Inspection of Cedar Road Primary School

Cedar Road East, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN3 2JF

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 May 2023

Overall effectiveness	**Good**
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Early years provision	**Good**
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are polite. They feel happy, safe and enjoy learning. Staff have high expectations of them all. Pupils rise to the challenge of becoming a Cedar Road Champion in celebration of good attendance, behaviour, effort and kindness. One pupil summed up the views of many by saying, 'I have teachers who care about me.'

Pupils value opportunities to assume roles of responsibility such as playleaders and librarians. School councillors consult with school leaders about ways to help the community with food banks and serving at a local lunch club for the elderly. They promote ideas for raising funds for charities.

The whole school community understands the clear behaviour routines and expectations. Staff manage pupils' behaviour well with consistent strategies. Those pupils who need help to manage their emotions have ready access to adults.

There is a calm and orderly atmosphere in lessons and at playtime. However, in a small number of lessons, low-level disruption is not dealt with quickly enough, and this distracts pupils from their learning.

Pupils know that if they have a worry, there is someone who will support them. They say that bullying is rare, and they trust adults to deal with any issues if they arise.

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

Leaders have done much to strengthen the curriculum structure. However, some subject leaders are new to the role. They have not yet had the guidance needed to effectively lead and monitor their subject. They do not have a clear overview of what pupils should learn and when.

In a small number of subjects, the knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn and remember to achieve well have not been broken down explicitly. As a result of this, some teaching does not focus as effectively on building up pupils' knowledge in a progressive way.

Leaders have prioritised early reading and phonics and a love of reading. Pupils across Reception, Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 are grouped by their phonics attainment to ensure that the lessons meet their needs. Pupils read books that are well matched to their phonic knowledge. Teachers check pupils' knowledge regularly. Those pupils who need additional help benefit from effective support. As a result, pupils are becoming confident and fluent readers.

The mathematics curriculum is well established. Carefully sequenced mathematical topics help pupils to become confident mathematicians. Leaders and teachers use assessment well to identify any gaps in pupils' knowledge. Teachers regularly check that pupils understand what they have been taught. Because of this, pupils can confidently recall what they have learned.

Learning in the early years lays a strong foundation for what children learn for the rest of their education. The classroom environment, both indoors and outdoors, is well organised, bright and engaging. The mathematical activities that children complete provide opportunities for them to confidently explore number and review their learning.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They are fully included in all aspects of school life. Appropriate training for staff means that pupils are accurately and quickly identified if they need additional help with their learning. Leaders ensure that the right support is put in place. They work effectively with external agencies where needed. Teachers support pupils well in classrooms. They provide adapted resources. They deploy adults to work with pupils in small groups or on an individual basis.

Some pupils are absent too often. This means that they miss out on important learning which hinders their achievement. Leaders have introduced robust systems to monitor and improve attendance. They should continue their work to ensure attendance levels are high.

The vast majority of pupils behave well. They understand the importance of following the school rules. Staff deal with any poor behaviour promptly. Bullying is not tolerated.

Pupils get many opportunities and experiences to learn about the wider world. The recently debated issue 'Should more be done to look after our oceans?' produced diverse opinions, but pupils respected each other's viewpoints. They embrace difference between people and understand that people have different beliefs, values and opinions from their own. Pupils are taught how to keep mentally and physically healthy. They enjoy participating in the many clubs such as science, performing arts and coding.

Governors and trustees bring skills and expertise from a wide range of backgrounds. They understand their statutory responsibilities. They support and challenge leaders effectively. Staff, including those new to teaching, feel valued. They say that leaders are mindful of their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular and appropriate training so that they can recognise the signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. They report concerns promptly, and leaders respond diligently. Leaders work with external agencies to support pupils and their families. They are tenacious in obtaining the help they believe is needed.

Pupils learn how to stay safe. This includes online safety and road and rail safety.

Safer recruitment processes are in place. This ensures that appropriate checks are made on staff and visitors to the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Levels of absence and persistent absence remain too high for a minority of pupils. Some pupils miss too much learning and do not achieve as well as they should. Leaders should fully implement and embed their policies and procedures in order to improve attendance.
- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not identified the precise knowledge that pupils need to commit to their long-term memory. As a result, pupils' recall of the curriculum is inconsistent.
- Some subject leadership is at a relatively early stage. Subject leaders are not yet fully taking responsibility for the implementation and impact of their curriculum. Leaders should ensure that subject leaders gain the necessary knowledge and understanding to measure the implementation and impact of the curriculum effectively, therefore ensuring that all pupils achieve well.

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	138160
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10254829
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	413
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Ross
Principal	Clair Mills
Website	www.cedarroadacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-size school
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.
- The school joined the David Ross Education Trust in June 2012.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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.
- Prior to the inspection, the lead inspector reviewed documents on the school's website, as well as published information about the school's performance and previous Ofsted inspections.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science, history and music. As part of the deep dives, inspectors visited lessons, reviewed

curriculum plans and spoke with curriculum leaders and teachers. They also talked to pupils about their learning and looked at the work they have completed.

- Inspectors met with the SEND coordinators, spoke to pupils with SEND, reviewed plans to support these pupils and visited lessons to see how pupils are supported to learn.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding leads and reviewed a range of documentation, including safeguarding records and policies, to ensure that appropriate actions are being taken to keep children safe.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils, parents and staff through Ofsted surveys, as well as additional communication from parents during the inspection.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's records of bullying, reviewed the actions leaders take when bullying occurs and spoke to several groups of pupils, including some single-gender groups, to understand their experience of school.
- Inspectors met leaders to discuss pupils' behaviour and reviewed the school's data on suspensions.
- Inspectors met with representatives from the multi-academy trust and the academy scrutiny committee.
- Inspectors scrutinised records relating to attendance and pupil movement.

Inspection team

Liz Moore, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Aoife Galletly	His Majesty's Inspector
Vic Wilkinson	His Majesty's Inspector

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