

# Oakwood School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique reference number</b>	125273
<b>Local authority</b>	Surrey
<b>Inspection number</b>	384969
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 June 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	John Daniell HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,131
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Brown
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sue Child
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8–9 June 2011
<b>School address</b>	Balcombe Road Horley Surrey RH6 9AE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01293 785363
<b>Fax number</b>	01293 786465
<b>Email address</b>	admin@oakwood.surrey.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	<b>11–16</b>
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	<b>20–21 June 2012</b>
<b>Inspection number</b>	<b>384969</b>



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2012



## Introduction

Inspection team

John Daniell

Her Majesty's Inspector

Andrew Lyons

Additional inspector

Cyndi Millband

Additional inspector

Evelyn Riley

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice and was planned as a third special measures monitoring inspection. Inspectors saw 32 parts of lessons taught by 32 teachers. In addition, a number of lessons were observed for shorter periods of time in order to focus on the achievement of disabled students and those with special educational needs. Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, three groups of students, the school improvement advisor and the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at school performance data, school improvement and self-evaluation documentation, records of the quality of teaching and school policies. As this was planned as a special measures monitoring inspection, no questionnaires were distributed. However, a meeting took place with a group of parents and carers in order to gather their views.

## Information about the school

Oakwood School is larger than the average-sized school. The school was placed in special measures in June 2011. The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is higher than the national average, with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties forming the most significant need. The proportion of students on school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is twice the national average. While most students are of White British heritage, the proportion of students coming from minority ethnic groups is increasing. A smaller-than-average proportion of students are known to be eligible for free school meals. The school has exceeded the current floor standard which is the minimum standard set by the government for attainment and progress.

The school is a specialist technology college and has achieved Investors in People status as well as Investors in Careers. It is also a member of the Horley Learning Partnership.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is not good because achievement and the quality of teaching, although improving, remain satisfactory. In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Students' achievement over time is satisfactory. There is clear evidence of an upward trend which continued last year. Gaps in achievement between different groups are narrowing and school leaders are rightly focusing on higher-attaining students and those on school action plus, where the gaps are more noticeable. Students report that they enjoy reading but that they are not presented with enough opportunities to read aloud in lessons.
- Teaching is satisfactory. The proportion of good teaching is steadily increasing and effective use is made of strong practitioners in the sharing of good practice. Too much teaching lacks challenge and does not meet the needs of different groups of learners which slows down the rate of progress for some. Teachers' marking is helpful, but not all students respond to comments made.
- Behaviour over time is now satisfactory. Students and teachers speak of noticeable improvements and the impact of the revised classroom behaviour management strategy. Some low-level disruptive behaviour remains in lessons but this is not persistent. Students feel safe in school and are more confident that any issues they report relating to bullying will be dealt with effectively.
- Leaders and managers have taken effective action to secure improved outcomes and to address many of the areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection report. Leadership at middle level is being strengthened which allows senior leaders to be more strategic. Systems for managing the school's performance are becoming embedded. Students' spiritual and cultural

**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

development is promoted less well than social and moral aspects.

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

- Sustain improvements in achievement by:
  - developing effective strategies for improving outcomes for disabled students and those with special educational needs, as well as for higher attaining students
  - providing more opportunities for students to read aloud in lessons.
  
- Increase the proportion of teaching that is good and better by:
  - ensuring that all teachers' planning meets the needs of different groups of students, particularly for higher attaining students and those on school action plus
  - providing an element of challenge in all lessons for all students, whatever their ability
  - making sure that all students respond to the helpful comments made by teachers when marking students' work
  - eradicating any remaining low-level disruptive behaviour and ensuring that all teachers understand and develop their role as effective behaviour managers.
  
- Provide increased opportunities in and outside school for students to further develop their spiritual and cultural understanding.

