

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Oaks Park High School

45-65 Oaks Lane, Newbury Park, Ilford, Essex IG2 7PQ

Inspection dates:

23 and 24 April 2025

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that the school's work may have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils said they can be themselves at this school. They work hard and achieve exceptionally well, including in the sixth form. This is because staff have consistently high expectations of pupils' work and conduct.

Pupils are respectful and polite in their dealings with staff and with each other. They are keen to take part in the school's wide-ranging extra-curricular offer. This enables them to develop resilience and leadership skills. For example, pupils have raised money to support local mental health and homeless charities. Older pupils support their younger peers with their learning. Sixth-form students are excellent role models.

Pupils thrive here because they are safe and well cared for. Staff know them well and cater for their individual needs in lessons. Pupils enjoy being part of this diverse school community where difference is valued. Bullying and any use of discriminatory language are rare. One pupil echoed the views of many when he said that they are well-educated in these matters. Pupils understand the importance of treating people from all walks of life with respect. This learning, alongside a well-planned careers programme, prepares pupils extremely well to take their next steps.

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

The school has developed an ambitious curriculum that is well-sequenced. Pupils have opportunities to deepen their knowledge and to practise subject-specific skills. In English, for example, pupils encounter increasingly complex texts. They develop their ability to select suitable quotations to support their explanations. Pupils study a demanding and engaging range of authors, including Chaucer and Shakespeare. They produce work of a

consistently high-quality across the curriculum. Pupils can draw on prior learning in order to make connections with current work. They engage with lesson content and participate exceptionally well, including in the sixth form.

Pupils benefit from the school's 'super-curriculum.' They select from a broad range of subjects. Some of these lead to additional qualifications like sports leadership or Mandarin Chinese. Pupils enjoy these opportunities to stretch their knowledge within and beyond the curriculum. More recently, they have started to learn British sign language.

Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. They check pupils' recall and understanding of taught content regularly. Staff ensure that pupils are ready for new learning before moving on. They use a range of effective methods to identify any misconceptions in a timely way.

The school is highly ambitious for all pupils. It identifies and expertly supports pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff meet pupils' specific needs exceptionally well. Teachers adapt their lessons so that pupils can access the same learning as their peers where appropriate. Consequently, pupils with SEND achieve highly. This includes the small number of pupils in the school's new specially resourced provision.

The teaching of subject-specific vocabulary has high priority across the school. In mathematics and science this helps pupils to understand problem-solving questions better. The school prioritises reading for all pupils, including in the sixth form. Staff assess pupils' reading attainment on entry to the school and regularly thereafter. They identify those who need extra help quickly and provide targeted support. This helps pupils to become confident and fluent readers. Pupils enjoy regular visits to the school library. There is an appealing weekly registration session dedicated to reading.

Typically, pupils enjoy school therefore they attend well. Where this is not the case the school engages well with pupils and families to remove any barriers. Pupils enjoy warm and nurturing relationships with staff. Pupils are confident to ask and respond to questions in class. They understand their code of conduct and put it into practice. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary.

The school prepares pupils for life in modern Britain extremely well. From their first year at school, pupils access a high-quality careers programme. Older pupils receive impartial careers advice and go on work experience. Sixth-form students are well supported with university, apprenticeship and job applications. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. They understand the 'red flags' that might indicate that a relationship is unhealthy. There is extensive support for pupils' mental health. All pupils can take part in a broad offer of visits to places of interest in England and overseas.

The school's leadership is exceptional. Leaders and the governing body are reflective. They constantly seek to refine aspects of their work for the benefit of pupils. The school ensures that staff access high-quality professional development opportunities. Leaders take account of staff workload and prioritise staff well-being. Staff are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 October 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

Unique reference number	133405
Local authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	10345887
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1775
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	298
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mohamed Omer
Headteacher	Joanne Hamill
Website	oakspark.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	8 and 9 October 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- At the request of the local authority, the school opened a specially resourced provision for deaf pupils in September 2024.
- The school uses three registered alternative provisions.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical qualifications and apprenticeships.

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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other leaders and a range of staff. They also met with the chair of governors and members of the governing body.
- The inspection team visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors reviewed the school's policies and records, including those related to attendance, behaviour and bullying.
- Inspectors considered the responses of pupils, parents and staff to Ofsted's surveys.
- 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.

Inspection team

Lisa Strong, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jonathan Newby

Ofsted Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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