

Inspection of Oak Church of England Primary School

Dryclough Road, Crosland Moor, Huddersfield HD4 5HX

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 October 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Oak Church of England Primary School do not achieve well, and this has been the case for too long. They have too many gaps in their knowledge in core subjects, such as reading and mathematics. Pupils are not given the help that they need to get better in these subjects and so they fall further behind. Some pupils are not ready to move on to secondary school when they leave Year 6. This is particularly the case for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils who need the most support in learning to read do not get suitable teaching. They are not taught the sounds that they need in order to read or spell words effectively. They cannot read the books with these words and sounds in them. Because so many pupils cannot read to a standard expected for their age, they struggle in other subjects too. Some pupils cannot read the mathematics text books or subject knowledge organisers that are there to help them.

Leaders have helped some pupils to improve their behaviour significantly. However, some lessons are still disrupted by the behaviour of a few others. Pupils often use bad language during the busy lunchtime period. Pupils say that staff are getting better at dealing with this, but that it does not always get resolved. Pupils have strong relationships with staff, and this helps them to report their concerns. Staff record and deal with significant incidents effectively. Most pupils feel that bullying is not an issue.

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

Over time, leaders and governors have not done enough to improve the quality of education. Acting leaders have put in measures such as new schemes of work to stem this decline. Much of this is in its infancy. The current leadership team, while committed to wanting to improve the educational offer, does not have the capacity to make all the changes that are needed.

Owing to significant staff turbulence, many leaders are new to their roles. They do not have the knowledge or expertise that they need to lead their areas of responsibility effectively. Leaders are reliant on external support to train staff or bring in new strategies. Leaders are not able to give staff the support that they need or to provide enough clarity on how these new strategies will be carried out.

Governors have not focused enough on the quality of education since the previous inspection. They have not held leaders to account for the inadequacies in the curriculum. A new interim executive board (IEB) has very recently come in to take over the governance of the school. This board is so new that it has had little opportunity to support the much-needed improvement of the educational offer in the school. On paper, the IEB has the knowledge and expertise that can help support these improvements. However, the IEB is still in the early stages of working with leaders on the plan for school improvement and how it will monitor it.

Leaders have brought in an early reading programme that is clear about what needs to be taught and when. However, this is not well implemented. Teachers do not consider what pupils already can and cannot do in their phonics. There is no plan for how to support some pupils in Year 1 and above in their daily phonics sessions. A small but significant number of pupils in Years 1 and 2 are still not learning the sounds that make up words and cannot read books with words in them. Both the ambition for these pupils and the plan to help them are lacking. The impact of this can be seen throughout school where pupils continue to struggle with their reading.

Leaders have recently brought in new schemes of work in all subjects across the curriculum. The curriculum starts in early years and builds up across the school through themes such as chronology in history or movement in physical education (PE). However, teachers' ability to teach these subjects is variable, and too often teaching does not follow the aims of the curriculum. Many teachers do not build on what pupils have been taught in the past because they are not sure how to do this. Teachers choose activities that do not match what pupils need to learn from the curriculum. Pupils forget much of what they have been taught.

Teachers are unsure of how to address all the gaps that pupils have. Many pupils miss crucial knowledge, and teachers do not know what this knowledge is. They are not able to teach the intended curriculum because they do not know what prior knowledge pupils need before moving on to the next step in their learning.

Pupils with SEND do not get a good-quality education in the school. The gaps that many pupils have in their reading are not addressed successfully. Many teachers do not know what is on the individual plans for these pupils. Teachers do not make adaptations that help pupils in their learning. Pupils with SEND are often asked to do work that is not suitable.

Staff in early years understand early child development. They check that children are keeping up with where they need to be through their conversations and teaching. The curriculum in early years breaks down what children need to do at each stage of their development. However, this has not been done precisely enough. Some teaching does not help children to develop in core skills such as communication or early mathematics.

