

Oak Farm Junior School

Windsor Avenue, Uxbridge, UB10 9PD

Inspection dates 26–27 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Good progress is being maintained in mathematics and reading. Improvements have been made in writing so that now pupils are achieving well in English. Attainment is above average.
- The focus on the learning of different groups, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, is enabling them to achieve well.
- The quality of teaching is good overall, with some outstanding aspects, resulting in the good progress pupils make.
- Pupils behave very well around the school and in classes. They have excellent relationships with their teachers. No pupils have been excluded in recent years. Pupils report that they feel very safe at school.
- The promotion of high quality spiritual, moral, social and cultural development results in self-confident pupils who enjoy attending school. Many pupils are involved in the wide range of after-school clubs available.
- The new headteacher is monitoring teaching systematically in order to achieve highly effective learning throughout the school.
- Attendance is high as a result of the application of rigorous school systems.
- Governance is outstanding. Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school exceptionally well and are driving forward improvements.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress in English and mathematics is not yet excellent because assessment data is not always used rigorously enough to pinpoint the gaps in teaching and learning.
- Middle leaders, some recently appointed to their roles, are not yet fully effective in promoting higher standards in the areas for which they hold responsibility.
- The proportion of outstanding teaching is not high enough to ensure that all groups of pupils in each class are challenged and make excellent progress from their starting points.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons, including four joint observations with senior and middle leaders, and discussed their findings with the teachers and teaching assistants observed.
- Inspectors attended an assembly and observed pupils arriving at and leaving the school, as well as during their break and lunch times.
- Meetings were held with three groups of pupils, including school council members, to hear their views about the school.
- Inspectors met with the chair of the governing body and two other governors, the headteacher, deputy headteacher and three middle leaders, and held a telephone conversation with the school improvement partner, representing the local authority.
- Account was taken of the views of 33 parents and carers who had responded to the on-line Parent View, together with the views of parents and carers gathered through informal discussion at the start and end of the school day.
- Staff views were considered, including the analysis of 15 completed questionnaires.
- School documentation was scrutinised, including their self-evaluation, data on pupils' progress, attendance and behaviour information, governors' minutes and safeguarding records.

Inspection team

Peter McGregor, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Julie Quarrell

Additional inspector

Grace Marriott

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Oak Farm is a larger than average-sized junior school.
- Almost all pupils transfer from the infant school which occupies the ground floor of the same building. Some facilities are shared.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is broadly average, as is the proportion supported through school action plus or a statement. These pupils' needs mainly concern dyslexia, speech, language and communication and autism.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding, that is those in receipt of free school meals and looked after children, is below average.
- About a third of the pupils speak English as an additional language, a higher proportion than the national average.
- An above average proportion of pupils come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds, mainly mixed backgrounds, Black and Black British, and Asian and Asian British.
- The school meets the government's floor targets, which are the minimum expectations of pupils' progress and attainment.
- An on-site breakfast club is managed by the governing body.
- In the past five years, the school has had four headteachers; the current headteacher has been in post for two terms.
- The manner in which the school is governed has changed in the past year. Governance of the infant and junior schools in the Oak Farm building is now separate.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in English and mathematics through:
 - using data on pupils' progress with increased rigour to identify issues in teaching and learning and focus on correcting shortfalls in individual performances.
- Ensure that middle leaders are all equally successful in promoting higher standards by:
 - monitoring rigorously the quality of provision in their areas
 - modelling effective teaching and learning
 - supporting colleagues in improving their practice through continuing expert professional development, paying particular attention to the needs of inexperienced staff.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching so that all pupils are expected to make excellent progress, by ensuring teachers:
 - always build on what pupils already know and understand, and do not merely teach what has been planned
 - match work carefully to individual needs, so that all groups of pupils make accelerated progress
 - engage pupils more in their learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils enter the school with above average attainment and make good progress. They achieve above average standards by the age of 11 because they apply themselves very well in lessons and are well taught.
- Standards of reading have been above average for several years and this is now matched in writing, as a result of a recent focus. Punctuation, grammar and creative aspects of language are all emphasised and pupils, aware that teachers are unhappy with technical errors, respond with accurate writing.
- A cross-curricular approach on writing in all subjects, not just English, is helping pupils to see its importance and raising attainment. Writing an acrostic poem to represent harvest in a Year 5 religious education lesson exemplifies this successful approach.
- The school is not complacent about its good standards in reading, fully aware that improvements in writing go hand in hand with effective reading. Pupils are keen to read and the school provides good time for this. Pupils remark that 'reading is fun and enjoyable'.
- In mathematics, attainment has been above average and progress good for several years. In the 2012 Year 6 assessments, about a tenth of the cohort, all high attaining pupils, were successful in gaining Level 6. The school's own data show that the relative underachievement of lower attainers in the past is being dealt with through the staff's better knowledge of the pupils they are teaching and effective intervention.
- Pupils' good knowledge of science was apparent when a Year 4 class applied a mnemonic to recall the sequence of planets and showed a good understanding of relative sizes and distances. Standards in the creative aspects of the curriculum, such as art and music, are also good, as a result of effective teaching.
- Parents, carers and pupils speak very positively about progress. A parent discussing the educational development of her child, who had significant special needs, remarked how excellent intervention and support and effective class teaching had led to excellent progress, considering her child's starting point.
- A similar picture of progress is apparent for pupils for whom English is an additional language, where peer support and teachers' good understanding of individual needs results in good progress.
- Notwithstanding the effective progress being made generally over Years 3 to 6, there is variation between classes. Progress is slower in a few lessons and classes, when teaching is not well matched to the varying needs of different groups of pupils.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Pupils' achievements, work in their books, parents' and pupils' views and what was observed in lessons indicate that the quality of teaching is good. Some is outstanding, leading to pupils making rapid progress.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. This leads to challenging work, where confident teachers explain ideas well, question thoroughly and respond effectively to pupils' questions.
- Targets for individual pupils in English and mathematics are based on the next steps needed to achieve a higher National Curriculum level. The process of signing off

