

Castle Hill Primary School

Buckland Road, Chessington, Surrey KT9 1JE

Inspection dates

18–19 June 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Determined actions by leaders mean that, after a dip in recent performance, almost all pupils are now making good progress across a range of subjects. Leaders' accurate evaluation has provided a clear focus for continued improvement.
- A strong culture of safeguarding exists throughout the school. Procedures for keeping pupils safe are secure and clear. Pastoral and academic support for pupils are high priorities for leaders.
- Pupils behave well around school and in classrooms. Teachers and leaders deal swiftly with the very few incidents of misbehaviour. Pupils feel safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe.
- Leaders have designed a curriculum that engages pupils as learners. However, plans to ensure that pupils' knowledge builds progressively on what they already know are not yet fully embedded.
- Leaders have used professional development and training opportunities effectively to improve the quality of teaching. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers' effective use of questions is a strength of teaching.
- Most parents and carers would recommend the school to others. They comment positively and are highly supportive of the leadership team in the current absence of the headteacher.
- Children in early years make good progress in a stimulating learning environment. Adults support children well through effective questioning but, occasionally, miss opportunities to extend children's creative and critical thinking skills.
- Teachers provide highly effective support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This includes the speech and language provision in early years. As a result, these pupils make very good progress.
- Leaders have ensured that the progress of disadvantaged pupils compares well with that of their peers and other pupils nationally.
- Teachers usually match work accurately to pupils' abilities but, occasionally, the most able pupils are not stretched or challenged as much as they could be.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the levels of challenge in all the tasks that pupils undertake, ensuring that they are consistent across all areas of the curriculum, including English and maths, and in all year groups.
- Use the skills and practice of the strongest teachers to ensure that this consistency is swiftly achieved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have taken decisive action to tackle the area for improvement raised at the time of the previous short inspection. They have worked strategically in this academic year to ensure that all pupils make progress in line with their peers nationally. They have introduced targeted interventions where necessary and prioritised staff development. This is because leaders know the school well and are accurate in their judgement of what is needed to improve the school.
- The school improvement plan is based on accurate self-evaluation. Leaders use clear, measurable targets to monitor the impact of planned actions on teaching and pupils' outcomes. This allows governors to hold senior leaders to account, and to provide both challenge and support.
- The good quality of teaching has been maintained because of the coaching and support teachers receive from leaders. Teachers appreciate the opportunity to work with other colleagues and to share knowledge and expertise. This is particularly helpful for staff new to teaching. Staff feel valued and supported.
- The highly effective leadership by the special educational needs coordinator has resulted in high-quality provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Their needs are identified early and their good progress is tracked accurately. The school supports these pupils very well.
- The school's curriculum is being developed to provide greater breadth and balance, with a variety of interesting topics being taught. These take the form of 'learning journeys' and are designed to motivate and engage pupils through active learning experiences. Recently, these included an 'explorer day': pupils built fires and made shelters in the school's grounds to better understand the demands of survival in the wilderness. However, the planning of some subjects does not yet give sufficient weight to the development of subject knowledge and associated concepts and skills. In history, for example, there is no clear planned sequence in the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding of chronology or use of historical sources.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Pupils learn about different faiths and cultures. Their recent work on the importance of showing respect and tolerance towards those who are different from themselves was impressive. When asked about tolerance, pupils showed high levels of understanding and maturity and were able to reflect on personal experiences.
- The vast majority of parents and carers are positive about the school. One said of staff at the school, 'They go above and beyond to ensure that children thrive; my child loves Castle Hill and is proud to be a pupil here.' Parents also credited leaders with continuing to run the school effectively in the absence of the headteacher. They praised them for being 'approachable, hard-working and always extremely helpful to staff, students and parents'.
- Staff feel valued and are very positive about the leadership of the school. As a result of leaders' actions, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment continues to improve. Staff receive coaching from skilled mentors and professional development has helped

leaders to maintain standards in the absence of the headteacher. Leaders evaluate teachers' performance through robust and supportive procedures.

- Leadership of subjects is effective, particularly the leadership of English and mathematics. These leaders have checked the impact of professional development to improve the teaching skills and confidence of staff. As a result, the quality of teaching in most subjects is improving and good progress is being made by most pupils.
- Leaders have carefully planned how they spend the pupil premium funding to ensure that it is spent effectively. They are skilled at identifying the barriers to pupils' learning and respond with a range of pastoral and academic support to overcome these. Teachers and leaders monitor pupils' progress and attainment effectively and intervene swiftly when necessary.
- The physical education and sport funding for primary schools is used very well. Significant investment in sport has encouraged greater participation rates. Professional development for staff means that they are now more confident about their teaching. Pupils report that they enjoy being active and fit.

