

Inspection of Oakridge Primary School

Silvester Way, Stafford, Staffordshire ST17 0PR

Inspection dates:	1 and 2 October 2024
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under Section 5 of the Act since July 2014. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

This school is a truly special place. Pupils thrive here. They gain a deep knowledge of the things they are taught and use ambitious vocabulary with confidence. They quickly develop into resilient, reflective and resourceful young people who are ready to take on the challenges of lifelong learning. Leaders are proud of their work, and rightly so.

Leaders have nurtured a tangible culture of kindness and care here. This is at the core of the school's work. Staff are proud to be the roots that support the growth of everyone involved in the Oakridge family. Pupils' benefit greatly from this. They build strong lasting relationships with their peers and know who to speak to if they have a concern.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They strive to embody the school's values in all they do. Within lessons they are eager to make the most of every moment available. Children in the early years quickly learn the routines expected of them and make strong progress. The passion that pupils have for their learning is impressive.

Pupils benefit from an extensive range of carefully thought-out opportunities to enhance their wider personal development. For example, pupils often drive charity fundraising events for those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils quickly develop a deep understanding of their own social and moral responsibility.

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

The school has the highest expectations for pupils. Leaders, including governors, do not shy away from challenges. Their commitment to continuous improvement is profound. Nothing is left to chance here. The school prioritises ongoing staff development. Staff value this and grow into experts in their field. Everyone works tirelessly to ensure pupils receive the best education possible.

There is an impressive culture of reading at the school. From the very start, children in the nursery are immersed in a broad range of carefully considered texts, songs and rhymes. Teachers use ambitious language with pupils at every opportunity. The school's commitment to developing pupils' vocabulary is the golden thread that shines throughout the curriculum. Pupils grow to adore reading. They speak passionately and with confidence about books they read, using complex vocabulary with ease.

The school's phonics curriculum supports pupils' love of reading well. The curriculum has been carefully designed and is expertly taught by teachers who have a deep knowledge of how pupils learn to read. Staff use assessment skilfully. If pupils begin to fall behind, staff spot this quickly and make sure these pupils get the help they need. Because of this, pupils, including those in the early years, quickly learn to read with confidence and fluency.

The school has created an ambitious and thought-provoking curriculum. Leaders have taken great care to ensure that the precise knowledge that pupils need to be successful is

clearly set out. They have ordered this knowledge well so the small steps in learning that pupils take, build sensibly upon the things they already know. This helps pupils to make sense of their learning. Across the curriculum, teachers' strong subject knowledge, and skilful checks on learning, combine well to ensure lessons focus on the most important things that pupils need to learn. Consequently, pupils, including those in the early years, make exceptional progress and achieve well.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported here. Leaders work in close partnership with a range of external agencies and parents, to quickly identify pupils' individual needs. As a result, staff understand what a pupils' individual need means to the pupil. Staff are skilled. They subtly adapt their teaching to meet pupils' additional needs. Pupils with SEND make excellent progress throughout their time here.

The school's work to enhance pupils' social interactions and their wider personal development is profound. It is part of the fabric of the school. For example, many pupils in key stage 2 act as mentors to support younger pupils with their reading and their wellbeing at break and lunch times. Staff model the behaviours and values they expect of pupils in all that they do. They challenge pupils to meet these expectations and artfully celebrate their achievements when pupils do. For example, through heartwarming personal messages of celebration that exemplify the school values. The care and attention the school devotes to promoting such a positive culture is remarkable.

The school offers a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities that enhance pupils' learning. For example, children in the early years have an autumn camp night, where evening stories around a campfire are shared, while pupils explore the changing light and shadows cast by the firelight. Opportunities like this are threaded throughout the school curriculum. They are purposefully designed to ensure pupils gain a wealth of experiences that enrich the curriculum and enhance their learning. Pupils benefit considerably from these moments.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	124130
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10343869
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	216
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Suzanne Wilson
Headteacher	Luke Wylde
Website	www.oakridge.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 July 2014 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision.
- The new headteacher took up post in September 2024.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and art. For each deep dive, 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.
- An inspector met with a group of governors.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils at social times and in formal meetings.
- Inspectors met with staff and took account of the online staff survey.
- Inspectors gathered parents’ views by reviewing responses, including free-text responses, submitted to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Alexander Laney, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Niall Gallagher

Ofsted Inspector

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