

# Oakwood Primary School

Pendeen Crescent, Southway, Plymouth, PL6 6QS

## Inspection dates

5–6 February 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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

- Leadership and management are good. The governors provide a good level of challenge and support and take decisive action when required.
- The staff, senior leaders and governors are united in their commitment to an ambitious vision for the school's future. This has had a positive impact on the school's overall effectiveness.
- Achievement is good and pupils make good progress in English and mathematics from the time they enter the school.
- The executive headteacher, head of school, staff and governors have worked very effectively together to improve the quality of teaching and learning since the previous inspection. Teaching is now consistently good.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage join the school from a large number of different settings. They settle extremely quickly and make very good progress during their first year at school.
- Pupils' progress throughout their school career is accurately monitored and any underperformance is quickly addressed.
- The extremely rich curriculum provides a varied and exciting range of learning experiences which meet the needs of all the pupils.
- Pupils feel safe in school. Their behaviour is good. They get on well together and demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and a fundamental strength of the school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The standards attained in writing are not yet as good as those in mathematics and reading.
- Not enough of the teaching is outstanding. This is because teachers do not always pace a lesson correctly. In addition, some marking does not give sufficient guidance to pupils to help them improve their work.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out over two days with half a day's notice.
- All full-time staff were observed teaching. A total of 22 lessons were seen. This included a joint observation with the head of school. Three whole school and key stage assemblies were also seen.
- The inspectors heard pupils from Year 1 and 2 read individually and observed the teaching of phonics (pupils learning letter patterns and the sounds they represent).
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, the school improvement adviser, subject and key stage leaders, the special needs coordinator and members of the school leadership team.
- The inspection team looked at a wide range of evidence which included the school's development plan, the school's data for tracking the progress and attainment of individual pupils and specific groups, performance management documentation, the school's self-evaluation information, curriculum and lesson plans, governing body documentation, and the work pupils were doing in their books.
- Parents were met at the beginning of the school day and the 26 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) were considered. The school's own parent and pupil surveys were also scrutinised. Responses from 16 staff questionnaires were also taken into account.
- During the inspection pupils' behaviour was observed, both inside and outside of the classroom, and the school's safeguarding procedures were scrutinised.

## Inspection team

Mark Anderson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Fran Ashworth

Additional Inspector

David Nebesnuick

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Oakwood is a slightly larger than average-sized primary school located close to the centre of Plymouth.
- The school is part of a federation of two schools which was established in 2008. The partner school is Beechwood Primary School. The two schools are led by an executive headteacher and one board of governors.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in two Reception classes. The pupils in the older age groups are taught in three Key Stage 1 classes, including one mixed-age class and six Key Stage 2 classes which include two mixed-age classes.
- The vast majority of pupils at Oakwood (94%) come from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs supported at school action, school action plus or statements of special educational needs is similar to the national average.
- The school has met and exceeded the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The current leadership structure was established in September 2010.
- The school operates a breakfast club which is situated on the school site.
- The school does not use alternative provision for any of its pupils.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the teaching of writing by:
  - ensuring that teachers systematically teach the basic skills and plan work that enables pupils to practise these
  - reviewing the teaching of writing throughout the school and giving pupils more time to write in lessons and complete the tasks they are given.
- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching by:
  - ensuring teachers pace their lessons appropriately and provide sufficient time for pupils to refine their skills and complete their tasks
  - making sure that marking is constructive and always tells pupils what they can do to improve their work further
  - ensuring that tasks are always planned to match the abilities of the pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- The majority of children have skills lower than those typical for their age when they join the school. They make good progress and the majority reach the levels expected nationally as they move into Year 1, although literacy and numeracy levels remain slightly weaker for some children. The large gains made in social and emotional development reflect the emphasis the school places on the 'whole child'.
- Good progress is maintained through Key Stage 1 and the improving levels of attainment in reading are a strong feature of this stage of the pupils' education. This improvement has been strongly supported by the introduction of a commercial scheme to support phonics sessions (letters and the sounds they make) across the year groups.
- The clear trend of improving attainment is seen in all subjects, although attainment in writing is not at quite as high as reading and mathematics.
- Pupils have made rapid gains in their progress in mathematics, particularly in Key Stage 2. This has followed a close focus on the teaching of mathematics and the use of resources which better engage and interest the pupils.
- The last three years have seen an upward trend and the progress of pupils in English is improving in Key Stage 2. Nevertheless, it is not yet keeping pace with mathematics. In Key Stage 2 the pace of the development of a range of writing skills is not yet fast enough and pupils are not always given enough time to complete individual writing tasks.
- Pupils get regular opportunities to read in school and teachers and learning assistants ensure that their phonics knowledge continues to be reinforced well both during lessons and support sessions.
- There are no significant differences in the progress made by groups of pupils. In English and mathematics the attainment of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is similar to that of other pupils in the school. The impact of well-planned actions is leading to improvement in the achievement of these pupils and the gap is narrowing between their attainment and that of all other pupils, as seen in their average point scores in national tests. This demonstrates the school's successful promotion of the equality of opportunity.
- The school's systems for tracking each individual pupil's level of progress and achievement are very detailed and accurate. The tracking data are carefully analysed to establish any areas that are in need of strengthening and any individual pupils or groups who require additional support.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The teachers' enthusiasm, subject knowledge and knowledge of their pupils mean that the great majority of lessons are well planned and engage all the pupils. Most learning tasks are challenging and thought provoking, which means the pupils' attitude to learning is positive and the pupils' enthusiasm usually matches that of their teacher.
- In most lessons, teachers ensure that learning runs at an appropriate pace and the teachers' good questioning skills keep all pupils on task and involved. A good example of this was seen in Year 6 when the pupils were very keen to explain the context of their individual stories written in the past tense.
- Staff who teach children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have effectively adapted their planning and observations in line with the new curriculum for children of this age. Phonics teaching to children in Reception and pupils in Year 1 and 2 is precise and carefully adapted to suit different ability levels so pupils learn quickly.
- Marking and feedback are helping pupils to meet their learning targets. This is particularly evident in Years 5 and 6. In most cases pupils get clear guidance on the next steps in improving their work. However, marking and feedback are not yet consistently good across all year groups.