Governance of the school

- The governing body comprises a group of committed people who have the skills and expertise to monitor the standard of education provided. Good relationships exist between the governing body and school leaders.
- Governors have acted swiftly to support the leadership team in the absence of the headteacher. They visit the school regularly and ensure that they receive the information that they need to hold leaders to account. This enables them to probe and challenge leaders effectively through clear lines of accountability. They have also shown a duty of care to staff during this period and are mindful of how they can reduce workload and keep morale high.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have created a culture of vigilance which keeps pupils safe. Checks are in place to ensure that adults are suitable to work with children, including students, visitors and the volunteers who help in school regularly.
- Staff receive regular training and updates in safeguarding. As a result, they know how to recognise signs of abuse and neglect and report them, using the school's agreed procedures.
- Safeguarding records are of a high quality and clearly demonstrate the commitment of leaders and staff to keeping pupils safe. Leaders work closely with outside agencies to provide effective support for vulnerable pupils.
- Pupils feel very safe in school. They say that their teachers look after them well and there is always someone to talk to if they have any worries. The curriculum is carefully planned, so that pupils know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, including when using the internet. Pupils thrive in a safe and nurturing environment. They feel cared for and valued.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The teaching of reading is effective. Changes to the way reading is taught place emphasis on reading for understanding. This has improved pupils' use of inference and skills in retrieving information from the text. Carefully selected texts expose pupils to more challenging vocabulary. However, pupils' technical vocabulary in curriculum subjects other than English is less well developed.
- Teachers have a systematic approach to the teaching of phonics in the early years and key stage 1. Pupils successfully read unfamiliar words on their own. They apply their phonic knowledge with improving accuracy in their own writing. Support staff work with pupils who are struggling so that they catch up swiftly.
- In English, teachers have further raised their expectations of the standards that pupils can reach in their writing. Teaching has been adapted to focus even more on effective vocabulary and the content of pupils' writing. Pupils are encouraged to improve their own writing, which they do by 'polishing' their work. These actions have helped to ensure that current pupils across the school are making good progress and producing better pieces of writing. However, some teachers' expectations of the presentation of pupils' writing are too low.
- The teaching of mathematics is effective. Teachers focus on improving pupils' fluency and speed of recalling important mathematical facts. Consequently, pupils can deal with larger and more complex numbers with increasing confidence. They are gaining a better understanding of calculation strategies because teachers provide more opportunities for pupils to reason and explain their thinking. Pupils draw on their increasing mathematical vocabulary in their explanations. However, in some year groups, some pupils' answers still lack a precision in mathematical language that occasionally holds them back.
- In curriculum subjects other than English and mathematics, teachers use English as the starting point around which they plan learning activities. This has led to improvements in writing across the curriculum. However, subject-specific skills have had less attention. For example, in history and geography pupils' writing showed technical strength but chronology or geographical understanding were not yet fully embedded.
- Skilled support staff are deployed well to support pupils' learning, including for disadvantaged pupils. This is particularly successful for pupils with SEND, particularly those supported by an education, health and care plan. Consequently, such pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- Teachers have created an environment that supports pupils' learning and social and emotional needs well. Good relationships are promoted effectively by staff. These contribute to pupils' positive attitudes to learning and the good progress they make. The high expectations shown in most of the teaching are reflected in the pride pupils take in their work. Most pupils focus on their learning and work hard because the teachers try to make learning interesting.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils show high levels of respect and care for each other, valuing others' opinions and working cooperatively. All adults work hard to ensure that all pupils are safe and well cared for. Staff work closely with pupils and families in a supportive and sensitive manner.
- Pupils take their many roles of responsibility in the school community seriously and are proud to be chosen as a peer mediator or well-being ambassador. They use these roles to help and support other pupils. They are caring and considerate of the feelings of their classmates.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive; they are keen to succeed and to try their best. They use the school's specific approach to learning behaviours called MAGIC habits and PROUD traits to build their resilience and self-belief. The school's ethos is reflected in the pupils' 'can do' and 'not yet' philosophy for learning. The use of affirmation and praise for all is a real feature of the school.
- There is a variety of clubs on offer to the pupils, who speak very positively about these additional experiences and what they have learned from them. The school uses pupil premium funding well to subsidise places in clubs and on residential trips.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Pupils have a good understanding of British values, such as tolerance and the rule of law. Pupils who spoke with inspectors talked confidently about democracy and how they have a say in choosing responsibilities and making decisions.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school, and the large majority said there is no bullying in their school. Pupils feel that they can go to staff with any problems. Pupils show a good understanding of how to keep safe online.
- Pupils have healthy attitudes to relationships through high-quality pastoral provision across the curriculum and through age-appropriate support from the school nurse for the older pupils.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The strong relationships that are nurtured in school ensure that pupils usually conduct themselves well in lessons and around school. Pupils are polite and have good manners, holding doors open for adults and visitors. Playtimes are well-organised and happy times, where pupils interact with each other confidently and with respect.
- The relationships pupils have with adults and with each other are warm and trusting. Consequently, pupils enjoy coming to school, as can be seen in their attendance. Persistent absenteeism is low and reducing further.
- Pupils enjoy their learning and mostly work conscientiously. Behaviour systems encourage positive attitudes to learning and the few incidents of misbehaviour are