## **Main report**

### **Achievement of pupils**

Students' attainment on entry to the school has been broadly average. However, in recent years, an increased number of students with lower prior attainment have joined the school. The proportion of students gaining five or more A\* to C grades at GCSE in 2011 including in English and mathematics was 54%, which was slightly below the national average. Current data, which include results from examinations already taken, indicate that attainment is set to rise in 2012 to above last year's national average. Students make good progress in mathematics and in humanities subjects. Disabled students and those with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily alongside their peers. Within the school, students at school action plus and those who are higher attaining progress at a slower rate. However, gaps in attainment are narrowing for all groups of students because of a renewed emphasis on progress and the setting of targets. The performance of students known to be eligible for free school meals and of those with low prior attainment has improved significantly. There is some variation in the performance of students from minority ethnic groups. Regular discussions involving senior leaders, members of the

**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

governing body, the heads of core subjects and the special educational needs coordinator now take place with a focus on achievement by different groups of students, and this results in well-targeted interventions to raise standards. Literacy skills are developed satisfactorily across all subjects, which contribute to students' enjoyment of reading. However, students told inspectors they would welcome more opportunities to read aloud in lessons.

Students' progress over time is satisfactory overall. Parents and carers believe their children achieve well at the school. In a Year 7 science lesson, students of varying abilities conducted the same experiment. The higher-attaining students were not challenged enough from the start. Consequently, their progress was not accelerated sufficiently and achievement was satisfactory. Where students were observed making better progress, they were engaged in their learning and made effective use of opportunities to develop their independent learning skills. For example, Year 9 students in a history lesson on how people were affected by World War II, made good use of available resources and responded thoughtfully to the task. The better teachers are intuitive and demonstrate a sound understanding of how students learn.

### Quality of teaching

Evidence gathered during the inspection, as well as reviews carried out by the local authority, support the school's belief that teaching over time is satisfactory and some is good. A very small proportion of teaching is inadequate. Those parents and carers who met with inspectors expressed satisfaction about the quality of teaching. Inspection evidence supports their views. Satisfactory teaching secures progress for all students, but the rate of progress is uneven. This is because these teachers' planning for learning does not take into account the specific learning needs of all students. Consequently, all students often do the same work and there is a distinct lack of challenge for higher attaining students at the start of the lesson. Where teaching is only satisfactory, there is a tendency for teachers to talk too much from the front and for the pace of the lesson to slow. Consequently, some students, including disabled students and those with special educational needs, become less engaged in their learning and demonstrate low-level disruptive behaviour. Better teaching fosters good relationships, promotes positive behaviour and therefore engages all students in their learning. The proportion of good teaching is steadily improving and is reflected in the improving outcomes forecast for 2012. In an effective drama lesson in Year 8 where students created a performance using masks, the teacher's high expectations and carefully structured planning secured good progress. Opportunities were incorporated in the lesson for students to provide insightful comments on the quality of the performances and how they could be improved.

Students know their levels of attainment and some can explain confidently how to move up to the next level. Teachers' marking is regular and there are some good examples of detailed comments from teachers which clearly indicate how students can improve on their current performance. However, very few students respond to

**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

these comments.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of students' development are taught satisfactorily across the curriculum. A recently completed audit clearly maps out to what extent each aspect is delivered. An effective lesson in English used the story of *Forrest Gump* as an imaginative vehicle for understanding and exploring disability. This triggered some meaningful discussion and promoted equal opportunities well. Opportunities to promote students' spiritual and cultural development are less well developed.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Students report that behaviour in lessons and around the school has improved and all said they feel safe when in school. As a result, students' attendance is above average. Parents and carers who met with inspectors also rightly believe that behaviour has improved. This improvement in behaviour over time since the school was placed in special measures is validated by school's own data on behaviour incidents, which show that there has been a reduction in the proportion of fixed-term exclusions. Instances of bullying have also declined and students are confident that any incidents that are reported will be dealt with effectively. Students' behaviour in lessons makes a positive contribution to effective learning. However, where teaching is satisfactory and planning for the needs of different groups is weaker, students can sometimes become less engaged. The recently reviewed classroom behaviour strategy encourages positive behaviour in the classroom, but this is not implemented consistently by all teachers. Students move around the school calmly but a few still lack a sense of urgency when moving between lessons.

