing good relationships with parents and carers. Attendance has also improved because pupils enjoy the subjects that they learn and find learning fun.
- A large majority of parents and carers who took part in the online survey thought that the school dealt effectively with bullying and that behaviour in the school was well managed.

The leadership and management

are good

- The executive headteacher, head of school and deputy head of school have strongly improved the school from its starting point in September 2012. Expectations have substantially increased because of the senior leadership team's strong insistence that individual pupils make fast progress. Teaching and pupils' progress have both strongly improved as a result. This is why leadership and management are good.
- However, these strong expectations have not yet resulted in pupils attaining high enough results at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. This why leadership and management are not outstanding.
- Careful recruitment and deployment of staff have helped strengthen the quality of teaching and improve pupils' progress, although these are not yet consistent across all areas of the school.
- The school has accurately identified where it needs to improve. The school's plan for bringing about improvements is thorough, well judged and detailed, and demonstrates the senior leadership's team's high expectations. It contains a clear timescale for improvements to be made.
- The senior leadership team carefully monitors the quality of teaching. Performance management arrangements are robust and ensure that strong performance is rewarded appropriately and that any weaker performance is swiftly addressed. Teachers are set properly challenging, but

realistic, targets for improvements to pupils' progress. The senior leadership team also identifies and meets teachers' training needs and helps teachers develop professionally.

- Subject leaders, leaders of extra support given to pupils, and the Early Years Foundation Stage leader all monitor pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility. They support other staff in developing their teaching and are helping to improve the consistency of teachers' expectations and practice in the school.
- The academies trust and senior leadership team have introduced a vibrant curriculum into the school, and there are good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are given very good opportunities to gain insights into a range of cultures and religions, and to consider people's feelings and moral questions. For example, pupils have carried out work on Balinese dance and music, and Year 4 pupils' writing of Indian stories contained reflections on moral issues. A Reception classroom's current 'global learners' display demonstrates the school's active work against discrimination and its promotion of equality.
- Primary school sports funding is spent effectively on enhancing pupils' engagement in sports through the provision of a sports specialist to teach physical education and a range of sports. The school also provides a range of sports clubs. The school uses its work in sports to develop pupils' teamwork and attitudes towards achievement.
- Pupil premium funding is also spent effectively to provide extra support in English and mathematics for eligible pupils. These measures have contributed to the school's successful closing of the gap between eligible and non-eligible pupils.
- The school ensures that all pupils are safe. It keeps appropriate and up-to-date records of its work in this area and meets statutory requirements.
- The Aurora Academies Trust has a good understanding of the school and has helped ensure that the school is improving. It made well-judged appointments to the senior leadership team and has been clear about its expectations of the school and of senior leaders. The academy trust has given effective training to teachers and governors and helped monitor pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching.
- A large majority of parents and carers considered the school to be well led.
- **The governance of the school:**
- Governors understand the school's key priorities for development and expect senior leaders to bring about improvements where they are most needed. They look at data about pupils' achievement carefully and offer challenge of high quality to the school. Governors scrutinise information about the quality of teaching and check that senior leaders properly hold teachers to account. Governors are not directly involved in the performance management of the senior leadership team as this is in the remit of the academy trust, but they make their high expectations of senior leaders clear. Governors scrutinise school finances carefully, including the use and impact of pupil premium funding. Their impact on the school's drive for improvement is good.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	138391
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	426372

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	397
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Hampson
Headteacher	John Greenwood
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01323 501251
Fax number	01323 506698
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