

Oakdale Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110710
Local Authority	CITY OF PETERBOROUGH
Inspection number	288749
Inspection date	24 April 2007
Reporting inspector	Linda Killman HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Debbie Skrobot
Headteacher	Mr John Yardy
Date of previous school inspection	8 October 2001
School address	Oakdale Avenue Stanground Peterborough Cambridgeshire PE2 8TD
Telephone number	01733 566237
Fax number	01733 554722

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	24 April 2007
Inspection number	288749

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

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.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors over one day.

Description of the school

This is an average sized, oversubscribed school close to the city centre. The majority of pupils live locally in owner-occupier housing. The pupils' attainment on entry is average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average. Most pupils are White British; a fifth are from Italian heritage. The school has successfully achieved a number of nationally recognised awards including Artsmark Gold, Investors in People standard, the Basic Skills Benchmark and the Quality Mark for physical education.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Oakdale provides a good education for its pupils, excellent pastoral care and good support for learners of all abilities. It is an extremely inviting and welcoming place to be. The school is a harmonious community; staff have created an ethos where relationships are exceptionally good, where pupils feel safe and are well looked after, and where the pupils share a mutual respect for each other's cultures, faiths and traditions. The pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school, behave impeccably and have extremely good attitudes to learning. They acquire good skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) to support them in their future lives. The majority of parents are overwhelmingly supportive of what the school offers and deservedly the school has earned its good reputation.

The achievement of all pupils is good given their accelerated progress over time and the good standards reached before they leave the school. On entry, the pupils' skills are broadly at the expected level for their age. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory enabling pupils to make sound progress in their first year to reach age related expectations. Through Key Stage 1 some headway is made in reading. By the end of the Year 2, standards of attainment remain broadly average in mathematics and writing but above average in reading. The school is aware that girls' attainment at this stage is markedly higher than that of the boys and has begun to address this. The sound foundations laid in literacy, numeracy, personal and social skills and good quality teaching enable pupils to excel in Key Stage 2. These pupils are prepared to go the extra mile to stretch themselves. By the end of Year 6, pupils make good progress to reach above average standards in English and mathematics and exceptionally high standards in science. Nevertheless, the targets set for pupils in the 2006 national tests were insufficiently challenging, being exceeded by a considerable margin.

The quality of teaching and learning is mostly good. The high expectations shared by all staff for pupils to behave well ensure that time is used constructively in lessons. The best teaching generates high interest levels for pupils through good quality practical experiences and a greater level of challenge. All pupils have opportunities to work independently as well as in pairs and groups. All pupils take great pride in completing their written work.

The curriculum is exemplary in many respects. It is well balanced and completely inclusive, catering for pupils' individual talents and preferences. It is successfully designed to advance pupils' personal development and well-being to a high level. However, opportunities for outdoor play in the Foundation Stage are too restricted as the open space is underdeveloped. Take up is high for the outstanding range of out-of-lesson activities on offer for all ages. Safety programmes contribute to pupils' very good understanding of how to stay safe and act responsibly.

The headteacher is an excellent role model for staff, leading by example. His transparent approach to leadership and management encourages staff to be accountable and to be reflective about their practice. Regular self-review enables the school to identify strengths and weaknesses well, although some judgements are over-generous. Governance is good and improving, providing just the right balance of support and challenge to ensure that the school is held to account. The school's good leadership and management, proven track record of development since the previous inspection and its unrelenting commitment to ongoing improvement provides it with a good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that short and longer term targets for all pupils are sufficiently challenging.
- Raise standards and achievement further, increasing the proportion of pupils who make good and better progress, particularly in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1.
- Improve the provision for outdoor play in the Foundation Stage.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The pupils arrive in Reception with skills in line with national expectations. Well planned activities whet their appetite for learning through play. Most pupils make satisfactory progress throughout their first year to reach the goals expected for five-year-olds.

Over the past two years, standards in the national tests for seven-year-olds have dipped. Nevertheless, by the end of Year 2, the pupils' attainment remains higher than average in reading when compared to schools nationally and broadly average in writing and mathematics. Progress seen in most pupils' work is good. Girls' attainment at this stage is significantly higher than that of the boys. The school has responded to this through greater consideration of boys' interests in planning work for them and by strategically employing a balance of male and female visitors to enhance the curriculum.

Throughout the school, pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, as well as the most able pupils, make excellent progress to reach better standards than pupils with similar abilities nationally. This is because they are well supported by expert teaching assistants and the curriculum is suitably tailored to meet their needs and abilities.