An increasing proportion of students are being offered posts of responsibility, including membership of the school council and the role of prefect, for which they have to submit a formal application. These responsibilities are fostering a sense of pride in the school and helping to create a mutually supportive and cohesive school community. During the inspection, a number of Year 8 students were actively involved in successfully hosting a mathematics day for Year 2 pupils from local primary schools.

Case studies of students whose circumstances make them vulnerable demonstrate that they are cared for well. The garden club provides a safe haven for such students and any others to make a positive contribution to the life of the school.

### **Leadership and management**

Leaders and managers have responded positively to areas for development identified during the monitoring visits. For example, they modified their overwhelming monitoring schedule and rightly concentrated on monitoring aspects that are more likely to secure school improvement. The transition from heads of house to heads of

**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

year has been successfully implemented. Systems for evaluating the work of the school are becoming embedded and senior leaders demonstrate an accurate appraisal of the school's strengths and areas for development. Key appointments, including a new head of English and a special educational needs coordinator, have been made, and contribute to the school's capacity to sustain improvement. Improved systems for engaging parents and carers are in place, for example through the parents' forum or the school's 'open door' visits on Fridays. The parents' forum has contributed to the improvement in the provision of homework and the new school motto, 'Achieving Excellence Together'. Most parents and carers support the school's aims, but a few remain harder to engage.

Senior and middle leaders have been successful in their quest to steadily improve the quality of teaching and, consequently, students' outcomes. Records of teaching over time for every teacher are broken down into key components of what constitutes a good lesson, and teachers' performance management is linked to whole-school development priorities. Inspectors concurred with senior leaders' judgements during jointly observed lesson observations, but found some appraisals of teachers' performance over time to be a little over generous.

The broad and balanced curriculum adequately meets the needs of students through the introduction of specific pathways which support students in following appropriate courses based on their interests and potential. Students say they appreciate the range of sporting and other activities on offer. Opportunities provided through the curriculum to promote students' spiritual, social, moral and cultural understanding are satisfactory. School leaders are planning for an improved provision as a result of an audit which identified existing weaknesses.

Members of the governing body are committed to improving students' outcomes and have made a concerted effort to develop their understanding of performance data and how well different groups of students achieve. There is no discrimination in the school and leaders' and managers' focus on narrowing any remaining gaps in attainment demonstrates their commitment to equal opportunities. Arrangements for the safeguarding of children meet statutory requirements.

**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

## 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

**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

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



22 June 2012

Dear Students

### **Inspection of Oakwood School, Balcombe Road, Horley RH6 9AE**

Thank you for making the inspection team feel welcome when we visited your school recently. Yours is an improving school and you told us you particularly enjoy the many opportunities to develop your leadership skills.

- Oakwood is a satisfactory school and your achievement over time is satisfactory and improving. Gaps in your achievement are narrowing and school leaders are working well to ensure all of you achieve as well as you can.
- Teaching is satisfactory and improving. Some teachers do not challenge you enough in lessons. They do not sufficiently match the work to your specific needs. Consequently, although you make progress, your rate of progress is often slowed down.
- Your behaviour has improved and is now satisfactory. You also told us you feel safe in school and are confident that any reported instances of bullying will be dealt with efficiently. Your behaviour in lessons is satisfactory and often good, but there are occasions when poor behaviour affects your learning and progress. This is often linked to the quality of teaching.
- Leaders, managers and members of the governing body have taken effective action to address areas of school improvement which have an impact on your outcomes. Consequently, the quality of teaching and how well you achieve are steadily improving. Some aspects of your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are stronger than others.

We have asked leaders and managers to continue to improve your achievement and the quality of teaching, as well as to consider ways of promoting your spiritual and cultural development. We ask you to concentrate in all of your lessons and to model good behaviour which supports your learning. Take advantage of the opportunities offered to you to have a say in the way your school is run, so that you can make a positive contribution to your school's improvement.

Yours sincerely

John Daniell  
Her Majesty's Inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234**, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**