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31 May 2019

Mrs Eileen Bissell
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Bissell

Short inspection of Oakdale Junior School

Following my visit to the school on 15 May 2019, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since your predecessor school was judged to be good in May 2016.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Driven by your own passionate commitment to serve the children of your community, you have continued to improve the school. Your high standards and deep knowledge of education are reflected in the school's work. Your desire to educate the 'whole child', valuing their particular background, means that Oakdale is an inclusive school where pupils learn well. Parents and carers recognise your work. Evidence from your own surveys, and comments during the inspection, show they are very satisfied. 'A super school', or, 'an amazing school' were typical comments from parents.

You are supported by experienced senior leaders. They are very well informed, diligent and reflective. Governors and multi-academy trust (MAT) leaders support and challenge well. Staff are proud to be members of the school and work hard to provide the best. You are rightly proud of this strong team approach at Oakdale that has brought about improvements. You all recognise that your priority remains to ensure consistent, high-quality teaching across the school so that all pupils make the very best progress all of the time.

Pupils learn in an atmosphere that values them. They are diligent and resilient. They are interested in their work. They behave well, are polite and well-mannered.

The school provides a curriculum that is interesting and engages pupils. Pupils talk about all the different experiences they have had. They remember interesting lessons that teachers have delivered, such as dissecting a pig's heart when they were studying a particular text. They speak about how memorable trips deepen their learning. They say that home learning provides opportunities for them to know more. They are proud to hold different responsibilities and can explain the difference this makes in making the school better or supporting other pupils. They enjoy the many clubs, including art club, unicycle club and chicken club, as well as the special events that are organised by the school.

Safeguarding is effective.

Knowledgeable leaders, supported by the MAT, ensure that appropriate policies and procedures are in place. You ensure that recruitment procedures are well managed and there are appropriate checks on the suitability of staff, governors and volunteers before they are appointed. You ensure that staff are well trained and kept up to date with recent developments and guidance. Concerns are acted upon and followed up as appropriate. Children and families are supported when necessary. The school offers sessions with a family support worker and school nurse to enhance this work.

Pupils say they feel safe in school. Parents and staff agree that this is so. Pupils are very clear that any issues they have will be sorted out by staff. There is a strong ethos in the school of knowing pupils and understanding their particular background and needs. This underpins the strong safeguarding culture.

Inspection findings

- One of the key lines of enquiry to determine whether the school remained good was to explore how leaders, including the governing body and the MAT, ensure that pupils are making good progress.
- Oakdale's published attainment data for pupils at the end of Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics have been similar to national averages for some time. However, aspects of published data on pupils' progress are contradictory. It was therefore important to evaluate how leaders set high expectations for pupils' achievement and monitor their progress so that outcomes are good.
- Procedures are thorough. It is very clear that you have considered issues related to checking pupils' achievement very carefully. You and your senior team are very well informed. Governors and MAT leaders have also ensured that they understand so that they can provide effective support and challenge.
- Leaders compare pupils' attainment when they enter your school with their performance in the first few weeks. Mindful of test and teacher assessment information from your feeder schools, you use a number of different assessments to establish what children know and can do when they join the school. You then set aspirational targets for individuals and monitor and report against these. You also use a range of standardised tests to check progress as pupils move through the school. Leaders capture evidence from pupils' books and teachers'

assessments. Together, this information shows governors and leaders at all levels that pupils meet your high expectations and make good progress from their starting points.

- Another line of enquiry was to evaluate how well teachers make use of assessment information to secure good progress for all pupils.
- The school recognises that high-quality teaching and learning is key to the good progress of pupils. You have taken effective steps to strengthen practice throughout the school. There are high expectations across the school and teachers adopt common practices. Teachers have strengthened their subject knowledge through a range of professional development opportunities. Leaders recognised, through their analysis of information, that reading and mathematics required particular attention. The school has therefore changed its approach. High-quality texts now stimulate whole-class reading work. A new mathematics curriculum based on securing a deep understanding has been adopted. It is being continually refined to further enhance pupils' learning.
- The clear processes in place enable teachers to quickly identify any pupil who might be at risk of underachievement. If pupils are not making enough progress, teachers, year teams and senior leaders consider the possible reasons. They set rapid action plans to provide teaching to remedy things. This is regularly monitored and evaluated to ensure that pupils are back on track. As a result, pupils are making good progress across the curriculum.
- Teachers provide stimulating lessons that capture pupils' interest and ensure that pupils learn well. Pupils are excited by the texts they read. They feel that they are becoming confident mathematicians. They become fluent with mathematical operations and then use these to reason and solve problems. Common expectations and planning together mean that there is a consistency of experience within a year group. Pupils are very confident in teachers and teaching assistants to help them learn. Much of the teaching in the school is of very high quality and leads to good learning over time. However, teachers do not challenge some pupils precisely enough. Consequently, they do not ensure that all pupils are building on their prior knowledge or using and extending skills they already have to enable them to make substantial progress.
- A third line of enquiry was to evaluate how effectively leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve well. Approximately a fifth of pupils at Oakdale are eligible for pupil premium funding because they are from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- You have a clear plan that drives your work. You emphasise the importance of high-quality teaching in raising the achievement of this group. You make specific adjustments on a day-to-day basis. Teachers give appropriate priority to ensuring that disadvantaged pupils have understood learning in lessons and receive helpful feedback and additional support if necessary. You use the funding to provide extra help. You provide one-to-one meetings to ensure that pupils are progressing well, both academically and socially. You respond creatively to individual needs and feedback, for example you may provide personalised support with concerns such as attendance or encourage them to join clubs.

- Examination of books and data shows that disadvantaged pupils are making good progress across the school in reading, writing and mathematics. A growing proportion of disadvantaged pupils reach the standards expected of them at the end of Year 6. Their attendance and behaviour are good. Those pupils who have had extra support with their social and emotional development show positive gains in self-esteem and confidence. The progress of some pupils who have extra support in reading is very strong. Their improved progress means that they can access the school's curriculum more successfully in the future.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching is sufficiently challenging so that all pupils are building on their prior knowledge or using and extending skills they already have and do their very best.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the chief executive officer of the Harbourside multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Stephen McShane
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

My visit took place during the week when Year 6 were sitting their end of key stage tests. During the inspection I met with you, your senior leaders, members of the local governing body and the CEO of the Harbourside multi-academy trust. I spoke with the school's challenge partner by telephone. Together we observed learning in classrooms and looked at pupils' work. I spoke with a representative group of pupils. I scrutinised documentation from the school on a range of matters, including safeguarding. I took account of the 40 responses from parents to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, and your own parent/carer questionnaire.