Leaders have introduced a new curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE). This covers topics such as relationships and identity. Learning in each of these topics builds in maturity as pupils move through the school. As the curriculum is so new, pupils still have little understanding of some important aspects, such as an understanding of different families or the importance of using respectful language.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have worked to improve relationships across all areas of the school. Staff and parents and carers now work much better together. Leaders help families who need extra support and work with agencies to put this in place. Much of this is done informally through coffee mornings or chats in the playground. This is a strength of the recent work of the acting leaders.

Leaders have trained staff to be aware of important risks locally. Staff know the signs to look out for and they are clear about how to report these. Pupils feel that they can discuss concerns with staff whom they know well.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in the community and are improving in their understanding of this as they are taught more of the curriculum.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders in school do not have the capacity to bring about all of the improvements needed. There is a significant amount of work to do to make the necessary changes. Leaders at all levels are not clear about how to prioritise what is needed because they are asked to do too much. This is hampering the ability of leaders to make these changes. The IEB should ensure that there is a clear plan for how improvements will be made, and that leaders have the capacity to enact these.
- Some leaders in school do not have the knowledge or expertise to lead their subject or area of responsibility effectively. They are not sure how to make changes or developments to the curriculum or educational offer that pupils require. Pupils are not getting an acceptable standard of education. Senior leaders should ensure that leaders at all levels are trained in the areas of curriculum development needed. The IEB should monitor that these developments are happening as planned.
- The daily phonics offer for the pupils who need the most help with their reading is not ambitious or helpful. These pupils are not getting better at their reading quickly enough, and this impacts negatively on their ability to access other areas of the curriculum. Leaders need to have an urgent focus on the weakest readers in school. Leaders need to train all staff in school to support these pupils in their phonics and reading so that they recognise what pupils can do and enable them to move on to new sounds and reading skills when they are ready.
- Leaders have introduced new schemes of work in nearly all curriculum subjects. Teachers' subject knowledge is variable. They do not revisit learning or use activities to build on what pupils know or tackle what they do not know. Pupils are not able to remember or use most of what they are taught because there is insufficient sequencing in their learning. Senior leaders need to train all staff to teach the curriculum as intended and to select suitable work that is matched to this.
- Pupils with SEND do not get the support that they need. What they are asked to do too often lacks ambition and is not well adapted to help them access crucial

aspects of learning. Pupils with SEND do not achieve well and have too many gaps in their understanding to be successful in their next steps of learning. Leaders should train and support teachers to make the adaptations needed for pupils with SEND so that they are successful in their learning.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	142418
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10247299
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	455
Appropriate authority	Interim executive board
Chair of board	Jennifer Ryan
Headteacher	Sarah Wilson (Acting Headteacher)
Website	www.oakprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 and 27 March 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been significant staff changes since the previous inspection. At the time of this inspection, there was no substantive headteacher. There is an acting headteacher and an acting deputy headteacher. A supernumerary headteacher from the local authority is supporting the school.
- The school has moved from taking a maximum of 150 children into the Reception class to taking a maximum of 60 children. The number of pupils on roll has fallen substantially since the previous inspection.
- All members of the previous governing body resigned or came to the end of their term before the end of the 2021/22 academic year. An IEB was brought in from September 2022 to provide governance for the school.
- The school is now situated in two buildings. It previously used three.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.
- In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education, and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the acting headteacher, acting deputy headteacher, supernumerary headteacher and other senior leaders. They also met with members of the IEB, a representative from Kirklees local authority and a representative from the Diocese of Leeds about their involvement with the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, English, PE and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors visited early years as part of these deep dives and checked that the early years welfare requirements were being met.
- Inspectors looked at some cases of families who had received support from external agencies and spoke to staff about their safeguarding training.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator and checked the plans for some pupils with SEND and how these were being used.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of pupils at lunchtime and in groups to discuss what it is like to attend the school. They discussed pupils' learning in PSHE lessons.
- Inspectors spoke to parents during the inspection and took note of the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors spoke to members of staff, including early career teachers and teaching assistants, in groups and individually.

Inspection team

Matthew Knox, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Shan Brough Jones	Ofsted Inspector
Suzette Garland-Grimes	Ofsted Inspector

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