

Oakwood Primary School

117 Tennyson Road, Luton LU1 3RR

Inspection dates 26–28 April 2016

Overall effectiveness **Good**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders, managers and governors have a clear understanding of what makes a good school. The headteacher's vision for the school is communicated well and is bought into by governors, teachers, parents and pupils. This is a school that continues to improve.
- Teaching is of good quality because teachers plan their lessons with care so that all pupils make the progress they should.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge.
- Relationships between pupils and teachers are positive. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend school regularly.
- Pupils have impeccable manners. Their attitudes towards learning are commendable.
- Leaders are particularly effective in keeping pupils safe and ensure that arrangements for safeguarding pupils are highly effective.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils are well prepared for their future roles in modern democratic British society.
- The early years provision is good, and children make good progress. Strong links with parents help children settle in quickly when they join the Nursery.
- Leaders have ensured that the school meets all of the independent school standards.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' outcomes in writing do not match those achieved in reading and in mathematics.
- The quality of the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) could be stronger in early years.
- The school's recently introduced systems for assessing pupils' progress are not used effectively to improve pupils' achievement and promote outstanding progress.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes in writing by:
 - increasing the focus in this area and providing more opportunities for pupils to write freely and at length.
- Improve the quality of teaching in early years, particularly in phonics, by sharing and extending the good practice already in place.
- Improve the school's assessment systems so that the school's leaders and teachers have a clearer understanding of what constitutes good progress and use the information to improve pupils' achievement.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Leaders, managers and governors set high standards and convey these well to staff, parents and pupils. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of what the school aims to achieve. Staff morale is high.
- Leaders have a good understanding of what the school does well and the challenges that remain to be overcome. The headteacher has produced a detailed and carefully considered school improvement plan which identifies key actions required over the coming year to secure further improvement. Leaders and governors monitor, at regular intervals, the progress made against proposed actions and act on their findings in a timely manner. The school's self-evaluation summary document is both accurate and evaluative. Leaders ensure that the school is compliant with the independent school standards.
- The recent restructuring of the senior leadership team through the addition of a deputy headteacher has added to the leadership capacity of the school. Roles and responsibilities are clear and the headteacher's good-quality induction programme ensures that the deputy headteacher not only receives effective support, but that he is also held to account through regular meetings.
- The quality of teaching is managed well by means of regular observations, ongoing scrutiny of pupils' books, and meetings between teachers and their managers. All teachers assess their own performance against the teachers' standards before meeting with the headteacher, which ensures consistency in how well teachers are expected to perform.
- Staff training is of good quality when provided in-house and is related directly to whole-school priorities identified in the school improvement plan, as well to targets which arise from teachers' performance management reviews. This personalised training has helped to maintain the good quality of teaching in the school. Systems for staff's evaluation of the training they attend are in place, but not yet embedded in the school's routine monitoring and evaluation procedures.
- The curriculum is suitably broad and balanced and has secured good outcomes over time. Islamic studies and Arabic feature on a daily basis, but not at the expense of other subjects. Pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities and clubs. These include science, swimming and horse riding and add to the richness and diversity of the school's provision.
- Leaders and managers promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. This is a strong aspect of the provision. Teachers take every opportunity to link the curriculum to the promotion of fundamental British values. Displays around the school celebrate this aspect of the school's work. Senior leaders are rightly proud of the 'values tree' on display in the school foyer, which identifies and celebrates the many pupils who model these values in school.
- The headteacher has successfully engaged with parents of the school. Parents who responded to Parent View were keen to elaborate through their written comments as to how much they appreciate the work of the headteacher and his staff. The parents' forum arranged by the headteacher is an effective means of gathering parents' views.
- The school has established some meaningful and productive links with other local schools. Pupils from Oakwood have presented an assembly on the festival of Ramadan to a local Church of England school, and this school's pupils have returned to Oakwood to present an assembly on the Christian festival of Easter. The school's leaders have also worked collaboratively to share good practice.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors are skilled individuals who have a good grasp of the school's strengths and areas for development.
 - The governing body has recently been expanded to include more parent governors. The aim of this expansion was to empower the parents and has been effective.
 - Governors visit the school regularly and have a good understanding of school improvement because they are responsible for monitoring individual aspects of the school improvement plan.
 - Governors' minutes of their meetings demonstrate that they confidently hold the school's leaders to account. They test out the accuracy of the content of the headteacher's termly report through their visits and through their sharp analysis of achievement information on pupils' outcomes.
