

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Oakthorpe Primary School

School Street, Oakthorpe, Swadlincote, Derbyshire DE12 7RE

Inspection date:

17 December 2024

Outcome

Oakthorpe Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Rachel Culpan. This school is part of Rise Multi Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Dave Ellison-Lee, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Stephen Adshead.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy the richness of life at Oakthorpe Primary School. Older pupils revel in their role of helping others at lunchtime through organising games and activities. These less-structured times are harmonious and enjoyed by all. One pupil spoke for many when they explained, 'There's a great community in the school. Everything we do, we do together.'

The school has high expectations of what pupils should know and be able to do. Most pupils achieve well and older pupils agree that they are 'definitely ready' for secondary school. Pupils conduct themselves well around school and are polite and courteous. Occasionally, the work that they are asked to do does not sharply match what pupils know and can do. When this happens, some pupils lose their focus.

Parents and carers, as well as pupils, feel that children are safe at school. Pupils know how to share their feelings and readily give examples of when their worries have been sorted out. They understand that some pupils need more help than others to behave in line with the school's high expectations of behaviour. Most pupils would recommend the school to others saying that everyone was welcome at their school.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

There are new leaders in place and the school has joined a different trust since the previous inspection. Everyone works together to effectively implement well-judged plans.

Many parents praise this new direction and describe how approachable staff and leaders are. Staff appreciate the professional development they have had. They feel their workload is usually considered appropriately. Governors visit the school regularly to evaluate the impact of changes and check on the well-being of staff.

Children in the early years get off to a great start. They become confident, independent learners. Classroom routines are well-embedded and children listen carefully to what adults and other children have to say. Staff quickly spot when children need to have another go at something that they have not understood, such as forming a letter correctly. Teaching is swiftly adapted to make this happen. Children use the right vocabulary to describe the differences between shapes. They think carefully about how they could change their model of a square into a rectangle. Respectful attitudes are highly evident as children work together to tidy away.

The school has prioritised reading. There is a clear focus in ensuring that all pupils know the sounds that letters make. The books that pupils read are chosen with care so that pupils get the chance to practise blending sounds together. Many pupils write fluently and include sophisticated language when they write persuasive arguments or descriptive accounts. However, sometimes younger pupils are asked to undertake complex tasks, such as writing a story, before they have secured important early knowledge of how to do this.

Staff have identified exactly what pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) need to learn next. This is woven into classroom learning and more bespoke teaching. The school has worked with the trust to improve the way that teachers teach. Often activities are adapted so that all pupils, including those with SEND, can learn alongside their peers. Pupils usually recall what they have learned before. For example, older pupils explain how the movements that they practised before helps them with the new sport that they are learning this term. Well-judged feedback helps pupils to improve their performance when they have another go. Occasionally, pupils' misconceptions are not spotted and addressed as quickly as they could be.

The school has worked hard to improve attendance. This is carefully tracked to make sure that appropriate help and guidance is offered to families. The school works with external agencies and the trust to provide this. More pupils, including those with SEND, now come to school every session that they can. Pupils are proud of their school and enthusiastic about the opportunities that it offers. They enjoy a range of clubs and visits which enhance the curriculum. Pupils benefit from the chance to sing and play sports with other schools. Residential experiences, such as sleepovers and trips, are valued highly.

The school wants all pupils to 'flourish and succeed'. There is a new approach to behaviour in place and instances of inappropriate behaviour have declined. The school recognises that there is still more to do to fully embed this. Pupils learn to aspire and are taught how to become responsible citizens who can make a difference. Pupils deeply appreciate the schools' values and the rewards they get for demonstrating them. They understand the new behaviour system and the values that underpin it. Pupils feel that this

helps them to live well together, saying, 'Kindness spreads kindness, and the people at Oakthorpe are really kind.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes pupils at the early stages of learning to write are given tasks which are too hard for them. They cannot complete these successfully. The school should ensure that the work that pupils get enables them to practise early foundational knowledge.
- Occasionally misconceptions are not spotted and addressed. This means that some pupils do not understand well enough the errors they make or do not secure the important knowledge they need to. As the school's new pedagogical approaches are embedded, it should make sure that pupils' knowledge is checked consistently.
- On some occasions the work that pupils have does not match what they know. When this happens, pupils become disengaged. The school should ensure that pupils' work is consistently well-matched to what they know and can do and continue to embed the high expectations that they have of pupils' behaviour.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in 5 and 6 November 2019.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	143611
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10347651
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	81
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Stephen Adshead
CEO of the trust	Dave Ellison-Lee
Headteacher	Rachel Culpan
Website	www.oakthorpeprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	5 and 6 November 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up her post at the end of August 2024.
- The school joined Rise Multi Academy Trust in April 2022.
- There have been several changes of staff since the previous inspection.
- The school uses two unregistered alternative provision.
- There is a breakfast club for pupils at the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector listened as pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke with parents. They also considered the views expressed through Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors spoke with members of staff throughout the inspection and considered the opinions they expressed through the online survey.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Throughout the inspection, inspectors spoke with groups of pupils including during non-structured parts of the day such as playtimes and lunchtimes. They considered the views expressed through the pupil survey.
- Inspectors met with members of the local governing board and the board of trustees. They also met with leaders from the trust central executive team.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders and considered a range of documents.

Inspection team

Hazel Henson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Caroline Barton

Ofsted Inspector

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 and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024