

# Oxley Park Academy

Redgrave Drive, Oxley Park, Milton Keynes, MK4 4TA

**Inspection dates** 4–5 March 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	NA
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The Principal and senior leaders ensure that the school has a clear sense of direction that is shared with members of staff, parents and pupils.
- Leaders are ensuring that the school is improving again following a recent dip in pupils' progress.
- Leaders and governors are having a positive impact on developing teaching and raising pupils' achievement.
- Pupils behave well and feel safe at school. They are responsible, proud of their school and enjoy the many interesting activities provided.
- Teaching is good because teachers share their extensive knowledge with the pupils and motivate them to want to learn.
- Attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils achieve well from their differing starting points.
- Children learn quickly in the early years provision because tasks are well organised and interesting.
- Strong provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development supports pupils in becoming considerate and well-rounded individuals.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers are not always making good use of information on how well pupils are doing to provide hard enough work, especially for the most able.
- Occasionally, time is wasted when pupils finish quickly and wait for others to catch up, or when the class is allowed too much time to complete an activity.
- Leaders, including governors and middle leaders, are not checking up quickly enough that all groups of pupils are doing equally well. This means that they do not always identify minor variations in pupils' achievement quite as rapidly as they might.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed teaching and learning in 23 lessons, of which seven were seen jointly with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with leaders, teachers, pupils and members of the governing body.
- The inspection team took into account the 86 responses to the online survey, Parent View, a letter from a parent and held informal discussions with a number of parents.
- The inspection team considered the views expressed in the survey responses from 46 members of staff.
- A range of information supplied by the school was scrutinised, including: the school’s own information about how well pupils are doing; planning documents; checks on the quality of teaching; the school development plan; and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding procedures.

## Inspection team

Alison Cartlidge, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Allan Barfoot	Additional inspector
Lynn Lowery	Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Oxley Park Academy is much larger than the average-sized primary school. The school converted to a stand-alone academy on 1 July 2011. When its predecessor school, Oxley Park Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, its overall effectiveness was judged to be good.
- There are two full-time Reception classes in the early years provision.
- Pupils have a diverse range of ethnic heritages. The large majority are White British, of Indian background, or of African origin.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is well below average. This is additional funding for disadvantaged pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- There have been several changes in staffing over the last two years, regarding teachers and the roles of senior leaders.
- The Principal is a local leader of education and has been supporting another school in the area.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

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

- Ensure that teachers make good use of information on how well pupils are doing, so that:
  - they always plan lessons which provide pupils, especially the most able, with enough challenge
  - pupils are not routinely waiting for others to catch up or are allowed to spend too long on a task.
- Strengthen the way leaders, including governors and middle leaders, check up on how well groups of pupils are doing so that any variations in achievement are identified and tackled in a timely manner.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- Leaders have a strong impact on ensuring that the school has a positive ethos where teaching and good behaviour can flourish. The school has a distinctive identity and the strong sense of teamwork is evident right from the start of each day when the whole school takes part in their 'Hakka'.
- All members of staff and pupils know what it means to be part of 'Team Oxley' and understand the role they play in the school. Consequently, equal opportunities and strong relationships are promoted well and discrimination of any kind is discouraged. Several parents of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are particularly impressed with the way their children are included in all the school has to offer.
- The inspirational Principal and senior leaders have a firm grasp on what needs to be done next to improve the school further. They have established a clear vision for all at the school to 'dream, believe and achieve together'.
- Systems for supporting and challenging teachers in their work, and identifying and providing relevant training, are robust. New teachers to the school are given good support from mentors. All staff have clearly defined next steps to improve their work and these are followed up to ensure that they develop skills and knowledge rapidly.
- The leadership structure has changed recently and leaders, including governors and middle leaders, have become more rigorous about checking up on the progress of individual pupils. While the dip in attainment and progress in 2014 was not entirely unexpected, information on how well groups of pupils are doing has not been organised well enough so that any relative weaknesses can be identified and tackled promptly.
- The new curriculum is established and provides a breadth and balance of learning across subjects. Strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. They learn to respect and appreciate the beliefs and values of others. Links have been made with schools in South Africa and Zimbabwe to further enhance pupils' cultural understanding. Pupils enjoy learning and have good opportunities to reflect on their experiences.
- The additional funding for physical education and sport is used effectively to provide specialist coaching, staff training and resources. As a result, there has been an increase in competitive sport and a wide range of interesting clubs including skating, horse riding and parkour (free running).
- Funding for the few pupils who are disadvantaged is targeted effectively according to individual need. While much of this support provides relevant one-to-one or small-group work in class, it also includes valuable access to therapists and fee-paying clubs.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and are effective in keeping pupils safe. All adults who work in the school are checked for suitability for working with the pupils and are fully trained to help keep them safe. A good proportion of the staff are trained in administering first aid.
- Parents are pleased with the work of the school, especially with the way their children are being taught. They typically make comments such as, 'I couldn't ask for nicer staff' and 'The teachers know the children very well.'
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is effective. Governors have a clear understanding of what works well and what the school needs to do next. They compare the school with others and are aware that the dip in attainment and progress in 2014 was disappointing and greater than anticipated. They know how good teaching is at the school and what steps are being taken to help teachers to improve their work. They are knowledgeable about the arrangements for supporting weaker aspects of teaching and rewarding strengths. Governors have asked for more frequent information on how well pupils are doing so that they can challenge the school more rigorously as soon as dips in the progress of groups of pupils become apparent.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and respectful, and enjoy taking responsibility and being part of 'Team Oxley'. Most pupils and their parents agree that behaviour at the school is good, and this view is backed up by the school's behaviour records.
- Pupils cooperate well during lessons. For example, in mathematics in Year 1, pupils shared weighing equipment sensibly as they checked which objects were lighter or heavier.