In Key Stage 2, pupils have a better understanding of how to improve their work and make good progress. They enthusiastically complete their homework and opt to attend booster classes to improve their performance in literacy and numeracy. In the 2006 national tests standards were above average in English and mathematics and exceptionally high in science, where all pupils achieved the national average and three quarters reached the higher Level 5.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They adopt healthy lifestyles and know how to stay safe. In addition, the curriculum highly promotes teamwork and co-operation as well as the development of good literacy, numeracy and ICT skills that equip pupils very well for their future lives. The pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school because work is interesting. The pupils say that the work is 'action-packed and exciting'. The pupils know that adults will listen to their concerns and they trust them to take any necessary action. The quality of relationships and the pupils' behaviour and attitudes are excellent. Attendance is excellent and there have been no reported racist incidents or exclusions for a long time. The school council also plays a strong role in giving the pupils a voice in their school. It has made a difference by making suggestions for the introduction of the 'trim trail' and unlimited access to drinking water, all supported and acted upon by the school. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Everyone matters here, is respected and feels fully included. Year 6 pupils make a positive difference to the school community through the additional responsibilities that they eagerly take on. All of the pupils act as excellent ambassadors to the school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is mostly good. Regular assessments ensure that pupils' progress is successfully monitored although targets set for future work are not always adventurous enough. Lessons are well planned and organised. The pupils know what they are going to learn at the start of each lesson and are actively involved in assessing how well they have done. Those with additional learning needs are very well supported by expert teaching assistants and make great progress. Relationships are excellent in all classes and the pupils are keen to get on with their work in a secure and friendly environment.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum has been refined and improved since the school's last inspection and is outstanding. In particular, advances have been made in the provision of ICT which is used effectively to ensure that pupils develop good skills in this area as well as in literacy and numeracy. A stunning range of extra-curricular activities is provided. Pupils of all ages pursue their chosen interests after school. From the age of six they are able to take part in residential trips to increase independence, as well as their ability to work in teams and support each other. This helps them to make huge strides forward in their personal development and well-being, preparing them well for their future lives. There is a huge fun factor woven into the curriculum. 'Challenge Corners' stimulate pupils' thinking skills. Theme Days such as Healthy Eating Week and competitions that are regularly entered are highlights in the pupils' calendar. Italian classes are enjoyed by the school's Italian pupils as well as those who wish to learn the language from scratch. The arts feature highly, providing pupils with many opportunities to perform confidently and develop their creativity. Pupils of all abilities value their education and appreciate all that the curriculum offers.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good overall. Pastoral care for all pupils is outstanding in all aspects. Developing pupils' personal and social skills and fostering a positive attitude to learning are high priorities. The guidance provided for pupils to move their learning on is good. All pupils have targets to meet and they understand them. However, targets are not reviewed regularly enough to ensure that a high enough level of challenge is sustained. Marking is regular and tells pupils how well they have completed their work although it does not always indicate clearly enough how the work can be improved. Systems for checking how well pupils are doing are effective and the school is swift to intervene if pupils are struggling. The effective homework programme and booster classes for older pupils support learning outside school hours. The pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has an excellent rapport with pupils, staff and parents alike and is respected for his in-depth knowledge of every child. Staff are developed professionally through robust performance management that enables them to continuously strengthen their practice. Evaluation is embedded in the school's practice at all levels, albeit occasionally over-generous, and everyone contributes to improvement activities. Observations of teaching and learning provide clear guidance for improvement and return visits monitor progress. Vetting procedures for new recruits are robust, as are the school's safeguarding procedures for pupils. Governance is good and improving. Governors are increasingly raising their profile in the school and their recently introduced curriculum responsibilities are helping them to develop areas of specific expertise. The upbeat and reflective attitude of the leadership and management at all levels ensures that there is no room for complacency and contributes to the school's good capacity to improve.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-----------------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

26 April 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Oakdale Primary School, Peterborough, PE2 8TD

I had a great day at your school. From the moment I arrived, I was immediately struck by your respectful attitude towards all adults. You made me very welcome and through your willingness to share all that you know about the school you helped me to find these things that make your school such a good school:

- Your behaviour is extremely good.
- You take your work seriously and do your best to improve.
- There is an amazing variety of fun activities on offer for you to take part in beyond the school day.
- The teaching is good and enables you to progress well so that you leave the school armed with the skills you need to be successful learners in the future.

To make your school even better I have asked the staff to make sure that:

- your targets are challenging enough
- you are all learning as fast and as well as you can
- the youngest pupils have a better space for learning outdoors.

Your teachers are doing a good job and everyone works hard to give pupils at Oakdale the best possible chances to be successful. I hope that the enthusiasm that you show for learning lasts you a lifetime. You too can help to make your school an even better place by letting your teachers know when you are finding the work too easy!

Yours sincerely

Her Majesty's Inspector