

# Oakdale Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110710
<b>Local Authority</b>	Peterborough
<b>Inspection number</b>	378150
<b>Inspection dates</b>	29–30 September 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Nick Butt

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

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<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>	200
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Debbie Skrobot
<b>Headteacher</b>	Yolanda Steward
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 April 2007
<b>School address</b>	Oakdale Avenue Stanground Peterborough PE2 8TD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01733 566237
<b>Fax number</b>	01733 554722
<b>Email address</b>	office@oakdale.peterborough.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	29–30 September 2011
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspection team visited 21 lessons or part lessons taught by seven teachers. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils, and spoke informally to parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at a selection of documentation, including planning, evidence of monitoring such as lesson observations, and analyses of pupils' work and other assessment information. The inspection team scrutinised inspection questionnaires returned by 126 parents and carers, as well as those from staff and pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- What is the school doing to make sure that more pupils achieve the higher levels in writing?
- How challenging are pupils' curricular targets, and how well do they know what steps to take to achieve them?
- What impact has the new headteacher had upon the school's drive for improvement?

## Information about the school

Oakdale is smaller than the average primary school. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average. Of these, a significant minority have Italian heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, but the proportion of those with a statement of special educational needs is average. A new headteacher took up post in September 2011. The school has a wide range of awards including Investors in People, the Information Technology Mark and Artsmark Gold.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Oakdale is a good school. The new headteacher has won the support and respect of the whole school community through her collaborative leadership style and astute early assessment of what the school does well and where it could improve. Changes she has introduced have been broadly welcomed and are making a difference. For example, measures to secure the school site and monitor access to the building have created a safe environment for pupils and staff alike. She leads a strong team, with well-established systems to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and the breadth of the curriculum. While all subject leaders have the opportunity to observe lessons on a regular basis, there is occasional inconsistency in how well this is done, and how efficiently time is allocated to the task. Nonetheless, leaders and managers have been successful in improving teaching, so that it is now consistently good.

Pupils make good progress from starting points that are often below those expected for their age, and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities do outstandingly well. This is because the school identifies early any pupils requiring extra help and provides support that is targeted precisely to their needs. Close monitoring of their progress ensures that planning can be adapted to respond to any changes in their performance. Pupils' attainment is broadly average but improving, especially in reading. In writing, while most pupils make good progress, some more-able pupils do not reach the higher levels of attainment because they do not have sufficient opportunity to practise writing at length. Teachers have identified these pupils and are monitoring their progress closely. The school's learning environment is very rich, with outstanding displays of artwork making the classrooms and public areas highly attractive. The curriculum interests and engages pupils well, and is enriched by a good range of visits and visitors.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and probe pupils' understanding with searching questions. They use information and communication technology well to bring learning alive. Their use of assessment is satisfactory, but some pupils have targets that are too general and there is unevenness in the extent to which marking and other guidance shows pupils how to reach them. The new headteacher has introduced a new marking policy which is beginning to tackle these shortcomings. Outstanding pastoral care enables pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable to overcome any barriers to learning successfully. The school promotes attendance well, keeping it above average levels.

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Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider community, taking on numerous responsibilities, for example as newly-appointed house captains. They have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe, and say they have not experienced bullying at the school. They take plenty of exercise and many make healthy choices. However, a small minority of pupils do not choose healthy snacks at playtimes.

The good progress made since the school's previous inspection, with improvements in teaching and rising standards, combined with the considerable impact of the new headteacher and clear and effective self-evaluation, points to a good capacity for further improvement.

