

Inspection of a good school: Oakwood Infant and Nursery School

Windsor Avenue, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex CO15 2AH

Inspection dates:

22 and 23 March 2022

Outcome

Oakwood Infant and Nursery School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school every day. They enjoy their schoolwork because they enjoy their lessons and describe learning as fun. Pupils like their teachers and say they make learning interesting. Teachers have high expectations for what pupils can achieve in lessons. Pupils are keen to answer questions and learn more. Pupils achieve well in most areas of the curriculum.

Pupils describe the behaviour in school as calm. This is evident in lessons, around the school and in the dining hall at lunchtime. Pupils work well together in lessons and like helping each other. Pupils say they are confident to talk to adults if they have a problem of any kind.

Pupils feel safe and happy at school. They say there is no bullying and if someone is unkind, this is rapidly sorted out. School ambassadors enjoy their responsibilities at breaktime and lunchtime. They help make sure all pupils join in with play.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, pupils enjoyed a wide range of activities, clubs, visitors and visits within the local community. These activities are starting again as restrictions are lifted. Forest school activities on site enable pupils to learn useful skills, such as collaborating on shared projects.

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

Leaders are ambitious for what all pupils can achieve. They are determined to help pupils do their best. Leaders provided an effective curriculum throughout the COVID-19 lockdown periods. Consequently, any gaps in pupils' learning are rapidly closing.

Leaders have carefully thought about what pupils need to learn in all subjects. This starts in Nursery. Some plans have been recently introduced and are being led by newly appointed subject leaders. These leaders are beginning to make sure that important

knowledge, concepts and skills are taught in a logical order. This is helping pupils to know more and remember more as they progress through the school.

Teachers have the knowledge they need to teach most subjects effectively. They find working together in year teams helps share the workload of planning. Teachers' clear explanations mean pupils understand what they are learning and why. If a pupil misunderstands something, adults help them think this through. This means pupils are confident to make improvements to their own work.

Reading has a high priority for school leaders. Staff have been well trained to teach phonics and reading. Children learn their sounds rapidly in Nursery and by the end of Reception are starting to read simple books. Children develop a love of reading because interesting books and stories are a focus of their learning in Nursery and Reception. Pupils continue to achieve well in reading through key stage 1. By the end of Year 2, pupils are beginning to read fluently and with good understanding.

Reading books are well matched to the sounds pupils have learned. Pupils keep the same book until they can read all the words in the book. Parents, carers and teachers use reading diaries well to record how pupils are getting on with their reading. Teachers rapidly identify any pupils falling behind with their reading. Pupils get the support they need to catch up.

There is effective support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders ensure there are detailed assessments of each pupil, and pupils receive the best support to meet their needs. Leaders work with teachers on their subject plans to consider pupils' needs, so pupils with SEND can typically be supported to stay in class and access the same curriculum as their friends.

In the early years, adults join in with children's imaginative play. They ask skilful questions that help children think more deeply about their learning.

Pupils learn about friendship and to respect people from different cultures and backgrounds. This contributes to pupils' understanding of how to work and play together in harmony.

Governors know the school and check that all subjects are taught. However, they are not as clear about how leaders organise the curriculum to have the greatest impact on what pupils know in all subjects.

Leaders have put in place a range of strategies to reduce staff's workload and support well-being. This is starting to have a positive impact. Leaders are working to ensure that all staff can benefit from these routines.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have put robust and highly effective systems in place to ensure all pupils are safe. Staff have regular training. They are confident to share concerns about a child's safety with leaders. Leaders respond swiftly to any concerns and are tenacious in ensuring that pupils get the help they need.

All safeguarding processes and procedures are stringently checked by governors and the local authority. Leaders work effectively with outside agencies as required.

Pupils learn and know about a wide range of risks to their safety. They understand how to keep themselves safe online, especially when playing their favourite computer games.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subject leaders are new to their role. Senior leaders should ensure new subject leaders support teachers in planning sequences of lessons that enable pupils to learn and remember more as they progress through the school.
- Governors have a broad understanding of what needs to be taught in the curriculum but have less expertise to evaluate how well the curriculum is being implemented. Those with responsibility for governance should identify the appropriate support and training opportunities that will help them to hold leaders to account more effectively.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2016.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	114722
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10211019
Type of school	Infant and Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	289
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	The Reverend S Fountain
Headteacher	Kathy Maguire-Egan
Website	www.oakwoodinfantandnurseryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 May 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Oakwood Infant and Nursery School is larger than the average-size primary school. Pupils leave at the end of Year 2 and complete the primary phase of their education in other schools.

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 headteacher, other senior leaders, the manager for vulnerable children and the early years and special educational needs leaders who work in the school. The inspector had telephone meetings with governors and with the local authority representative.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, early mathematics and history. The inspector met with subject leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work, spoke with pupils and staff and listened to pupils reading. The inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and other documentation.

- The inspector checked the effectiveness of safeguarding by reviewing a range of documentation, including school policies, procedures and records. The inspector spoke to the headteacher and manager for vulnerable pupils to discuss their work and review examples of the actions to keep pupils safe. The inspector spoke to pupils and checked staff members' understanding of how to keep pupils safe from harm.
- The inspector gathered pupils' views by speaking to school ambassadors and groups of pupils in lessons. There were no responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey.
- The inspector spoke to parents at the start of the school day and considered 29 responses and 12 free-text responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspector spoke to groups of teaching and non-teaching staff. The inspector took account of the 28 responses to Ofsted's online staff survey.

Inspection team

Julie Winyard, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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