



INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

OAKLANDS SCHOOL

**EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE
INTERMEDIATE INSPECTION**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS INSPECTORATE

Oaklands School

Full Name of School	Oaklands School
DfE Number	881/6025
EYFS Number	EY395599
Address	Oaklands School 8 Albion Hill Loughton Essex IG10 4RA
Telephone Number	020 8508 3517
Fax Number	020 8508 4454
Email Address	info@oaklandsschool.co.uk
Head	Mrs Cheryl Macnair
Proprietor	Mr Matthew Hagger
Age Range	2 ½ to 11
Total Number of Pupils	242
Gender of Pupils	Mixed (95 boys; 147 girls)
Numbers by Age	0-2 (EYFS): 7 5-11: 136 3-5 (EYFS): 99
Head of EYFS Setting	Mrs Susan Bickford
EYFS Gender	Mixed
Inspection dates	08 Oct 2013 to 09 Oct 2013

PREFACE

This inspection report follows the *ISI schedule* for intermediate inspections, focusing on the Early Years Foundation Stage. The inspection occurs over a period of two continuous days in the school. The previous ISI inspection was in October/November 2010.

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is the body approved by the Secretary of State for the purpose of inspecting schools belonging to the Independent Schools Council (ISC) Associations and reporting on compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010. ISI is also approved to inspect the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which was introduced in September 2008 and applies to all children in England from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday. This report evaluates the extent to which the setting fulfils the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework published by the Department for Education (DfE) and follows the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 as subsequently amended.

The inspection of the school is from an educational perspective and provides limited inspection of other aspects, although inspectors comment on any significant hazards or problems they encounter which have an adverse impact on children. The inspection does not include:

- (i) an exhaustive health and safety audit
- (ii) an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features
- (iii) an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures
- (iv) an in-depth investigation of the school's compliance with employment law.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to in the published report but will have been considered by the team in reaching their judgements.

INSPECTION EVIDENCE

The inspectors observed lessons, conducted informal discussions with children and examined samples of work. They held discussions with senior members of staff and with the proprietor, and attended registration sessions and assemblies. The responses of parents to pre-inspection questionnaires were analysed, and the inspectors examined regulatory documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Dr Wendy Bowring

Early Years Lead Inspector

Miss Jenifer Hillman

Team Inspector for Early Years
(Head of Pre-Prep, ISA school)

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1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

- 1.1 Situated in extensive grounds on the edge of Epping Forest, Oaklands is a proprietorial independent day school and part of the Oak-Tree Group of Schools. Founded in 1937, the school moved to its present accommodation in a Victorian house in 1944 and was purchased by the present proprietors in 1982. The school aims to foster pupils' personal and spiritual development through a high standard of pastoral care and engagement with the local community. It seeks to value close links with parents and to provide many opportunities for them to become involved in its life. The school sets out to create a learning environment in which pupils develop their individual talents, enquiring minds and physical abilities. It also aims to foster in pupils self-discipline, tolerance and self-esteem. The school is administered by the managing principal, the head and the group business manager.
- 1.2 There are currently 242 pupils on roll, between the ages of 2 and 11. Of these, 95 are boys and 147 are girls. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) caters for 106 boys and girls, 59 of whom are part-time. The youngest Nursery children are housed in one of two main buildings. Reception classrooms are in the other main school building, while the older Nursery children occupy separate accommodation. There are several enclosed areas available for outdoor play.
- 1.3 Since the previous inspection in December 2011, a number of improvements have been made to the premises, including refurbishment of the accommodation for the older Nursery children, which now consists of three inter-linked rooms with improved toilet facilities, kitchen and resource areas. The head was appointed in September 2011, and there have also been changes to staffing in the EYFS over the last two years, including the appointment in September 2013 of a new EYFS co-ordinator, along with two new teachers and two new key people.
- 1.4 The school has identified thirteen pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), of whom four receive specialist learning support. One child has English as an additional language (EAL) and receives occasional additional help. Pupils are predominantly from professional families. Almost a third of pupils are from cultural backgrounds other than white British.
- 1.5 National Curriculum (NC) nomenclature is used throughout this report to refer to year groups in the school. The year group nomenclature used by the school for the EYFS and its National Curriculum equivalence are shown in the following table.

Early Years Foundation Stage Setting

School	NC name
Lower Kindergarten	Nursery (ages 2 to 3)
Garden Room	Nursery (ages 3 to 4)
Reception	Reception

2. SUMMARY

(i) Compliance with statutory requirements

- 2.1 The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006 and no action is required.