- Teachers sometimes spend too much or too little time introducing lessons, leaving insufficient time for pupils to get to grips with new concepts and ideas, or not preparing pupils sufficiently to undertake independent learning activities.
- In a few lessons activities are not well matched to the different abilities of pupils. This results in some pupils finding the work too difficult and others completing tasks very quickly when they could tackle more demanding work.
- Teaching of calculation skills is good. Pupils in Year 4, for example, successfully applied their understanding of 'partitioning' and 'stealing' numbers to solve some very challenging word problems.
- Teaching assistants are deployed well to provide intervention and support. This is carefully used to meet the learning needs of pupils. This takes place both in the classroom and in small groups in the 'Street'.
- All parents who responded to the questionnaire or spoke to the inspectors considered that their child was taught well and made good progress.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils is good**

- The great majority of pupils have good attitudes towards learning and quickly settle to the tasks they are set with enthusiasm. They respond appropriately to questions and requests throughout the school day.
- Young children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught, from when they start school, what is expected regarding good behaviour. These expectations are reinforced well for the older pupils through the school's 'Golden Rules'.
- Parents have a positive view of behaviour in the school as expressed by those responding to the on-line questionnaire, Parent View, and to the school's own survey. They appreciate that the school is caring, approachable and will deal appropriately with issues.
- Pupils are polite and courteous to staff and visitors. They are taught to show respect and consideration for others. They get on well with each other across the age groups in lessons and on the playground areas where they show a good awareness of each other and how to keep safe.
- Pupils are keen to take an active role in school life and take on a variety of responsibilities. The school council provides a pupil voice and the extremely wide range of clubs and activities ensure there is 'something for everyone'.
- Celebrations of good attendance and close home-school working have resulted in improved attendance.
- Pupils say they are well cared for and feel safe at school at all times. They felt able to speak to adults if they had a problem or needed to confide in someone. They showed a clear understanding of what constituted bullying, including physical, emotional and cyber bullying, and commented that the adults always dealt with any instances quickly, fairly and firmly.
- The school's breakfast club is well organised, well attended and provides a welcoming start to the school day.
- A minority of pupils find it difficult to manage their own behaviour, but any inappropriate behaviour is dealt with effectively and there are clear systems to record poor behaviour or racist incidents. The pupils' understanding of equality was enhanced by a recent racial equality programme run by a police diversity officer.
- Behaviour policies and procedures are implemented consistently which contributes well to the positive ethos and good relationships. Behaviour code posters are prominently displayed throughout the school and very effective reward systems are in place.

## The leadership and management is good

- The federation's executive headteacher and the head of school are ambitious for the school's further development and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.
- Teachers and parents all think that the senior leaders provide effective leadership and management across all areas of the school.
- The leadership of teaching is becoming increasingly rigorous and performance management has served to eliminate previous weaknesses. This is well supported by the strong teamwork and morale of the teachers and their desire and commitment to keep the school moving forward.
- Leaders and managers rigorously collect data on pupils' attainment and progress. The information is analysed accurately and pupil progress meetings are scheduled every six weeks in order to identify those pupils falling behind or not making expected progress and take appropriate action.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and improvement plans are clearly focused through success criteria, targets and timelines.
- Improvements to pupil outcomes, attendance and the quality of teaching indicate a good capacity to maintain improvement.
- Safeguarding arrangements comply with statutory regulations. Leaders and managers are extremely well equipped to ensure that all staff recruited are rigorously checked. The leadership identifies and responds very well to any concerns regarding child welfare. The school is exceptionally well supported by the effective role played by the parent support adviser.
- Senior leaders observe teachers' work and make accurate judgements relating to the quality of their practice and the progress their pupils make. These findings are used appropriately to decide teachers' pay and internal promotion within the school. There is a strong link between performance, appraisal and pay progression.
- The school places a high priority on professional training for the staff and developing their teaching skills and knowledge, although opportunities for teachers to share best practice could be increased.
- The range of subjects and topics taught is extensive, and well matched to the needs of pupils. There are a very wide variety of activities available for pupils to participate in, ranging from a film club, tag rugby, 'nuts about nature' to marathon training. An example of the breadth of opportunity was the recent performance of the choir at St Paul's Cathedral in London.
- There are many opportunities for the development of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness and understanding. This is highlighted by the school's close links with a school in Jaixing in China which has raised the pupils' awareness of being a 'global' citizen.
- The local authority provides light touch support for this good school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors know the school well, are determined to improve it further and hold leaders to account for the effectiveness of the school. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and how well it performs in comparison with other similar schools. They understand the areas for development and are working well with the school to develop a three-year plan. They are regular visitors to the school and are individually 'attached' to specific classes. They understand the links between teachers' performance and decisions about salary progression. The governing body has an effective committee structure and individual governors' expertise is used well, for example to ensure that the school's finances are carefully audited and well managed. Governors have a clear understanding of how the pupil premium funding is allocated and its impact in improving levels of pupils' attainment. Governors are kept well informed by the school's leadership and also attend training so that they can fulfil their roles more effectively. They ensure that the school meets all statutory obligations, particularly those related to safeguarding and the safe recruitment of staff.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	135146
<b>Local authority</b>	Plymouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	402797

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	299
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Patricia Lopez
<b>Executive headteacher</b>	Andrea Norris
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 November–1 December 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01752 775478
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