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

- Improve the impact of teaching on learning and progress through sharper use of assessment by:
  - identifying pupils capable of achieving the higher levels of attainment in writing and giving them challenging extended work to do
  - ensuring all teachers set pupils challenging targets linked to National Curriculum levels
  - ensuring marking gives pupils clear guidance about the next steps in their learning to reach their targets.
- Develop the role of subject coordinators by:
  - sharpening their monitoring skills
  - making best use of time for them to fulfil their responsibilities.
- Ensure that snacks eaten at playtimes are more healthy.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Pupils enjoy being actively involved in learning and have positive attitudes to their work. They respond well to teachers' high expectations, as when Year 6 pupils role-played a Victorian class and made comparisons between that experience and modern schooling. They cooperate well when working in pairs or groups. For example, Year 2 pupils collaborated in playing a game to add 10 to a two-digit number. Year 5 pupils worked successfully in groups to discuss the properties of shapes and fed back their ideas to the class. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities take a full part in lessons because planning carefully includes them and teaching assistants support them well. Individual education plans are tailored specifically to their needs and monitored frequently to ensure that they make the best possible progress.

Pupils behave especially well on the playground and moving around school. Their behaviour is mainly good in lessons, but just occasionally a few become restless if the work is not challenging them sufficiently. The school council interviewed candidates for the headship of the school, and pupils help the younger ones at

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lunchtimes. There are good links with the local community. Pupils submitted ideas for improving the local park and made cakes for a charity coffee morning. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils get on well together and have a strong sense of right and wrong. They get to know children from different places on residential trips and have a very strong appreciation of the art from a variety of global cultures. They are well prepared for secondary school, being equipped not only with the basic skills they need, but also with good work habits and positive attitudes to learning. They have good enterprise skills, organising the sale of produce at the harvest festival, and sourcing and setting up a tuck shop.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Most lessons observed during the inspection ran at a brisk pace, engaging pupils and involving them actively in learning. Teachers have high expectations and use teaching assistants well to support individuals and groups of pupils. Staff make good use of vocabulary related to particular subjects, such as mathematics. Pupils take pride in their work and produce topic folders that are beautifully illustrated, but are sometimes short of extended pieces of writing. They can talk about their curricular targets but are occasionally unsure how these link to National Curriculum levels of attainment, and what steps they need to take to reach them. This is because marking does not always show them how to improve.

The curriculum is organised well and takes good account of pupils' interests and aspirations. It is underpinned by a progression of skills in each year group. Pupils'

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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learning is enhanced by a good range of trips, such as to the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge to look at Ancient Egyptian relics. All pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 have the opportunity to take part in an annual residential visit, developing their social and team-building skills. Pupils practise their skills across a range of subjects, for example in devising and producing films for the Peterborough Oscars (the POSCARS). A prize-winning example examined the Italian community’s links with the nearby London brickworks.

Extremely strong links with outside agencies support the school’s outstanding pastoral care. Parents and carers praise highly the school’s concern for each individual. One, expressing the views of many, said, ‘Staff are approachable and extremely committed... my child is very fortunate to come to a lovely caring school.’ The school manages transition arrangement extremely well, both into Reception and on to high school, with plenty of extra support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Home-school diaries keep parents and carers up to date with any pastoral matters, and give them the opportunity to enter into a dialogue with the class teacher.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The new headteacher has involved all staff and the governing body in renewing the school’s aims and vision, summed up in the statement, ‘A path of discovery, a route to success.’ She has rightly re-focused the drive for improvement on the process of learning, and introduced flexible ways of working to give teachers freedom to try out new ideas and play to their strengths. This has brought new energy to the classroom and helped to bring learning to life for pupils. During the inspection pupils were engaged in a variety of exciting activities linked to International Week, including tasting food from different countries. The school’s comprehensive plans for improvement have identified the correct issues, although their evaluation focuses too much on the activities undertaken rather than their impact on pupils’ learning. Subject coordinators have a good overview of their areas of responsibility, but the time allocated for monitoring does not give sufficient priority to the core subjects of English and mathematics.

The governing body’s effectiveness is good. Its members are well informed and bring a range of expertise to the table. They support the school in numerous ways and keep a careful check of its provision. The governing body has identified that it does

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not explore the school’s data with sufficient rigour at times, to appreciate the nuances of how different groups are performing.

