

Oxley Park Academy

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

Inspection dates

19–20 June 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, leaders have not yet successfully addressed weaknesses in teaching and pupils' progress.
- Teaching, learning and assessment is inconsistent and does not meet the needs of all pupils.
- Pupils' progress is too slow, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils do not make enough progress from their starting points.
- Pupils do not benefit from a broad curriculum. Although reading, writing and mathematics are well established in the curriculum, other subjects are taught too infrequently.
- Leaders do not use information about pupils' progress well enough so that they can successfully intervene when pupils fall behind.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not achieve as well as they should, particularly in reading and mathematics. Extra funding for disadvantaged pupils is being used increasingly effectively but has not yet improved academic outcomes.
- Governors do not challenge leaders effectively. As a result, standards have declined over the past three years.
- Teaching does not meet the needs of the most able pupils. Consequently, they do not reach the high levels of which they are capable.

The school has the following strengths

- The new executive principal has taken decisive action to urgently improve standards. He has introduced sweeping changes that are beginning to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Pupils feel safe and they are well cared for. Strong relationships between staff and pupils support pupils' emotional well-being as a key priority for all staff.
- Pupils behave well. They are proud of their school and show high levels of respect, both towards each other and to staff.
- Teachers in the early years have high expectations and they know the children well. As a result, they ensure that children make strong progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils make strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - improving teachers' use of progress information so that tasks provide high levels of challenge, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and the most able
 - effectively monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Ensure that the curriculum is broad and balanced so that it effectively prepares pupils for the next stage of their education.
- Improve leaders' and governors' use of progress information to make sure that pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, make rapid progress.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Passionate and enthusiastic leadership from the new executive principal and the new campus principal has brought much needed improvements since January 2018. They have put in place a wide range of urgently needed strategies to improve pupils' progress and address inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- New leaders have put in place clear improvement plans. These plans are not yet fully embedded. As a result, outcomes for pupils are not yet good. Pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics is below that of pupils from similar starting points nationally.
- The executive principal and the campus principal have high ambitions for pupils. They have raised expectations over a short period of time and are beginning to embed effective monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment and a more consistent approach to ensuring that teaching meets the needs of pupils, particularly the most able pupils and those who are disadvantaged.
- Leaders do not make effective use of pupils' progress information so that they can rapidly improve outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics. Plans are in place to embed a rigorous system of assessment. However, leaders do not yet check carefully enough whether their actions are having the desired impact.
- Staff told inspectors that training provided by leaders has improved this year. Training now increasingly supports teachers in providing higher challenge to pupils and improving the consistency of teaching. However, as these changes are new, they have not yet led to rapid improvements in pupils' outcomes.
- The curriculum does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to learn about a wide range of subjects. Because of this, pupils are not prepared well enough for the next stage of their education. Leaders have planned a review of the curriculum and are aware that a wider variation of subjects should be offered to pupils.
- Pupils enjoy taking part in the many after-school activities that are available to them. As a result, pupils are keen to participate in after-school learning. Pupils are also keen to take part in activities that develop the spiritual, moral, social and cultural areas of their education. There are many opportunities within the wider curriculum that support these areas. For example, pupils ran a successful campaign to reduce the use of plastic by local manufacturers.
- Leaders use pupil premium funding increasingly well. An internal review of pupil premium was carried out earlier in 2018, and, from this, a plan to improve the use of funding was developed. Nevertheless, pupil premium funding has not yet been used sufficiently effectively to improve the progress of disadvantaged pupils.
- Primary physical education and sport premium funding provides more opportunities for pupils. Effective use of funding has led to more pupils participating in sporting activities.

