

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234  
[www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)



13 May 2019

Mrs Helen Gow  
Headteacher  
Cedar Park School  
Cedar Avenue  
Hazlemere  
High Wycombe  
Buckinghamshire  
HP15 7EF

Dear Mrs Gow

### **Short inspection of Cedar Park School**

Following my visit to the school on 2 May 2019, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in April 2015.

### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You are very ambitious for the school. Your high expectations permeate through all school leaders and staff, who share your determination to do their very best for the pupils. School leaders are very effective in reviewing current practice and take any actions necessary to improve teaching for pupils. They are very supportive and have strong confidence in your leadership. This is because they are fully involved at a strategic level in developing teaching and learning to improve pupils' progress. Through careful evaluation, you are very aware of the strengths of the school and have an insightful understanding of the identified areas for continued improvement.

Most parents are supportive of the school, with one saying: 'My child is extremely happy at the school and I am really pleased with the community feel of the school.' However, there is a small minority of parents who are unhappy about the school's approach in dealing with complaints about how the school supports their children's learning.

Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and appropriate areas for further development. They attend a wide range of training to support their roles and responsibilities. Governors challenge and support the headteacher and school leaders effectively. They carry out a variety of useful tasks to monitor and evaluate the school's effectiveness, including checking safeguarding arrangements. You have effectively addressed the areas for improvement identified at the last

inspection. The quality of teaching and pupils' achievement is improving. Pupils now have more opportunities to respond to teachers' feedback, helping them to make strong progress. The quality of pupils' handwriting is improving.

Cedar Park is a vibrant, happy place, where pupils enjoy coming to school. The school is very friendly and caring and pupils speak very positively about their experiences. They highly value being part of the nurturing community and they praise the staff for how well they are supported. Pupils appreciate that staff arrange exciting events, such as the sponsored swim activity that took place on the school site during the inspection. The school is well maintained and the displays in the classrooms enhance the learning environment and celebrate pupils' achievements. Pupils are very proud that they take part in many exciting clubs, including film, construction, football, rounders and the forest school. During breaktimes, pupils play together well, and adults ensure that they are safe. The early years outdoor space is an enriching environment with a wide range of resources and play equipment to support children well in their learning. In lessons, pupils are engaged and motivated and learning activities are appropriately matched to their needs. Pupils behave very well and are polite and courteous.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

There is a strong culture of safeguarding at Cedar Park. The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and records are detailed. There are effective systems to monitor and check pupils' well-being. You provide well-chosen ongoing training for staff and governors so that everyone knows what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. Governors are knowledgeable about safeguarding and ensure that this aspect of the school's work is given high priority. Pre-employment checks to ensure the suitability of staff are firmly in place.

You and your team ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, safe and caring environment. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in the building. They are aware of the potential dangers when using the internet. Knowing the school's rules well, pupils said that if they ever viewed anything on the internet that made them feel unsafe, they would tell an adult. Pupils feel safe in school and are well supported by the adults around them. The overwhelming majority of parents also agree that their children are safe at school.

### **Inspection findings**

- During this inspection, we agreed to focus on: how effectively leaders ensure that pupils in key stage 2 and the most able pupils in key stage 1 make good progress in their writing; how effectively leaders are ensuring that middle-prior-attainers in key stage 2 make good progress in mathematics; and how well leaders have addressed the recommendations of the previous inspection report to develop the roles and skills of middle leaders.
- Pupils leave Year 6 with standards higher than national at the expected standard in writing. Nevertheless, pupils do not make as much progress from their key

stage 1 starting points as pupils nationally. Last year in key stage 1, the proportion of pupils meeting the higher standard in writing was lower when compared to national.

- You and your team have identified the need to raise pupils' progress in writing. The enriching curriculum excites and motivates pupils so that they are inspired to write. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to talk about their work and then write about it. Leaders check the quality of pupils' writing regularly to ensure that staff know exactly what the next steps are for all pupils. You have wisely decided to work with two local schools so that staff can share best practice in the teaching of writing. Some pupils from Cedar Park have visited pupils in these schools to work collaboratively on writing projects to improve their writing skills. Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. Teaching assistants are well prepared to support pupils of different abilities.
- Pupils' progress in writing is tracked well and evaluated effectively to further support their learning. Scrutiny of pupils' writing books shows that pupils are making good progress. Pupils take pride in their work and clear improvement can be seen from the beginning of the year. However, leaders accurately recognise that pupils need to be consistently challenged to ensure that all pupils make as much progress as possible.
- The mathematics coordinator has implemented some well-chosen changes to how the subject is taught. These have led to middle-prior-attaining pupils making stronger progress. Teachers' effective questioning enables middle-prior-attaining pupils to develop their higher-order thinking skills to find solutions to mathematical problems. In my visits to classrooms, adults supported pupils well and asked probing questions to further develop pupils' knowledge. Pupils were also highly engaged in their work and enjoyed the mathematical challenges provided. Their books show that they are making good progress. You know that you need to continue to embed the changes to the teaching of mathematics to ensure that more pupils make sustained progress.
- You are successfully developing the roles and skills of middle leaders to enable them to improve the teaching and learning in the areas for which they are responsible. They speak with great confidence and clarity about how they are supporting colleagues effectively to evaluate teaching and learning to ensure that pupils make strong progress. Their accurate evaluations of their subject areas enable them to prioritise actions to improve curriculum provision. Middle leaders value the support and guidance that you give them to develop their professional skills and knowledge so that they strengthen their practice.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teaching routinely challenges pupils in writing so that a greater proportion make stronger progress
- the improvements to the teaching of mathematics are sustained so that pupils' progress continues to rise at end of key stage 1 and key stage 2.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Buckinghamshire. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Darren Aisthorpe  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During this inspection, I met with you, the key stage 2 leader, the information and communication technology leader, the mathematics leader, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and three governors. I spoke on the telephone with a representative of the local authority and had a meeting with a group of pupils. I spoke with 11 parents on the playground, and considered 101 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 99 free-text comments. I also took account of 22 responses to the online staff survey and 75 responses to the online pupil survey.

We visited most classes in the school together to observe pupils' learning, speak with pupils and look at their books. Together with the mathematics leader, you and I examined a sample of pupils' mathematics and English work. I also looked at evidence of learning in the classrooms. During the morning, I observed pupils at playtime and spoke with them informally. I examined a range of documentation, including information about the work of governors, safeguarding, and teaching and learning. Additionally, I scrutinised the school's self-evaluation and development plans.