

Castle Hill Academy

Dunley Drive, New Addington, Croydon, Surrey CR0 0RJ

Inspection dates

27–28 September 2016

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Inadequate
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Inadequate
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Inadequate
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an inadequate school

- Since the academy opened, frequent changes to leadership have resulted in a lack of clarity or consistency among leaders across the school.
- Middle leaders lack confidence in supporting and challenging teachers to improve their skills. Feedback to teachers does not focus sharply on the right things to help pupils make swift progress. Weaknesses in subject knowledge have not been addressed effectively.
- In 2015, pupils left the school with standards in reading, writing and mathematics which were more than a year behind pupils nationally. In July 2016, the provisional outcomes analysed by the school showed that standards continue to be well below average.
- Pupils make inadequate progress from their starting points in reading and mathematics. Books show that pupils currently in the school are making slow progress.
- Pupils lose interest during lessons when teaching does not meet their needs. This limits the progress that they make.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are misguided because assessment and tracking systems do not support them in identifying next steps in pupils' learning. Guidance to pupils does not consistently help them to improve.
- Too many disadvantaged pupils do not attend the school regularly enough. Actions taken by the school to address this have not been effective.
- Leaders, including governors, do not monitor or evaluate the impact of the pupil premium funding rigorously. They are unaware of which actions make a positive impact on pupils' learning, and which do not. Differences in the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the school are not diminishing rapidly enough.
- Leaders' judgements of the starting points and progress made by children in the early years are inaccurate.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils in the designated special provision for those diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder make good progress as a result of good teaching.
- Safeguarding is rigorous and effective.
- Children in the early years are beginning to make progress in early number and writing skills.

Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

■ Improve leadership by ensuring that:

- leaders at all levels use information about how well pupils are doing, to identify the most important actions that are needed to bring about improvements in teaching and learning
- the assessment system supports teachers in planning to meet pupils' needs, so that pupils make consistently good progress
- leaders, including governors, rigorously monitor how the pupil premium funding is spent so that it has a greater impact on the progress and the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in the school
- middle leaders develop their skills to support and challenge teachers effectively to improve outcomes for pupils
- actions taken to improve attendance are effective and lead to attendance which is at least in line with the national average
- teachers and teaching assistants receive the training and support they need to address weaknesses in their subject knowledge of reading, writing and mathematics
- leaders make accurate judgements about what skills and knowledge children have when they enter the early years so that teachers can build effectively on what children know and can do.

■ Improve teaching, learning and assessment to enable pupils to make consistently good progress in reading, writing and mathematics by ensuring that:

- teachers raise their expectations of what pupils can do
- teachers use information about what pupils know and can do, to plan activities which consistently meet their needs
- feedback given to pupils helps them to improve their work and make good progress.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Inadequate

- There have been frequent changes to senior leadership since the academy opened. As a result, capacity to move the school forward is limited. Leaders at all levels do not have a shared understanding of what they need to do to improve outcomes for pupils. They lack confidence in adapting the multi-academy trust's policies and procedures to fit the needs of the school.
- The school's assessment system does not help teachers meet the needs of pupils. Middle leaders recognise that the system has not taken account of the most recent guidance on what pupils need to know and understand to achieve well at the end of key stage 2. Despite this, they have taken no action to improve the system to make it fit for purpose. Tracking currently identifies broad areas which pupils need to focus on in reading, writing and mathematics. It does not help teachers to pinpoint the specific aspects of the subjects that pupils need to know or understand in order to move their learning on.
- Leaders' judgement about the skills and knowledge that children have when they enter the Nursery and Reception classes is over-cautious. As a result, leaders' judgement about the progress children make during their time in the early years is inaccurate.
- Leaders' evaluation of the progress pupils are making across the school is over-generous. There are some pockets of strong progress evident in books over the past year, but much of the progress is slow. Leaders were unable to provide any information about the starting points or progress of the pupils currently in the school who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, except for those pupils in the specialist provision.
- Leaders and governors have not monitored the impact of the pupil premium rigorously. Leaders have not adapted provision for disadvantaged pupils based on what worked and what did not during the past year.
- The school curriculum prioritises the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics within the context of a broad curriculum. Programmes to support the teaching of phonics have been implemented. Pupils learn about other cultures through studying art. Their topic on famous people in Britain helps them to understand British values. Pupils understand the concept of democracy and can explain why voting for the school council is a 'fair system'. Pupils can explain the school values and they enjoy the celebration boards which inspire them to think about 'What I want to be!'
- The school curriculum promotes the development of moral, social and cultural education. During the inspection pupils showed limited understanding of faiths that are different to their own, but leaders have created plans to ensure that faiths and religions are explored in teaching 'blocks' across the year.
- The sport premium funding has been well spent. An enthusiastic sports coach provides good-quality sports lessons which pupils enjoy and benefit from.
- Several new staff were appointed in September 2016. Newly qualified teachers say that they have been well supported by the school so far.

