

Inspection of a good school: Oakley Vale Primary School

Cheltenham Road, Corby, Northamptonshire NN18 8RH

Inspection dates:

27 and 28 June 2023

Outcome

Oakley Vale Primary School continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this school. They say they feel happy and safe here. Pupils get on well together. They show each other, and adults, respect. Pupils enjoy making a positive contribution to the school. They like being school councillors, breaktime sports crew, reading buddies, 'little interpreters' and attendance ambassadors.

Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are excellent. They are highly motivated to learn. Pupils know they can talk to staff about any concerns they may have. Bullying is rare. Pupils are confident that when bullying does happen, staff deal with it effectively.

Staff have high expectations. This includes those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils value their learning. They are proud of their achievements. Pupils like the rewards they earn for doing their best. The '50 before Year 7' programme inspires pupils from Reception to Year 6 to challenge themselves before they leave the school. The list includes trying new food, learning a poem by heart, entering a competition and gazing at the stars.

Parents and carers value the work that the school does to support their children, a typical comment being: 'They make my daughter feel very supported, happy and cared for while she is there.'

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious and well-planned curriculum for all pupils. Leaders have provided training to develop staff's subject knowledge. Subject leaders have thought carefully about the key knowledge pupils should learn and when. As a result, pupils build their knowledge and skills progressively from early years to the end of Year 6. Teachers introduce new learning effectively. They focus on ensuring that pupils learn and use new vocabulary accurately.

Teachers check to make sure that pupils' learning is secure before moving on. Pupils value the 'flashback 4' activities that help them recall their previous learning in most subjects. Pupils are challenged by the work they are given. For example, in design and technology, pupils develop a detailed understanding of the product design cycle.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils with SEND to achieve well. Leaders ensure that the curriculum for pupils with SEND meets their needs. Leaders identify pupils with SEND as soon as possible. Teachers receive training to support these pupils. Plans to support their learning are clear and teachers use them well. Pupils with SEND access the full curriculum.

Leaders have prioritised reading. Staff receive valuable training to teach pupils to read. Pupils get off to a very strong start in reading. Children in Reception are taught phonics effectively. They are well prepared for reading in Year 1. The books pupils are given are carefully matched to the sounds pupils learn. Leaders identify pupils who may be falling behind in their reading. These pupils receive extra support to catch up. Pupils practise reading regularly to become fluent readers. Teachers introduce pupils to a wide range of authors and books. Pupils are enthusiastic and speak with confidence about their reading.

Leaders' high ambition for pupils begins in the early years. A well-sequenced curriculum ensures children are ready for their next phase of learning. Teachers assess children regularly to identify their needs. Leaders ensure that there is a sharp focus on developing children's communication and language. Children enjoy learning through well-planned and well-resourced activities. They play happily together and demonstrate well-developed social skills. Teachers provide children with rich opportunities to develop early literacy and mathematics.

The curriculum that supports pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. Leaders plan rich experiences for all pupils. There is a strong focus on developing pupils' confidence and character. Pupils understand British values. Pupils learn to respect and celebrate differences in others. They learn about different cultures and religions. Pupils learn how to debate important issues. They learn about physical and emotional health and age-appropriate relationships. Pupils understand how to become responsible citizens.

Staff provide pupils with an extensive range of experiences to enrich learning. Leaders provide many clubs that develop pupils' talents and interests, including Spanish, football, gymnastics and drumming. Pupils recall meaningful experiences, including residential trips, visiting a space centre and a local bridge.

Leaders consider the workload and well-being of staff. Staff, including those new to teaching, say leaders support them well to be successful in their roles. Staff are proud to be part of the school. The governing body and members of the trust support and challenge leaders well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding at this school. Leaders and governors regularly check the school's safeguarding procedures. Staff are clear about their responsibilities for safeguarding pupils. Leaders make sure that staff have regular training. Staff are quick to report any concerns they may have. Record-keeping is comprehensive. Leaders take prompt actions when concerns are raised. Leaders make sure that vulnerable pupils and their families receive the help they need.

Pupils learn how to stay safe, for example online, using the road and when they are out with friends.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2017.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	140120
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10240805
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	421
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Richard Morrison
Principal	Sarah Sanders
Website	www.oakleyvaleprimary.org
Date of previous inspection	13 and 14 June 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a member of the Brooke Weston Trust.
- The school runs a breakfast club.
- The school does not use any alternative education provisions.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the principal and senior leaders. He met with two governors in person and five members of the trust remotely.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, he met with teachers and subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. He listened to pupils read.
- In addition, the inspector considered other subjects, including design and technology,

art and English. He sampled pupils' work and spoke with pupils.

- The inspector met with the special educational needs coordinator and the early years leader.
- The inspector met with safeguarding leaders. He reviewed the single central record, the safeguarding policy and related documents.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents. These included behaviour records and various policies.
- The inspector met with staff and pupils to discuss different aspects of school life.
- The inspector considered the views of parents who completed the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, including the free-text responses. He reviewed responses to the staff questionnaire. He analysed responses to the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Stephen Long, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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