(ii) Recommendations for further improvement

- 2.2 The school is advised to make the following improvements.
1. Use data on children's ability on entry to Reception to track their performance and so ensure that all make maximum progress by the end of the EYFS.
 2. Provide further opportunities for child-initiated activities both indoors and out.

3. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

3.(a) How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

- 3.1 The setting makes good provision in meeting the needs of the range of children who attend. The educational programmes help most children to meet the expected levels of development, and in some cases exceed them. The setting is alert to fulfilling the needs of particular groups of children, such as those with SEND or EAL.
- 3.2 All children are well supported in acquiring the skills and capacity to develop and learn effectively and to be ready for the next stages in their learning. In the best interactions, well-trained, knowledgeable adults have high expectations and encourage children to think creatively. This was seen when older children were inspired to participate fully in music and movement by listening carefully to the pitch of the sounds heard and responding accordingly. However, not all teaching consistently challenges children in this way.
- 3.3 The setting works very closely with parents to help children to settle. Parents find the various printed sources of information, such as the parents' handbook and the weekly newsletter, the electronic communications and parents' evenings extremely useful. They feel well informed about their children's achievements and progress. They appreciate the learning records provided throughout the EYFS. However, some parents are not aware of how well their children have performed in achieving the Early Learning Goals.

3.(b) The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being

- 3.4 The contribution of the early years provision to children's well-being is outstanding. Children of all ages form secure emotional attachments with staff. Staff give children a great deal of praise and reinforce good behaviour; excellent relationships were observed in all age groups.
- 3.5 Care practices ensure that children are happy and enjoy their activities. Children of all ages learn to behave well and play co-operatively. They develop independence, as observed when the oldest children poured their own drinks from a jug at snack time, and when the youngest children were encouraged to wash and dry their own utensils after cookery.
- 3.6 The setting supports children in developing an understanding of the importance of physical exercise, although the outdoor environment is not used throughout the day to offer opportunities for physical development. Reception children talk knowledgeably about healthy food, and personal hygiene routines are reinforced from an early age. Parents recognise the close links that exist across the EYFS setting and with Year 1, which enable a seamless transfer for the children as they move into the next stage of their education.

3.(c) The leadership and management of the early years provision

- 3.7 Leadership and management in the EYFS are good. The proprietor diligently oversees all financial, employment and other regulatory matters, which enables the senior leadership team to focus on educational programmes. Good weekly planning is regularly adapted to support the needs of individual children. However, staff do not use data on children's attainment on entry to Reception to track their performance throughout the year in order to ensure that all children continue to make the progress of which they are capable by the end of the EYFS.
- 3.8 Excellent policies ensure that the setting fulfils its responsibilities in meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS. Staff receive thorough training in child protection, first aid and safety procedures, and the rigorous induction process was appreciated by new staff. All staff have opportunities for continuous professional development.
- 3.9 The setting has effective systems for self-evaluation that are used to set clear targets for improvement. The school development plan is regularly reviewed and an additional EYFS plan to which all staff contribute identifies short-term targets. The setting has productive partnerships with parents and external agencies, and these links ensure that appropriate interventions are secured for children to receive the support they need. Pre-inspection questionnaire responses showed that parents are highly supportive of the setting.

3.(d) The overall quality and standards of the early years provision

- 3.10 The overall quality and standards of the early years provision are good. Most children make good progress and achieve well in all areas of their learning and development. By the end of their time in the EYFS, children usually meet the Early Learning Goals, and some children exceed them.
- 3.11 Younger children, especially, achieve well in relation to their starting points, as seen in their knowledge of number, colour and days of the week. Older children form letters correctly and could predict what happened next in a story, and more able children work confidently with numbers up to 100.
- 3.12 The learning and care provided by the setting meet the needs of all children, including those who have SEND. Since the previous inspection, the setting has improved opportunities for the youngest children to choose to play indoors or outside, but few similar opportunities were observed for the older children, or for them to engage in child-initiated activities and imaginative play. Children's personal and emotional development is excellent and they feel safe, secure and happy; they work well together, share willingly and take turns. Behaviour is extremely good and children of all ages respond to instructions from adults carefully.
- 3.13 All requirements for safeguarding children's welfare are met. Leadership and management are effective in evaluating practice, and strive to secure continuous improvement in order to ensure the best outcomes for children.