- Leaders have ensured that pupils in the specialist provision, for pupils diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, make good progress. Their starting points are accurately assessed and progress is monitored thoroughly, on a daily basis.
- The majority of the parents who spoke with inspectors or completed the online questionnaire are happy with the school.
- Inspectors recommend that the school does not appoint any newly qualified teachers.

Governance of the school

- After a period of considerable turbulence in the senior leadership team, the governing body was disbanded by the academy trust in 2014. Up until the appointment of the new headteacher, the trust was ineffective in appointing and retaining strong leadership for the school. An intervention board is currently in place which focuses largely on school improvement. Under the direction of the chair, who was appointed by the academy trust, the intervention board has, more recently, offered both challenge and support to school leaders. However, the board has not challenged leaders sufficiently on the spending and impact of the pupil premium funding.
- The academy trust is responsible for all other aspects of governance. The trust has worked effectively with the current headteacher to prioritise actions for improvement.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders responsible for keeping children safe are a strength of the school. They take swift, thorough action to support pupils who are at risk. They work effectively and tirelessly with outside agencies to ensure that pupils are well cared for. They have created a rigorous system to safeguard children and, as a result of their efforts, all staff ensure that safeguarding their pupils is an absolute priority.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Inadequate

- Teachers do not meet the needs of learners because they do not use what pupils already know and can do to plan the work that they set. This is partly due to the fact that the school's assessment systems are not robust or accurate. It is also due to weaknesses in subject knowledge which have not been addressed. As a result, teaching either fails to challenge pupils or challenges them too much. For example, in a key stage 1 mathematics lesson pupils were learning to add 'one more'. Mathematics books showed that they were already very confident with this.
- Teachers have worked hard to implement group reading sessions and phonics lessons according to school guidelines. The teaching of phonics is variable. Some adults who are responsible for teaching phonics groups have poor subject knowledge and do not have the skills to support pupils to apply their phonics knowledge in reading and writing activities.
- In key stage 2 reading lessons teachers select age-appropriate books for pupils to read, but they do not consistently challenge pupils with questions to help them deepen their understanding. As a result, pupils, including the most able readers, do not make good progress.
- Much of the teaching seen during the inspection failed to motivate pupils or capture

their interest. When teaching is at its weakest, pupils complete tasks and move on without any feedback from teachers. Pupils often have to wait for the rest of the class to finish a task. This limits the progress that the most able pupils make.

- The quality of teachers' feedback to pupils is variable. Teachers praise pupils' efforts in books but they do not consistently provide useful feedback to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work. Teachers have successfully helped pupils to evaluate each other's work and give each other feedback. However, teachers do not check that this peer feedback is accurate or that it leads to improved outcomes.
- Pupils' books show that they have not made good progress over the past year. The lack of challenge means that pupils are often repeating work that they have already completed successfully in a previous year group. Mathematics books show that teachers prioritise arithmetic and there are limited opportunities for pupils to develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills. Work from this term shows that there has been some recent improvement in this area.
- Pupils in the specialist provision benefit from strong teaching which meets their needs. Teachers plan carefully for pupils' next steps in learning. They assess progress rigorously within each task that pupils are set. This allows them to pinpoint exactly what pupils' next steps in learning are. The provision is organised well to meet the needs of its pupils.
- Pupils across key stage 2 make better progress in writing than they do in mathematics and in reading. Teachers have ensured that the presentation of work has improved over the past year. Books are generally well presented and handwriting is neat.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils feel safe in school. Parents agree that their children are safe and well cared for.
- Pupils care for each other. During lunchtime Year 6 pupils help and support younger pupils without being prompted.
- Pupils show a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe outside school and online.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils miss too much of their education because of poor attendance. Actions taken to reduce persistent absenteeism have had no impact.
- Pupils are respectful and polite to visitors. Some lack confidence in talking about their learning.
- When teaching fails to motivate pupils or meet their needs, attitudes to learning become negative. As a result, pupils are easily distracted and do not pay attention to their work or to the teacher.
- School records show that behaviour in the playground has improved over the past year. There are some incidents of play fighting during playtimes. Pupils do not always

get support from adults to manage their behaviour in the playground. Occasionally, poor behaviour is left unchallenged.