Governance of the school

- Following the last inspection, the school has been through a period of turbulence. Governors have overseen the school's expansion in 2017, difficult staffing issues and financial difficulties. Nevertheless, governors have not previously challenged leaders sufficiently. As a result, there has been a decline in standards over the past three years.
- Governors have not used pupils' progress information regularly and precisely enough to monitor the impact of leaders' actions. Governors realised, after the 2017 key stage 2 results, that the school's outcomes information was unreliable. The executive principal and the campus principal have implemented a new assessment system and external moderation of assessments to enable them to provide governors with reliable progress information.
- Governors have supported the executive principal and the campus principal but have not ensured that rigorous performance management targets have been agreed so that they can effectively hold leaders to account. Governors plan to start the new academic year with appropriate performance management. Governors have enlisted support from a national leader of education.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders prioritise pupils' safety and welfare and make sure that policies and procedures are up to date and effective.
- Checks on the suitability of staff are comprehensive. Leaders have ensured that suitable monitoring is in place for all staff, governors and volunteers. Governors check this information to ensure that it is accurately and precisely recorded.
- Staff receive regular safeguarding training. As a result, staff are vigilant in ensuring that pupils are safe. Staff are also clear about how to report any concerns that they may have about pupils' welfare. Staff understand how to identify when a child is at risk of harm and they are relentless in following up reported concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is variable across year groups. This has resulted in pupils not doing as well as they should, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers' use of questioning is inconsistent. In some year groups, teachers' use of questioning allows pupils to think deeply about their learning. In other areas of the school, teachers do not use questioning effectively. Consequently, pupils' progress is slower.
- Teachers are becoming more skilled because they make increasingly effective use of agreed approaches in the classroom. For example, leaders have introduced strategies that help pupils structure their writing and improve their comprehension skills.
- Not all teachers adhere to the school's assessment policy. Some pupils do not follow the advice given by teachers and this means that they do not learn from their mistakes. Pupils' progress slows as a result, particularly for the most able. Where the

assessment policy is correctly applied, teachers identify mistakes and provide feedback. Pupils are then able to learn from their mistakes.

- Approaches designed to improve pupils' reading are not fully embedded across all year groups. Pupils read often but books do not always provide challenge. This is particularly the case for the most able, who read books that do not allow them to sufficiently increase their vocabulary. Consequently, pupils do not have opportunities to learn more complex words.
- Parents appreciate leaders' focus on providing useful opportunities to learn at home. Structured homework has been introduced by the executive principal. Pupils learn effectively at home by completing homework which adds to their learning and prepares them for lessons.
- Most parents believe they are provided with valuable information about their child's progress. A minority of parents believe that communication between the school and parents is not as good as it should be. However, some parents recognise that this an area that has improved. One parent who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, wrote: 'School communication is rapidly improving with the introduction of the weekly newsletter.'

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive. Pupils treat their teachers respectfully and politely. Pupils are well cared for and nurtured in a safe environment.
- Pupils feel safe in school. Almost all parents agree that their children feel safe in school and are well looked after. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe outside of school and while online. Pupils regularly receive e-safety information and they understand what to do if they are worried about situations that arise while they are online.
- Pupils benefit from effective emotional well-being activities. They are encouraged to think deeply about their own emotions and the ways in which they express their feelings. Consequently, pupils increasingly develop strategies to manage their own behaviour and emotions.
- Bullying is rare in school, and is dealt with quickly by staff if it does happen. Pupils told inspectors that bullying is not tolerated and that pupils act respectfully towards each other. For example, pupils were seen queuing to take turns on a new piece of play equipment during social time. When asked by an inspector why they were queuing, one pupil responded: 'Because it is the right thing to do.'
- Pupils are polite and proud of their school. They are welcoming to visitors, and pupils were keen to show their work to inspectors. Pupils talk confidently about their learning and the improvements that they have seen in school over the past year.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well in lessons. They concentrate well in class, listening attentively to their teachers and readily following their instructions.
- Pupils understand the rules around behaviour and the sanctions in place for those who do not follow rules. As a result, pupils regulate their own behaviour and follow teachers' instructions when given a sanction, such as having to get a warning card from a drawer in a classroom, for poor behaviour.
- Rewards play a big part in the promotion of good behaviour. A variety of rewards are given to pupils for positive behaviour. For example, parents are invited to assemblies where pupils' achievements are celebrated.
- A calm and orderly atmosphere permeates the school. Pupils' conduct at social times and between lessons is very positive. They show respect for each other and for staff. All pupils understand the need for good conduct.
- Pupils' attendance is the same as the national average for primary schools. Very few pupils are persistently absent, and the number of pupils who are persistently absent has declined this year. A small number of disadvantaged pupils do not attend regularly enough. Leaders recognise this and have put in place measures to support pupils who struggle to attend regularly.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes require improvement because pupils do not do as well as they should in a range of subjects across year groups.
- Year 6 pupils in 2017 started school with above-average attainment. Their progress at the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics was weak. Pupils' progress was significantly below the national average in reading and below the national average in mathematics.
- Current pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics across year groups is variable. In key stage 1, pupils make progress that is broadly in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2017, 79% of Year 1 pupils met the expected standard in phonics. This was an improvement compared to 2016. However, in key stage 2, progress slows and pupils do not progress as well as they should.
- Current key stage 2 pupils, are not doing as well as they should across a range of subjects, because of inconsistencies in teaching, learning and assessment. In Year 6, pupils' progress is improving quickly in writing and reading but is not improving in mathematics.
- Most-able pupils, across year groups, are not reaching the high levels of which they are capable, because teachers do not provide work that is challenging enough. In Year 5, for example, not enough pupils reach greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The use of additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is being used increasingly effectively but has not yet secured good academic outcomes. In 2017, disadvantaged pupils'

