

Castle View School

Foksville Road, Canvey Island, Essex SS8 7FH

Inspection dates

12–13 December 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent between subjects and year groups. Work is not always challenging for different groups of pupils.
- Although swiftly improving, previously pupils have not achieved well enough in examination subjects. In 2017, the progress of pupils between key stages 2 and 4 was well below average.
- Attendance, mainly of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is well below the national average.
- The number of pupils that are persistently absent from school remains too high.
- Middle leaders are not yet fully effective in ensuring good achievement in their departments.
- Not all teachers make good use of time to ensure that pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- Teaching assistants are not used effectively to support pupils' progress.
- Some parents are unhappy with the quality of the school's communication, particularly when they have concerns.
- Pupils do not receive regular homework across subjects to strengthen their learning in school.

The school has the following strengths

- The governing body took crucial action in September 2016 to ensure rapid improvements, including appointing a new headteacher. The school is well placed to improve further in the future.
- Over the last year, leaders across the school have initiated policies that are starting to lead to improvement, but the full impact is yet to be realised.
- There is effective support from the executive headteacher, enabling leaders to focus on improving the quality of education.
- Safeguarding arrangements are fully met.
- New systems for dealing with behaviour ensure consistently good conduct across the school. Pupils are polite, friendly and well-mannered. They wear their uniforms with pride.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and that bullying is rare. They are confident that incidents get dealt with quickly and effectively.
- The curriculum provides an appropriate range of subjects that is tailored to match the needs of pupils of different abilities and interests.
- The personal development of pupils is good. The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that all middle leaders continue to raise achievement in their areas of responsibility.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, so that all pupils make good progress over time by ensuring that:
 - teachers' expectations of all groups of pupils are high enough, so that work set is appropriately challenging
 - teaching assistants support pupils to make at least good progress within lessons over time
 - the greatest use of time is made in lessons
 - pupils obtain regular homework that consolidates their learning in the school.
- Improve attendance and reduce persistent absence so that they are at least in line with national averages, especially of disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities.
- Improve the communication with parents, particularly those parents who have concerns, so that they know what the school is doing to support their children.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher is relentless in his drive and determination to provide the very best education for all pupils. Since being appointed in September 2016, he has wasted no time in getting the school in a good position to improve.
- Senior leaders provide strong leadership. They have high expectations of all staff, focusing on improving outcomes. Leaders are highly evaluative and are addressing the areas for improvement systematically.
- The headteacher has accurately identified the school's strengths and weaknesses. The headteacher, executive headteacher and governors work collaboratively, are self-critical and have a clear understanding of their respective roles and accountabilities.
- The headteacher and his team have worked with tremendous resilience to address the most urgent issues, such as being fully staffed, strengthening whole-school processes and procedures, ensuring performance management is in place and addressing the behaviour of pupils. Leaders acknowledge that further improvement is needed before the school can be judged as 'good'.
- The executive headteacher provides valuable guidance and has supported the school's improvement over a sustained period. She is forthright about the challenges of the school and does not accept excuses for weak performance.
- Leaders and managers are raising standards and are determined to improve further the quality of teaching and the achievement of the pupils. The school's own records show that teaching has become increasingly effective during the current school year. However, the improvements in teaching have yet to be fully reflected in the outcomes of all pupils.
- School leaders have responded positively to the challenge senior leaders set to eliminate weak teaching. Middle leaders carefully monitor their departments using assessment information. Where performance is unsatisfactory, plans are put in place, performance monitored, and improvements expected.
- Leaders have ensured that a rigorous system for performance management is now in place. Pay increases are based on pupils' progress and the quality of teaching and learning. Only strong performance is rewarded.
- Staff have professional development that is successfully improving their practice, including opportunities for teachers to work with other schools. Newly qualified teachers are well supported through an induction programme and value the guidance provided by colleagues.
- The headteacher has embraced the opportunity to participate in a range of external reviews. These evaluations are studied meticulously by the headteacher and his leaders, and actions are taken to further improve the provision wherever required.
- The curriculum meets a variety of different pupils' needs and interests, while also preserving its breadth and balance. All pupils are now able to access a full English Baccalaureate curriculum, should they wish to do so. Staff give clear guidance about course choices so that pupils are able to select wisely.

- The school uses 'period 6' sessions, when teachers provide a wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities for pupils. Pupils enjoy coming to school and they appreciate the way in which teachers inspire them to participate in school life. Trips and visits enable pupils to undertake new experiences and develop their wider interests. One pupil commented, 'There is a lot on offer here to interest you.'
- Leaders make sure that pupils understand the importance of fundamental British values. Values such as tolerance and acceptance, as well as responsibilities and rights are explicitly taught in lessons, tutor time and assemblies.
- Leaders thoroughly scrutinise the spending and impact of additional funding through the pupil premium and the Year 7 catch-up funding. Likewise, funding for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is used commendably to target relevant support.
- Staff morale has been increased under the new leadership. There has been a decline in staff absence and the school is now fully staffed. Despite the considerable challenges to recruit teachers, leaders continue to 'grow' their own staff and leaders through training and development. The school has experienced a very high turnover of staff in recent years. It now only recruits high-quality teachers.
- Leaders are working hard to involve parents more in their child's education. However, some parents have more negative opinions of the school and do not feel that the school conveys adequately with them when they have concerns.