Outcomes for pupils

Inadequate

- Over the past two years standards achieved by pupils at the end of key stage 2 have been well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. This means that pupils who left the school in 2015 and in 2016 were not prepared well for secondary education. Disadvantaged pupils achieved less well than their peers in 2015. The school is in the process of evaluating the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in 2016.
- Pupils who attend the school currently, including the most able pupils and the most able disadvantaged pupils, have made inadequate progress in reading and mathematics over the past two years. Books show that progress in writing is slightly stronger.
- Differences in the progress and attainment of the disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, and others in the school are not diminishing. Books show that they continue to make slow progress, which means that their outcomes are not improving.
- The proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was below the national average in 2015 and dropped further in 2016 according to the school's analysis. The number of disadvantaged pupils who achieved the expected standard dropped significantly in 2016.
- The proportion of children who achieved a good level of development at the end of the Reception Year improved in 2016. As a result, attainment was closer to the national average at the end of the Reception Year and children were better prepared for Year 1 than in 2015.
- Outcomes at the end of key stage 1 were significantly below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics in 2015. Information gathered about what children know and can do this year shows that progress is variable and some of it is slow.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Children start school with skills and knowledge which are below those typically seen for their age. Leaders are not confident in analysing and understanding the information they gather about pupils' skills and knowledge. As a result, starting points for children have not been pitched correctly in the past. Because of this, leaders have an inflated view of the progress that children make across the early years.
- Leaders lack clarity in their understanding of the differences between the progress and attainment of groups of pupils such as boys and girls or disadvantaged pupils and others.
- Teachers plan enjoyable activities which take account of all the areas of learning. They rightly prioritise early language, literacy and mathematics.

- Staff in the early years support children in developing their vocabulary by modelling and explaining the words they choose to use.
- Children show some early signs that they are making progress in their literacy and mathematics skills. This is because teaching interests and motivates them. Children are enjoying their learning. For example, they were delighted when staff blew up balloons to explain positional words.
- When they notice a skill or an aspect of knowledge that needs strengthening, teachers in the Reception classes have begun to adapt their plans to meet the needs of the children. This good practice is yet to have an impact on the progress or outcomes for pupils over time.
- Pupils who joined the Reception classes this year have settled well. Warm, caring relationships between children and adults are evident across the early years. Children are safe and happy in the company of the adults who work with them. Children understand the school routines and behave well.

School details

Unique reference number	140000
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10019637

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy special sponsor-led/Academy
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	474
Appropriate authority	REAch2 Multi-Academy trust
Chair	Mr Jonathan Taylor
Headteacher	Miss Victoria Buckland
Telephone number	01689 843 148
Website	www.castlehillacademy.co.uk
Email address	office@castlehill.croydon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Castle Hill is larger than the average primary school.
- The school became part of the REAch2 multi-academy trust in November 2013.
- Since the school opened, there have been four headteachers in post. The current headteacher took up her post in September 2016.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding is much higher than average.
- Over half of the pupils come from minority ethnic groups. The largest ethnic group are White British, with a range of other ethnic groups represented in the school.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average.
- Children in the early years are taught in two part-time Nursery classes and two full-time Reception class.
- The school has a designated special provision for pupils diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.
- The school runs a breakfast and an after-school club.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classrooms at least twice during the inspection. Observations were undertaken with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the chair of the intervention board and with the regional directors of the multi-academy trust.
- Meetings were held with pupils to discuss their learning and their views on the school. Pupils took inspectors on a 'curriculum tour' of the school.
- All leaders met with inspectors to discuss their roles and the impact of their work.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and talked to pupils in the lunch hall, in lessons, in the breakfast club, and as they moved around the building.
- Inspectors examined a range of school documents, including information on pupils' progress across the school, improvement plans, curriculum plans and checks on the quality of teaching. They also examined school records relating to safety and behaviour.
- Inspectors scrutinised books to see what progress pupils make.
- Inspectors took account of responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and of information gathered from discussions with parents during the inspection.

Inspection team

Ruth Dollner, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Pauline Watts	Ofsted Inspector
Clementina Aina	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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