progress in reading and mathematics was significantly below the national average. Additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities secures good development in pupils' personal, social and emotional development.

- Leaders have recently improved their monitoring of pupils' progress, but pupils are still not doing as well as they should. Leaders lack a deep understanding of which pupils need to catch up in reading, writing and mathematics. They do not routinely monitor outcomes well enough, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities.

Early years provision

Good

- Staff have high expectations of children in the early years. As a result, children make strong progress in achieving a good level of development. Children develop well personally, socially and emotionally because of committed staff who know them well.
- Children develop reading, writing and speaking skills well. For example, in Reception, children practised writing days of the week and months, and most could master this over time. Children readily speak in front of their peers and confidently speak to visitors about their learning.
- The quality of teaching is good. Staff use questioning effectively. They provide a stimulating learning environment, which encourages children to cooperate, complete tasks provided by the teacher and learn by themselves. Teachers plan challenging activities that result in children developing effective number and language skills.
- In Nursery, precise teacher planning, based on accurate assessments of where children are in their learning, leads to good progress towards achieving a good level of development. Children enjoy school and learn well due to a very stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environment, and activities that meet their needs effectively.
- Outcomes for children in early years are good. In 2017, the number of children who met early learning goals in reading and writing was in line with the national average. Currently, children in the early years are making good progress in reading and writing.
- Children behave well in the early years. They respond well to teachers' instructions and can regulate their own behaviour. Children work well together in groups and pairs. They readily sit in large groups, and can concentrate on teacher explanations or instructions for prolonged periods of time. In Nursery, for example, children sat together to celebrate a child's birthday and collectively sang a song.
- Early years' leadership is supported by a specialist leader in education. Leaders have a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in the early years, and plans are in place to make further improvements.
- Children feel safe and secure. Staff are vigilant in ensuring that all children are safe in the early years. Safeguarding is effective and children's welfare requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	136853
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	10046108

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	567
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tracy Billingsley
Principal	Mr Noel Springett-McHugh
Telephone number	01908 503 870
Website	www.oxleyparkacademy.com
Email address	noel.springettmchugh@oxleyparkacademy.com
Date of previous inspection	March 2015

Information about this school

- The school became a stand-alone academy in July 2011 and the sole member of the Oxley Park Academy Trust. The trust delegates aspects of governance to the local governing body. The board of trustees is the accountable body.
- The previous headteacher left in April 2018. The new executive principal was appointed in January 2018. The campus principal was appointed in April 2018.
- Oxley Park Academy is an above-average-sized primary school. The majority of pupils are White British.
- The school serves an area of low deprivation. The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is below the national average for primary schools.
- The school meets the government's floor standards. These set the minimum expectations for pupils' learning and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 37 lessons. Senior leaders joined inspectors in the majority of observations.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, the executive principal and governors.
- Inspectors formally met with groups of pupils from key stage 2, and the views of pupils from all year groups were taken into account. Inspectors also spoke to a wide range of pupils during social times and during lessons.
- Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work and observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff from meetings with groups of staff and from the 54 staff who responded to the confidential questionnaire.
- Inspectors analysed 54 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff and the 130 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for pupils.
- Inspectors took into account the views of 114 parents who responded to the confidential Ofsted parental questionnaire, including 114 free-text responses.
- Documentation scrutinised by inspectors included the school's plans for improvement, their self-evaluation, reports on attendance and behaviour, records relating to pupils' safety, minutes of governor meetings, and information on pupils' outcomes.

Inspection team

Harry Ingham, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jo Garlick	Ofsted Inspector
Lizzie Jeanes	Ofsted Inspector

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