 - Governors consider each teacher's performance well before considering whether they should progress up the pay scale.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. This is a particularly strong aspect of the school's provision. Safeguarding practices are rigorous and robust. The school has a safeguarding policy published on its website. The safeguarding lead member of staff and the deputy headteacher have a very clear understanding of their role, particularly when recruiting new members of staff.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teachers at the school have appropriate qualifications and good subject knowledge. They have high expectations of their pupils. Teachers model standard English well and readily correct pupils' incorrect use of English when necessary.
- Teachers know their pupils' needs and abilities well. They provide work which is suitably challenging, particularly for the most-able pupils.
- The use of effective questioning in lessons enables pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding and secures good progress over time.
- In a Year 4 history lesson, pupils learned about Egypt and the pharaohs and the process of mummification. The lesson was brought to life by the teaching which required pupils to mummify oranges. The teacher asked pertinent questions and the pupils attempted the task with great enthusiasm. Their conduct and engagement was outstanding and they made good progress.
- Teachers use a good range of strategies, such as mini-whiteboards, peer assessment and self-assessment, to check pupils' understanding of what they are learning so they can quickly correct any misconceptions and ensure that lessons proceed at a good pace.
- Work is marked regularly and according to the school's marking policy.
- The school has rightly amended its system for assessing pupils' work to match the requirements of a modified curriculum. This new system is in its infancy. While there is no doubt that pupils make good progress in this school, the assessment system is not well enough established to allow leaders and teachers to gauge what good progress actually looks like, and make timely intervention.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils feel safe when in school and clearly know right from wrong. When inspectors presented them with moral dilemmas or scenarios, they looked at inspectors in amazement to think that they would even consider them doing the wrong thing.
- Pupils are very well informed about how to stay safe when using the internet.
- Pupils have an accurate understanding of different kinds of bullying and are confident that any incidences that might occur would be dealt with swiftly and decisively. However, no incidences of bullying are recorded and pupils could not think of an occasion when they or a friend had been a victim of bullying.
- Pupils show very strong attitudes to tolerance and equality. They understand that even though people's lifestyles might not fit in with their own beliefs, they accept these as they are part of living in modern democratic Britain. British values are discussed at the start of the day and every pupil whom inspectors encountered was able to readily offer a definition of what these values are. Pupils explained that they use the acronym 'Dr Tim' to recall the core values of democracy, rule of the law, tolerance, individual liberty and mutual respect. One of the many displays around the school accurately reflects the outcomes leaders aspire to for their pupils in stating that pupils at the school are 'Proud to be British Muslims'.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils move around the school sensibly and show respect and courtesy towards one another. Inspectors were impressed by the pupils' impeccable manners. They typically offer adults a friendly greeting when encountering them, hold open doors and allow them to go first.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is excellent. They are quite clear about what constitutes acceptable behaviour is and what does not. Inspectors observed pupils engaging exceptionally well in their learning. This is because the teaching they experience is not dull or bland. Pupils take a pride in the presentation of their work because they do not want to let themselves or their teachers down.
- No pupils have been excluded from the school since the previous inspection.
- The overall attendance of pupils is in line with the national average. The number of pupils who are persistently absent has reduced significantly. School leaders have made clear their expectations that parents must not take their children on holiday during the school term.
- Pupils are extremely proud of their school. They wear their uniform with great pride, present their work neatly and talk enthusiastically about their achievements.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well at Oakwood Primary. Inspectors' scrutiny of pupils' books shows that the good teaching they experience has a strong impact on their outcomes. Although not required to, pupils carry out the Year 6 national tests that are statutory in maintained schools. In 2015, test papers were marked externally and compared very favourably with other schools nationally. All pupils attained the expected level in the literacy tests and 90% did so in mathematics.
- The school's leaders track pupils' attainment regularly and monitor this closely. The school's assessment information indicates that few pupils are working below age-related expectations and inspection evidence confirms this. Leaders identify pupils who have not achieved as well as expected in tests, and take appropriate action to ensure that they do better next time.
- The most-able pupils make good progress and, by the time they leave the school, many reach the higher levels, particularly in mathematics and spelling and grammar. Teachers provide challenging work for pupils and encourage them to stretch themselves. For example, in a Year 4 mathematics lesson, the teacher targeted questions such as $6.4 \div 8$ at the most-able pupils, during a quick-fire quiz of multiplication facts, to ensure that they were appropriately challenged.
- Pupils read well and show an enjoyment in, and a good understanding of, the books they read.
- Outcomes in writing are not as strong as in mathematics and reading because pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to write freely at length. The over-reliance on the use of worksheets develops pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar well, but often inhibits them from producing high-quality, extended pieces of written text.