swiftly addressed.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Current pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, progress in subjects such as history, geography, science and art is less strong.
- Work in pupils' mathematics books shows that most pupils make strong progress. Pupils' knowledge and skills are improving. They are deepening their understanding of calculation processes. Increased opportunities to show how they come to their answers and develop their reasoning skills are apparent. However, the most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged in some classes.
- Scrutiny of pupils' writing shows that they make good progress. Pupils use a variety of sentence structures and phrases to add interest and mood. Teachers use examples from literature to enthuse and inspire pupils. This approach ensures that most pupils are making good progress. However, at times, a lack of challenge hampers progress of the most able pupils in some year groups. Occasionally the presentation in pupils' work is untidy.
- Pupils make good progress in reading. They enjoy reading and read with appropriate fluency and comprehension, considering their age and ability. Pupils in key stage 1 use their knowledge of phonics effectively to read unfamiliar words. Pupils spoken to during the inspection said that they enjoy reading and are developing a growing list of favourite authors.
- A clear focus on the needs of disadvantaged pupils through the support provided is continuing to enable them to make good progress.
- Pupils with SEND are making good progress from their starting points. Leaders manage the provision efficiently and identify pupils' needs effectively. Pupils benefit from carefully planned interventions, with well-sequenced lessons, and support that helps them to make good progress. In addition, pupils across the school benefit from the expert speech and language teaching that the school has within its early years and key stage 1 provision. The precise teaching and high expectations of the specialist staff have a measurable impact across the school.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership of the early years is effective. The leader has a very accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the early years provision and is keen to secure improvements. Accurate evaluation of the provision has identified priorities, such as the development of children's creative and critical thinking.
- The early years team has created an attractive and welcoming environment for the children. This has been adapted to have a greater focus on language and to provide more opportunities for children to reason and discuss the wider world.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Teachers provide well-planned activities that enthuse the children and are carefully matched to their learning needs. There is some inconsistency in the quality and use of assessment; leaders are

aware of this and have begun to address it.

- Leaders' assessment records and work in children's books show that children make good progress. Although the proportion of Reception children achieving a good level of development in 2018 was below the national average, this was linked to the low starting points of many children in the cohort at the school.
- Nursery children benefit from a focus on developing their writing and spoken language. Some children are beginning to form recognisable letters and attempt to write simple words. As a result of well-focused teaching activities, children's progress is improving and many are making good progress. Learning support assistants support children's learning activities well and help them to make good progress over time.
- Disadvantaged children make good progress. This is because staff provide a number of additional activities for individuals that support their learning effectively. These activities are particularly effective in improving children's skills in phonics and their speech and language development.
- Leaders identify and support children with SEND effectively. Children with speech and language difficulties are quickly assessed on entry to the early years classes and receive additional help from staff. Some join the school's speech and language provision for further input. This highly effective practice helps to ensure that these children make good progress from their starting points.
- Parents are involved in their children's education. Workshops are well attended and cover all aspects of the early years curriculum. For example, at a recent session, parents were challenged to work together to create a piece of expressive art; they then shared their outcomes with the children and became more familiar with expectations in this part of the curriculum.
- Children's behaviour and their attitudes to learning are good. They are confident in exploring activities indoors and outside, demonstrating that they feel safe. There are no breaches of the statutory welfare requirements. Staff follow and know well the safeguarding procedures and policies applicable to the whole school.
- Within a context of broadly good teaching, expectations and opportunities for developing creative and critical thinking are not yet high enough to provide greater challenge for children and increase the numbers of children attaining a good level of development.

School details

Unique reference number	141764
Local authority	Kingston upon Thames
Inspection number	10058856

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	496
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Anne Pearman
Headteacher	Lou Anderson
Telephone number	020 8397 2006
Website	www.castlehill.kingston.sch.uk
Email address	admin@castlehill.rbksch.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Castlehill Primary is a larger-than-average primary school. The school is a standalone academy.
- The school manages a nursery provision for children from three months old which was not subject to this inspection. Children attend Nursery both full time and part-time. They attend the Reception classes full time.
- Approximately one half of the pupils are of White British heritage. However, over one third of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- One fifth of pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which is additional funding from the government to support to raise attainment.
- The school is in the top 20% of all schools for the proportion of pupils receiving SEND support.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups, including some observations with school leaders.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents, including information about pupils' attendance, improvement plans, self-evaluation information, safeguarding records, curriculum planning and staff training records.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the school day and during the inspection. They took account of 135 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and 133 free-text responses. Additionally, they took account of 30 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and 40 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- An inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority and with the school's improvement partner.
- Inspectors spoke with staff members including newly qualified teachers and trainees.
- An inspector met with the chair of the governing body and three other governors.
- Inspectors talked with pupils informally at playtimes, visited the dining hall at lunchtime and observed pupils' movement around the school. Formal meetings also took place with pupils.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' behaviour at the start and end of the school day and during breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors undertook a detailed scrutiny of pupils' work and talked with them about their learning. They listened to pupils read and talked to them about the books they enjoyed and those that they are currently reading.
- Inspectors held meetings with the deputy headteacher, senior and middle leaders.
- Inspectors carried out a detailed scrutiny of current progress and attendance information for all groups of pupils.
- Inspectors analysed the school's website.

Inspection team

Karen Matthews, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Kanwaljit Singh	Ofsted Inspector
Rekha Bhakoo	Ofsted Inspector

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