

Inspection of a good school: Oakfield

Hopewell Road, Hull HU9 4HD

Inspection dates:

1 and 2 May 2024

Outcome

Oakfield continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Oakfield benefit from a caring atmosphere where staff and pupil relationships are positive. Behaviour around the school site is calm. This continues when pupils engage in off-site activities. Pupils know that adults will help them when they have a problem. Younger pupils benefit from a dedicated building to help with the transition from primary school to secondary school.

All pupils at the school have an education and health care (EHC) plan. Leaders gather and share information about this so that adults in the school can help pupils effectively. The emotional well-being team play an important role in supporting pupils so that they can attend lessons successfully. Small tutor groups mean pupils benefit from regular contact with trusted adults and peers. Pupils are encouraged to share their ideas and express themselves in these groups.

The curriculum is focused on helping all pupils take positive steps after they leave Oakfield. There is a strong focus on adapting the curriculum to suit the pupil. The personalised learning curriculum, use of off-site provision and the range of extra-curricular activities are adapted to pupils' interests. Staff work patiently and calmly with pupils to understand their needs. This is helping pupils to build positive views of education and school.

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

Leaders at Oakfield have a clear vision to help all pupils successfully transition into adulthood. This vision is understood by all adults in the school. The curriculum is sharply focused on this aim. For example, those pupils at the early stages of reading are identified and helped by expert staff trained in phonics delivery. This is helping pupils to develop into fluent readers. Tutor time activities have regular opportunities for classes to share books and read together with the aim of developing positive attitudes to reading. Leaders are aware that they need to develop a more systematic approach to helping pupils develop comprehension skills once they can decode.

All adults in the school know pupils very well. This is because information is gathered and shared effectively from a number of sources. For example, the special educational needs

co-ordinator (SENDCo) and the emotional well-being team ensure that daily briefings are used to pass on important information. This includes relevant information about safeguarding. Teachers use this information when they work with pupils. Teachers also make careful checks on what pupils learn in lessons. For example, in mathematics and art, teachers use their knowledge of pupils' progress to adapt lesson activities. Sometimes, it is not clear to teachers what knowledge pupils need to reach specific curriculum goals. Leaders are ambitious to help pupils secure useful qualifications, including GCSEs.

Pupils' broader development is a particular strength of the school. Pupils benefit from a wide range of trips and activities. During the inspection, for example, a group of pupils were undertaking a trip to the zoo. Among a range of activities, pupils have the option of completing the Duke of Edinburgh award and taking part in the 'night challenge' to learn about how different agencies support and help people. The school has developed strong links with other local education providers. This includes local colleges and sports clubs. Adults take time to plan activities that will help pupils understand and participate in society as successful adults.

Pupils are positive about coming to school. They particularly enjoy their efforts being recognised with the reward scheme that leaders have developed. Friday afternoons are given over to celebrating the successes of pupils through rewards activities. This approach is helping to build a positive atmosphere in the school where pupils gain recognition for their weekly achievements.

Governors make good use of link visits and reports from external partners to assure themselves about the information that leaders provide. They challenge and support the work of leaders, for example around improving attendance. Staff are incredibly proud to work at the school. Their achievements and efforts are recognised. Leaders take account of staff needs and make adjustments to support them. Staff feel that there is an open culture which helps to create a strong sense of togetherness. As one staff member commented to inspectors, 'I go home and feel like I've made a difference.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Staff training has not focused enough on developing subject specific knowledge for teachers and subject leaders. Sometimes, teachers do not have clear guidance about the specific subject components that they should teach. Leaders should help teachers to develop subject expertise in the range of subjects they teach.
- The school does not have a clear strategy for pupils that need support for reading comprehension and fluency. This means that pupils do not develop reading skills as quickly as they could and inhibits their ability to access the curriculum. Leaders should

develop a programme to support pupils who need help with reading comprehension and fluency.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 2014.

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	118140
Local authority	Kingston Upon Hull City Council
Inspection number	10297300
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	10 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	123
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Lee Morfitt
Headteacher	Rachel Davies
Website	www.oakfield.hull.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 December 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Oakfield is a special school which caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school has recently completed a consultation regarding a proposal to join a multi-academy trust soon.
- The school currently uses nine alternative education providers. Seven of these are unregistered. Two are local colleges.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Year 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- 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 spoke with the headteacher of the school and the wider senior leadership team. Inspectors also spoke with representatives from the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors also spoke with representatives from the local authority and the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and art and design. 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 visited lessons for pupils who have a personalised learning curriculum and visited some of the alternative providers of education. Inspectors also visited lessons in the Rowan provision for younger pupils and visited a sample of tutor time lessons.
- 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.
- Inspectors met with staff from the emotional well-being provision.
- Inspectors observed social times and spoke to pupils informally at these times.
- Inspectors considered the responses from parents to Ofsted Parent View. This included the comments submitted via the free-text facility. Inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey and staff survey.

Inspection team

Matthew Vellensworth, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Stuart Voyce

His Majesty's Inspector

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