The school has forged productive links with local businesses, which help with reading partners and improving the local environment. A strong partnership with the Italian Consulate enables the school to teach the Italian language and culture to pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2. The school promotes equality and tackles discrimination well, so that all groups of pupils achieve at least well, and some do outstandingly well. It has identified the minor differences and how to resolve them, for example by moving more pupils to the higher levels in writing. The governing body ensures that safeguarding arrangements are good. Meticulous records are kept and all staff are trained in promoting pupils’ safety and well-being. The school works extremely well with its local community and has effective links with schools overseas. It is developing links with contrasting schools in the United Kingdom.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly and happily into Reception because of the excellent relationships with staff and the high levels of pastoral care. They learn quickly and make good progress towards the early learning goals. They develop positive personal qualities that enable them to cooperate together and take responsibility for tidying up sensibly. Children respond well to the wide range of interesting and enjoyable activities available to them, and have plenty of opportunity to choose tasks for themselves both inside and outside the classroom. There have been improvements to the outdoor area since the last inspection and it is used to support all six areas of learning. Lack of space places some limits on the extent to which pupils can use large apparatus or wheeled toys, but suitable provision is made for them at other

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times. Good teaching meets the needs of all children and ensures that their interests are taken into account. Children enjoyed finding and counting ‘treasure’ left buried for them in the sand by pirates and wrote them thank you letters.

Children develop early basic skills well, with daily practice in the sounds that letters make. The teacher uses puppets and a wide range of techniques to engage children, who are very enthusiastic about their learning. Learning journey folders give a good record of children’s progress, although achievements are not always directly linked to the elements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile. The leader is reflective and responds sensitively to the needs of all the children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Self-evaluation is thorough and accurate.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

A larger proportion of parents and carers returned questionnaires than usual. Parents and carers told inspectors, both through the questionnaires and informally in the playground, that they are mainly very happy with the school, and feel that the new headteacher has got off to a good start. They particularly welcome the new security arrangements and name badges for all staff. All parents and carers who responded agreed that teaching was good and the inspection team found this to be the case. A few parents and carers felt that the school could take more account of their suggestions and concerns. Inspectors looked into this and found that where concerns are made known the school deals with them well. While the school seeks the views of parents and carers, it does not do this particularly frequently.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Oakdale Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 126 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 200 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	88	70	35	28	2	2	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	83	66	42	33	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	66	52	58	46	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	67	53	53	42	3	2	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	85	67	40	32	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	77	61	43	34	6	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	79	63	40	32	3	2	3	2
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	71	56	44	35	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	77	61	43	34	5	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	57	45	54	43	5	4	5	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	58	46	53	42	9	7	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	71	56	46	37	4	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	88	70	36	29	1	1	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 8 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



3 October 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Oakdale Primary School, Peterborough, PE2 8TD**

Thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school recently, and for sharing your views with us. You told us that you think your school is good and we agree with you. Here are some of its strengths.

- You achieve well and your reading is particularly good.
- You told us how safe you feel at school, and you know all about avoiding risk.
- Pupils who find learning difficult do especially well.
- Your artwork is very attractive and produced to a high standard.
- The teaching is good in the school and teachers make lessons interesting and enjoyable.
- There are plenty of visits and clubs for you to take part in.
- The school cares for you especially well.
- The new headteacher has got off to a good start.

We have asked the school's leaders to make sure more of you do really well in writing, by giving you more opportunities to write at length. We have asked them to give you targets that are well suited to your needs to help you improve, and to make sure marking shows you the steps you need to take to reach your targets. We would also like those people in charge of subjects to have more time to check them carefully, especially in English and mathematics.

You all can help by working hard at all times and telling your teachers what you enjoy learning. You can also make sure you eat healthy snacks at playtimes, because some of you still bring crisps and chocolate to school.

With best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

Nick Butt  
Lead inspector

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