Governance of the school

- The chair of the governing body is loyally committed to the school's success and demonstrates an accurate understanding of how to help the school move to 'good'.
- Governors are passionate about the provision for pupils in the community. They have an innate knowledge and understanding of the local environment to support pupils to fulfil their aspirations.
- Governors have worked admirably with the headteacher and executive headteacher over many aspects of the school life and have steered the school through difficult decisions.
- Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are clear about the quality of teaching and learning in the school. They are focused on improving standards across the school, for all pupils. They ask challenging questions of school leaders and hold them to account.
- Governors have a good range of skills and experience to maintain the leadership capacity of the school. They ensure financial reliability and carry out their safeguarding duties with assiduousness.
- The performance of the headteacher and that of the staff is managed rigorously. Salary increases are carefully considered and are awarded only when there is clear evidence to support them. Poor teaching is not tolerated.
- The additional funding that the school receives is being allocated with increasing effectiveness and is routinely monitored for its impact.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school has an up-to-date safeguarding policy on its website which takes into account the government's current requirements.
- Appropriate checks are made on staff and visitors. Newly appointed members of staff receive a thorough induction into safeguarding requirements.
- There is a strong culture of keeping pupils safe in the school. Staff are very clear on what to do if they have a concern about the welfare of pupils.
- Communication with parents, carers and the local authority is effective. The school works successfully with external agencies to keep pupils safe. Records are well kept and are stored securely.
- All staff have completed online training on the 'Prevent' duty which has increased their knowledge about how to keep pupils safe from the threat of terrorism and radicalisation. Staff are vigilant in identifying potential risks, such as pupils at risk of being involved in gangs and sexual exploitation.
- Pupils are taught how to keep safe, including when using social media.
- Risk assessments are regularly carried out. The site is safe and secure.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment have improved significantly over the past year. However, in different departments, teaching is too variable. This affects pupils' overall progress.
- Not all teachers make the best use of time in lessons. Teaching assistants are not used well to support the progress of individual pupils or groups of pupils.
- Pupils do not receive regular homework to ensure that they can consolidate their learning beyond what they learn in the school. Some parents raised this as an area of concern.
- The newly introduced whole-school 'purple progress book' encourages pupils to reflect on their work. Pupils can clearly articulate the progress made in their learning. However, it is not used consistently by all departments across the school.
- Pupils read on a regular basis and value the support they receive from staff to enable them to be more confident readers. The reading ages of pupils are available to staff. This ensures that pupils access subject material at the correct level to help them progress with their learning.
- Assessment information is more reliable than in previous years. Senior leaders have adopted rigorous moderation systems involving external support from a local high-performing school. When this information is used accurately to inform teachers' planning, it leads to pupils making good progress.
- The presentation of pupils' work is usually neat, tidy and does not show graffiti. Most pupils take pride in their work and come to lessons with the appropriate equipment,

ensuring a swift start to lessons.

- Where teaching is most effective, teachers' planning builds on prior learning and any misconceptions are corrected promptly. Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. Questioning and discussion engages all learners, and pupils have time to discuss and evaluate their work.
- Teachers communicate well with pupils, developing positive relationships and managing behaviour successfully. Pupils commit to their work willingly in the vast majority of lessons; low-level disruption is rare and the vast majority of teachers deal with any issues quickly before they interrupt learning.
- Leaders closely scrutinise the small cohort of pupils who attend alternative provision off site. Activities are suitable for their capabilities and interests. Regular communication between school and staff in the provision as well as termly reports provide guidance on the progress pupils are achieving.
- Determined and unwavering leadership has overcome weak teaching. Changes have led to some instability previously, as staff have left or joined the school. Staff who have arrived recently have brought with them new ideas and vitality.
- The school's leadership has worked tirelessly and successfully to reduce the number of supply staff, which has been a common feature in the past.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. It is a significant strength of the school.
- Pupils feel proud to be at the school. One pupil stated: 'This is due to the changes the new headteacher has brought in; he has totally improved this place.'
- Pupils who inspectors spoke to during the inspection said that they feel safe in the school and know they can approach adults if they have a worry or a concern.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what bullying is and the different forms it can take. Pupils believe bullying is rare and are confident that any reported incident would be dealt with robustly by the school.
- The headteacher does not tolerate tension between pupils and works tirelessly to ensure a happy, safe learning environment.
- Pupils talked sensibly to inspectors in an articulate manner. They are well informed about how to stay healthy, their rights, responsibilities, how to keep themselves safe and how to reduce the risk of child sexual exploitation.
- Pupils have access to a wide range of extra-curricular activities such as drama, music, sport, visits and trips. Pupils describe teachers as very caring and supportive, encouraging them to participate in the excellent facilities available.
- The majority of parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, indicated their children are happy, feel safe and that the school looks after them well. These results were strongly confirmed by the results of the school's own surveys.

- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is planned through a range of opportunities in assemblies, tutorials and educational visits. However, the quality of delivery in tutorials and the impact on pupils' learning is variable.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Attendance remains below the national average. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities remains too low. Persistent absence remains high.
- The school is proactive in working closely with individual pupils and families, but accepts more needs to be done to improve attendance. It does not shy away from sending warning letters and prosecuting parents where attendance becomes a concern.
- The vast majority of pupils show positive attitudes to their learning. Typically, teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. Work in books is well presented and complete. This reflects the pride most take in their work. However, when learning in lessons over time is not well matched to pupils' starting points and abilities, some pupils become disengaged and off-task behaviour leads to pupils making slower progress.
- Leaders have worked hard to address the issue of poor behaviour. They check that pupils arrive to school and lessons on time. Pupils move sensibly around the building and follow the instructions of staff. A calm and orderly atmosphere permeates throughout the school.
- Around the school, pupils are extremely polite, friendly and courteous to staff, visitors and to each other. Pupils wear their uniform correctly with pride, displaying the badges they have received for outstanding work and participation in activities. They keep the school very tidy. Pupils are well behaved at breaktimes and lunchtimes, including valuing the opportunity to play the piano in the atrium.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' progress from the end of key stage 2 to the end of key stage 4 was well below average in 2017. Pupils made limited progress in many subjects, including English, mathematics and science. A history of weak teaching, unsteady staffing, inappropriate curriculum decisions and poor behaviour have been unfavourable to pupils' learning and progress.
- The leadership team has embedded the necessary essential changes to ensure that current pupils are now making strong progress.
- In 2017, disadvantaged pupils underachieved significantly. The impact of leaders' response to the external review of the use of additional funding is starting to be seen. The school's assessment information indicates noticeable improvement in progress for disadvantaged pupils in the current Years 7 to 11. However, low attendance for this group of pupils remains a barrier to good progress.
- The progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities shows an improving trend across all year groups. Pupils are supported to improve their reading and number skills by using a variety of strategies, which are having a positive impact. The transition of

pupils from key stage 2 to the school has been strengthened to ensure that the correct provision for pupils is identified early.

- The school's assessment information shows there is a clear trend of improved progress and attainment for all ability groups, from very low starting points across all year groups and subject areas. This is because middle leaders and teachers now have high aspirations for their pupils due to the unrelenting determination of the headteacher for all pupils to succeed.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils take their learning very seriously. Leaders are working exceptionally hard to raise their aspirations. Pupils speak highly of the positive approach of the new headteacher and the positive working relationships with staff across a range of subjects, and are ambitious to continue with their studies further.
- The school provides a detailed programme of careers guidance. Pupils research careers and assess their own personal skills and qualities. They attend presentations given by employers and educational establishments. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of the skills and qualifications certain careers require.
- In 2017, the vast majority of pupils progressed to education, employment or further training.

School details

Unique reference number	141498
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10037626

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	830
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	David Kreyling
Headteacher	Steve Durkin
Telephone number	01268 696811
Website	www.castleview.essex.sch.uk
Email address	admin@castleview.essex.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets the requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- In October 2014, Castle View School opened as a new school, an academy converter.
- The previous headteacher left in December 2015. An acting headteacher led the school with the support of the executive headteacher until the appointment of the current headteacher, who started in September 2016.
- The school is smaller than average.
- The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below the national average.

- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium is higher than average.
- The school does not meet the government's floor standards.
- The school uses The Children's Support Services, Essex for alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 62 lessons, carried out with senior and middle leaders over two days.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and spoke to pupils about their reading experiences.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school’s self-evaluation; the school development plan and documentation relating to external reviews; minutes of governors’ meetings; records relating to behaviour and attendance; and information relating to current pupils’ progress.
- The lead inspector held meetings with the headteacher, a representative from the local authority, the executive headteacher, the independent education consultant, the governing body, the middle leaders and a group of recently qualified teachers.
- Inspectors held meetings with the senior leadership team, middle leaders and two groups of pupils. They also spoke to pupils informally throughout the two days about their learning experiences, behaviour and their safety.
- Inspectors observed movement around the school site and social times on both days.
- Inspectors considered the 81 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, and 56 free-text replies sent by parents and carers. Inspectors reviewed 56 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire for staff. No responses were received from pupils.

Inspection team

Stefanie Lipinski-Barltrop, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Katrina Lambert	Ofsted Inspector
Martin Brown	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Copping	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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