

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Oakhill Primary Academy

Doncaster Road, Ardsley, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S71 5AG

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Inspection dates:

22 and 23 October 2024

## Outcome

Oakhill Primary Academy has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The principal of this school is Lisa McCarthy. This school is part of Wellspring Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Mark Wilson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Cheryl Hobson.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Oakhill Primary Academy is a welcoming, inclusive school. Corridors are lined with pupils' work to celebrate their learning. Pupils are proud to be part of the school. There is an air of positivity and motivation to succeed here.

The school is ambitious for pupils' learning. This ambition is realised. Staff take time to find out about pupils' interests. This knowledge is then used effectively to engage pupils with learning, across the well-designed curriculum. Pupils enjoy learning here.

Pupils feel safe here. The behaviour for learning is exemplary. Typically, this is also the case at playtimes. However, occasionally playtime sports result in some pupils falling out with each other. If this happens pupils are supported well to resolve issues. The school's well embedded behaviour approaches are used effectively.

The school's values are known well by staff and pupils alike. Everyone strives to 'be the best that they can be'. Pupils and their families benefit from the kind and caring relationships that they have with staff. There is a culture of respect and caring for others throughout the school.

Pupils enjoy the extensive range of sporting clubs and fun activities offered by the school, such as cookery and crafts. They embrace trying new challenges through the recently introduced 'Oakhill 100 things to do before you leave school'. These experiences help pupils to develop into confident and resilient individuals.

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

The school's vision to 'support pupils to achieve their potential' is the central pillar of all that happens here. Staff share the same drive and determination to review and improve the curriculum. They utilise expertise from within the school, and from other schools in the trust, to achieve this ambition.

The school has designed a well-organised curriculum. It has ensured that the curriculum is equally well considered for those pupils in the single year groups and those in the mixed-age classes. Learning begins from the early years and builds progressively through to Year 6.

Leaders are passionate about their subjects and have identified the important knowledge that the school wants pupils to learn and remember. Teachers benefit from regular training and have strong subject knowledge. They use resources, linked to all areas of the curriculum, to design learning that engages and interests pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, at times, some learning opportunities are missed. This occurs when staff do not sufficiently consider pupils' starting points for learning and adapt the learning activities accordingly.

This is a very inclusive school. Expertise from the specialist support teachers in the school's specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND is used well. Where appropriate, teachers choose resources carefully to help these pupils to learn successfully. The school is focused on developing pupils' oracy skills. Key vocabulary is identified in all subjects and teachers encourage pupils to use it. Teachers skilfully incorporate opportunities for pupils to talk about their learning into every lesson.

Reading is given high priority in the school. Corridors have books on display and teachers promote their favourite book outside their classrooms. Pupils talk with confidence about books they have read. They enjoy the prizes they receive for reading frequently. The youngest children build a firm foundation of phonics knowledge because adults are highly skilled in teaching about communication and reading. In the Nursery class, children are encouraged to talk and sing with adults. This successfully supports the development of their speaking and listening skills. The school's chosen phonics programme is well understood by staff. It is delivered consistently well. Pupils who find reading or phonics more difficult are given support through additional lessons. Teachers carefully check how well pupils are learning what they intend. However, on occasions, teachers do not use the information from these checks to move pupils' learning on when pupils are ready. The school is addressing this issue with some urgency. Although historically pupils have not achieved as well as they could in national reading tests, pupils currently in the school are developing into accurate and fluent readers.

The school is clear about their ambition for pupils to have a wide range of experiences to support their broader education. The school plans exciting activities, linked to learning, such as creating an art gallery for visitors. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about visits to the local church or Barnsley town centre, to learn about the suffragettes. Pupils have a secure knowledge about important learning regarding online safety, respect and tolerating

difference. However, learning regarding some other British values is not as securely remembered. The school is aware of this and is refining the curriculum to support pupils to remember learning more effectively.

Work with the local authority to improve attendance is having a positive effect on some pupils. However, while the school is doing all that it can, it recognises that improving pupils' attendance remains a priority.

The school has maintained the standards identified at the last inspection by ensuring that everyone shares their ambition for pupils to achieve highly. The local governing body and other leaders within the trust support and challenge the school well. They have effective oversight of the improvements that leaders at all levels are implementing.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- At times, pupils are given tasks that they already know and can do. This slows some pupils' learning. The school should further support teachers to ensure that learning is closely targeted to pupils' needs so that they make good progress through the curriculum.

## **Background**

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in June 2019.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	144484
<b>Local authority</b>	Barnsley
<b>Inspection number</b>	10346692
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	336
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Cheryl Hobson
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Mark Wilson
<b>Principal</b>	Lisa McCarthy
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.oakhillacademy.org.uk">www.oakhillacademy.org.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	12 and 13 June 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of Wellspring Academies Trust.
- The school is one of five schools in the Barnsley and Leeds Primary Partnership.
- The school operates a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND. The provision provides for pupils with speech, language and communication needs. The pupils are dual registered at the school and come from different primary schools in the local authority. They attend the provision for up to four terms before returning to their host school. There are currently eight pupils accessing this provision. The pupils are placed in the school by the speech and language team in conjunction with the local authority.
- The school provides a breakfast club.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, meetings were held with the principal and other senior leaders. The inspector visited various lessons, some with the principal and other leaders of specific subjects. Some of the leaders of subject networks from the trust accompanied staff from the school in discussions about the quality of education the school provides. The inspector also spoke with some pupils and reviewed samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector discussed the provision for pupils with SEND and visited the school's specially resourced provision. The inspector also met with the designated safeguarding leaders and the school's pastoral support team.
- Meetings were held with representatives from the trust and the chair of the local governing body, along with other governors.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation document, safeguarding information, records and policies.
- 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.
- Parents' views of the school were considered through their responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. The information from staff surveys was also considered. There were no responses to the pupil survey.

## Inspection team

Andrea Batley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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