Early years provision

is good

- The early years provision is good overall and there is clear evidence that it is improving. Leadership is also improving and is beginning to have a greater impact on standards in the early years.
- In general, children enter nursery with skills and abilities that are typical of their age, although some are below. Some children continue on into the main school but others leave after the nursery year to go to local maintained primary schools. Children make good progress during their time in early years and the proportion who reach a good level of development by the end of the Reception year is similar to the national average.
- Good arrangements are in place to help children to settle quickly when they join the nursery. For example, the staff visit children in their own homes because they find that this helps them to establish a bond with individual children quickly. The early years leader has recently extended this approach and home visits will be carried out for children joining reception in September 2016.
- The nursery classroom provides a bright and attractive environment for children. There is a good range of equipment available, clearly labelled and stored at child height. Areas of classroom are well-defined and offer a range of activities including role play, water play, craft table and a reading area. The reception classroom is much smaller and is restricted by its size. However, the space is used well to create a suitable classroom for young children.
- Teaching is good overall, although there are areas that require improvement. The teaching of phonics is not fully effective because staff lack the subject knowledge necessary to teach phonics well.
- The school's approach to assessment is developing well and staff are beginning to use their observations to inform their planning more routinely. Children's learning journals provide an attractive record of their progress, particularly in nursery, and there is clear evidence of the involvement of parents in their children's learning.
- Children learn the nursery's rules and routines quickly and follow instructions given by adults well. Behaviour is less consistent in the reception class where children need more frequent reminders to listen carefully during whole-class sessions.

School details

Unique reference number	135539
Inspection number	10006065
DfE registration number	821/6011

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Muslim primary day school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	150
Proprietor	Oakwood Education Trust
Chair	Abdul Ghafoor
Headteacher	Arshad Jamal
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,950
Telephone number	01582 518800
Website	www.oakwoodprimary.co.uk
Email address	admin@oakwoodprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 September 2012

Information about this school

- Oakwood is an independent day Muslim primary school that opened in 2008. The school is situated in a quiet residential part of central Luton. The school is registered to admit up to 150 boys and girls aged from three to 11 years of any religious background.
- The school was last inspected in September 2012, when it was judged to be good. An emergency inspection was conducted in October 2015 following a complaint received relating to the suitability of the school's accommodation.
- Pupils come from a range of diverse cultural backgrounds and are mostly of Pakistani or Bengali heritages.
- There are no pupils who have special educational needs or disability. No pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- The school does not make use of any alternative off-site provision.
- The school is managed by a board of trustees that includes the headteacher, who is one of the founders of the school. The school seeks to help its pupils achieve an understanding of their own faith, and the role of Islam in their lives.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was conducted with one day's notice.
- Inspectors observed pupils' learning across all year groups. One observation was carried out with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the school's senior leaders, the chair of the trustees, three members of the governing body, and pupils who sit on the school council. Inspectors also spoke to parents at the end of the school day.
- Inspectors scrutinised school improvement documents, policies, information on pupils' outcomes and their work, records of the quality of teaching, information on pupils' behaviour and attendance, and minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- Inspectors considered 42 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and eight responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

John Daniell, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Wendy Varney	Her Majesty's Inspector
Cathy Tooze	Ofsted Inspector

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