- Pupils play together harmoniously most of the time. A small minority of parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire, Parent View, expressed concerns over the way bullying is being dealt with by the school. Inspection evidence shows that bullying is dealt with effectively. Pupils spoken to during the inspection reported that instances of poor behaviour and bullying were rare. They felt that they could share any concerns with staff and these would then be dealt with. If for any reason unkindness such as name-calling persists in a class, the school is happy to bring the topic up for class discussion or to tackle it through assemblies.
- Pupils are positive about coming to school and attend regularly. Most try hard and persevere with tasks in lessons, with only occasional lapses in concentration. They become confident and give each other helpful advice such as, 'It's okay to make a mistake' and 'You can always try harder next time.'

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils and their parents agree that pupils feel safe at school and know how to stay safe.
- Pupils move about the school in an orderly fashion, including going up and down the stairs. They remain calm, even during the exciting 'World Book Day' when everyone was dressed up as 'Wally', a character from the *Where's Wally?* books.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about how to stay safe when using electronic devices. They have been taught how to look out for warning signs for unsafe situations and how to react in these circumstances.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers and teaching assistants form good relationships with the pupils enabling them to manage behaviour well. They have a positive impact on the pupils' learning, including in literacy, reading and mathematics.
- Teachers work together well in year teams to plan activities that engage the pupils' interest. Resources and practical tasks are used effectively to support learning, especially for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. For example, in mathematics in Year 2, all pupils could take part in measuring right angles by using 'shape monsters'.
- Tasks are explained clearly so that pupils are aware of what they are to learn. For example, in Year 3, pupils understood what they were doing when they sorted various words into nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs.
- Members of staff have extensive subject knowledge and make good use of vocabulary that is specific to a subject. For example, in Year 5, words such as personification, metaphor and simile were used to support pupils in writing interesting poems about cities.
- Teachers mark pupils' work with clear next steps for improvement; pupils usually respond quickly to this advice. For example, pupils enjoy improving their work by using their 'polishing pens' to 'up level' their writing.
- In some lessons, teachers do not make enough use of the information on how well pupils are doing to ensure that all pupils move on to harder work as soon as they can. For example, the most-able pupils, in particular, can spend too long on a task they have already mastered, or they are kept waiting for other pupils to catch up during a whole-class task.

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' attainment is broadly average when they join Year 1. In 2014, pupils' attainment was below average in the Year 1 phonics (the sounds that letters make) screening check. Attainment is higher in the current Year 1 because the school is providing a clearer structure for teaching sounds and letters this year, and progress is now good in this subject.
- Attainment is consistently above average by the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' progress declined in 2014 compared to the previous year, especially for boys in writing. The school has taken action to tackle this dip by adapting its planning in different subjects. As a result, boys are increasingly motivated and want to improve their work. Information about the progress of current pupils and pupils' work across the school shows that good progress is being made this year.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress from their starting points. They are supported effectively in lessons and are enabled to take part in all the school has to offer. Activities are carefully prepared to support them socially and academically and, consequently, their

confidence also develops well.

- The few disadvantaged pupils eligible for additional funding currently at school make at least as much, if not more, progress than other pupils, and any gaps in attainment are closing and smaller than those found nationally. In 2014, the attainment of Year 6 pupils from this group was equivalent to a term behind others both in school and nationally in reading and mathematics, and less than a term in writing.
- The most-able pupils achieve well over time. However, there are occasions in some lessons when they are not challenged to move on in their learning quickly enough.

### The early years provision

is good

- Good leadership and management ensure that there is a wide range of activities to promote learning. Arrangements for checking up on how well the children are doing are robust. There is a clear understanding of what needs to be done to make provision even better.
- Children behave well and feel safe. They learn how to share, to take turns and to try hard. They like learning because activities are planned that will engage their interest. During the inspection, children enjoyed various tasks linked to the theme 'The Elves and the Shoemaker'. For example, they decorated shoes for the shop, wrote letters to the shoemaker and measured shoe sizes.
- Teaching is good. Members of staff are effective role models for behaviour and the development of new skills. Their encouragement and support enables the children to learn how to be confident and well organised. Routines such as the five-minute warnings and the use of the expression 'magnet eyes' help children to focus on the teacher.
- Children achieve well in the Reception Year and the proportion reaching a good level of development is broadly the national average when they join Year 1. Children do especially well in personal development and reading, and are well prepared for the next stage of their education. They are confident about helping their friends and learning from each other, and are happy to 'magpie' (copy) new ideas.
- Children are developing a better knowledge of phonics this year because sounds and letters are being emphasised and are taught earlier in the year than in the past. Leaders are aware that boys' writing was a comparative weakness in 2014 and are providing more writing activities to appeal to both boys and girls this year.
- Worthwhile links with parents are firmly established and, consequently, parents are suitably involved in their children's learning. For example, parents are given helpful advice on how to help their children learn about phonics.

## 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>	136853
<b>Local authority</b>	Milton Keynes
<b>Inspection number</b>	449687

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>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	540
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tracy Billingsley
<b>Principal</b>	Cathy Higgins
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01908 503870
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