after three successes in an objective involves pupils so they feel ownership of the process. The progress they see themselves making motivates pupils to learn.

- Marking is detailed and helpful. Errors are corrected, pupils are told what needs to be done in order to improve the quality, such as the best method for a mathematics problem, and comments are followed up to ensure that further progress is made.
- At times, teachers do not identify, or pay enough attention to, what pupils already know, or to their progress and attainment in a lesson. This can lead to unnecessary repetition for high attainers, and to a lack of comprehension by lower attainers. In the small minority of lessons where this takes place, some groups underachieve because work is not sufficiently well matched to the needs of pupils.
- A few pupils mentioned that when teachers sometimes talk for a long time, they struggle to remember all that is said. Pupils in these classes want to be more engaged in their learning.
- The school has created a very positive learning environment with excellent relationships between staff and pupils. This aspect of almost all lessons is an important key that unlocks the joy of learning and effective progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

- Behaviour is good and sometimes outstanding because school systems are implemented rigorously, both in lessons and during play times. Pupils respond very well to the positive approach and the praise they receive for their efforts and their successes in any aspects of school life. They value their awards in assembly and strive to achieve them.
- Pupils are happy to be at school and say so, a view backed up by their parents and carers. The successful breakfast club is one example of this. A small minority of parents reported that they had concerns about bullying but no evidence was apparent of this during the inspection. A few younger pupils talked about name-calling and unfriendly behaviour, but all agreed that when incidents occurred, and were reported, problems were quickly resolved.
- Pupils are polite and friendly, welcoming visitors to their school. They have learnt to be very courteous.
- The small number of pupils who struggle to behave in an acceptable manner are supported well and learn to accept the school norms. Pupils are very tolerant of one another. No racist incidents have taken place in recent years.
- Pupils feel safe because they are aware that the staff will always do their best to respond if asked for help. They understand and follow the procedures for making safe use of facilities shared with the infant school.
- Attendance has improved to its current, very high level over several years. Particularly good quality systems, including rigorous follow-through, are very successful. The headteacher, with the support of governors, has taken a robust stance, not accepting any holidays or similar absences in term time.

The leadership and management

are good

- The headteacher is very ambitious for the school. He has the full support of staff, seen in their extremely positive responses to questionnaires. In his short period of tenure, improvements in the way data is used to identify underachievement and in the supportive intervention provided have resulted in greater progress by pupils. He has been rigorous in raising expectations and has a clear plan to guide the school as it moves forward.

- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and helpful. It clearly identifies the need to improve teaching further in order to increase progress and attainment. The headteacher has in hand an effective programme of monitoring and professional development.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Respect for the individual and appreciation of each person's worth, whatever their background, is at the heart of the school.
- Senior and middle leaders, given responsibility for leading change and improvement in their areas, are responding well. Middle leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning is effective, but not consistently so, with insufficient focus on development points which would improve pupils' achievements. Support for inexperienced staff is in hand but not yet fully effective.
- Performance management links pupils' achievements, including those of the most vulnerable, to the quality of teaching and learning and associated professional development. Governors are appropriately involved, receiving the information they need to monitor this good process.
- Pupils benefit from a good curriculum, with a strong focus on English and mathematics and an appropriate balance of other subjects. A cross-curricular approach is proving to be successful. For example, skills learnt in history are applied in art, and literacy is a focus in all subjects.
- A wide range of clubs and activities are provided, in which almost two thirds of pupils participate, including a choir of over 60 pupils and Spanish and chess clubs. Sports clubs are very popular, for example boys' and girls' football teams, handball and cross-country. Pupils are successful in inter-school fixtures and tournaments. The school carefully monitors participation to try to ensure equality of opportunity. Parents, carers and pupils value these activities greatly.
- Safeguarding procedures are meticulous and meet statutory requirements. They are implemented robustly.
- The local authority, through the school improvement partner process which the school buys into, is aware of the school's strengths and development points and that it is a good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - has managed very successfully the transition from joint to separate governance of the two schools using the Oak Farm building
 - monitors extremely closely what is taking place through a good committee structure; the Chair of the Governing Body monitors each committee's effectiveness
 - has an excellent understanding of data about pupils' progress and holds the headteacher and his staff to account most effectively. Governors stated, 'our entire focus is the children and how well they are doing'
 - is based upon governors being very well trained and informed about educational matters, including safeguarding
 - actively seeks out parents' and carers' views, aware of the value of the on-line questionnaire 'Parent View'.

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	102431
Local authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	402886

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	359
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Teresa Doyle
Headteacher	Alan Mills
Date of previous school inspection	5 June 2008
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