

Inspection of Cuckoo Hall Academy

Cuckoo Hall Lane, Edmonton, London N9 8DR

Inspection dates: 12–13 September 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Inadequate

What is it like to attend this school?

This school has improved a lot since its last inspection. Everyone we spoke to on the inspection told us this. They think that the new headteacher and her leadership team have worked hard to make the school a better place. This is true.

However, leaders know they still have work to do. Some subjects are not planned effectively or taught well enough. Pupils do not learn as well as they should.

Pupils enjoy school. They like their lessons and want to do well. Every pupil we met was polite and friendly. They know the importance of good manners. Pupils told inspectors that bullying does not happen often. When it does, staff act quickly to deal with it.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons is very good. Teachers can get on with teaching and do not have to deal with poor behaviour. At playtime, pupils know how to behave. Any rough behaviour is not tolerated. Pupils told us about the 'two strike rule'. They say this makes them think carefully about how to react if someone annoys them.

Pupils feel safe at school. They trust their teachers and know there is always someone they can talk to if they have concerns.

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

The new headteacher and the leadership team have led the school on a difficult journey through special measures. Leaders have faced challenges head on and taken decisive action to improve the school. They have a clear vision for the school which staff share and understand.

Before, pupils were not making good enough progress in English and mathematics. Leaders made these subjects a priority. The planning for English and mathematics is well structured. It is ambitious for all pupils. Teachers have had high-quality training to help them with this. They are now confident in planning and delivering effective lessons. They teach these subjects well. Pupils' progress has improved as a result, particularly in mathematics.

The teaching of early reading is a strength of the school. Leaders have placed a strong focus on this. They make sure that pupils who struggle with their reading get the time and support they need to catch up. Teachers read to their classes every day and pupils develop a love of reading. The library and classroom reading areas are well resourced.

However, the education provided by the school is not yet good. Some subjects are not planned well enough. In subjects such as history and geography, pupils do not develop a secure knowledge of the topics that they have studied. For example, Year 5 pupils have previously studied the Anglo-Saxons, but they can only recall very

basic facts. In addition, pupils often do not see geography and history as separate subjects.

Teachers provide support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), but this could be better. Due to changes in staffing, leaders do not yet have a secure knowledge of some pupils' needs. However, a skilled team of staff provide good support for a small group of pupils who have more complex needs.

Leaders want all pupils to have the same opportunities as pupils at any other school. In their words, their aim is 'that no pupil is disadvantaged by their postcode'. They have not yet achieved this. Across the school, pupils do not learn much about the creative arts. Leaders have not focused on these subjects in as much depth as they have for English and mathematics. In music, for example, pupils do not learn a musical instrument unless they pay for lessons. Pupils in key stage 2 have only recently started to learn French.

Pupils speak enthusiastically about some of the clubs and activities on offer. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their artistic interests in the curriculum. The number of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND who take part in extra-curricular clubs is low.

In the early years, children are safe and happy. Staff engage well with children and make sure that parents and carers are involved. Leaders in early years are highly knowledgeable about how young children learn. The outdoors area has improved.

Children in the early years make a secure start in reading, writing and mathematics. They do not achieve as well in some areas of learning, such as understanding the world. Leaders do not see the early years as the starting point for the curriculum. This means that children are not prepared fully for Year 1.

Members of staff are very positive about the support they get from leaders. They told inspectors that the workload has been hard to cope with at times, but they felt it was needed to improve the school. There is a real sense of teamwork and pride in what they have achieved.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The safeguarding team use their expertise to make sure the school is a safe and welcoming place. Leaders and staff are vigilant to any concerns. They identify pupils who may be at risk and take prompt action. Leaders are tenacious in their work to get the right support for vulnerable pupils and their families. They know the potential risks their pupils face outside of school and teach pupils how to keep safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school is improving, but it does not yet provide a good quality of education. The strengths in English and mathematics have not been replicated across the whole curriculum. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum in all other subjects has the same breadth and depth as English and mathematics.
- Mathematics, English and science are planned and delivered effectively. Some subjects are not. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is sequenced coherently in other subjects. They should carefully select the key content in subjects such as geography and history so that pupils know more and remember more.
- The creative arts are not routinely taught in any depth. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum in these subjects is developed so that pupils develop good subject-specific knowledge and disciplinary skills.
- External support from consultants helps leaders manage the SEND provision. Leaders have accurately identified pupils who need additional support and put provision in place. However, leaders should ensure that they have a more secure knowledge of those pupils with SEND who have a support plan. The support plans should be reviewed regularly. These pupils do not acquire the knowledge they need to succeed.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to nurture their artistic interests and talents. They cannot learn a musical instrument unless they pay for lessons, for example. The number of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND who take up extra-curricular clubs is low. Leaders should ensure that all pupils have better access to opportunities which can widen their personal development.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	136284
Local authority	Enfield
Inspection number	10119540
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	710
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Marino Charalambous
Headteacher	Nicky Ross
Website	www.chat-edu.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	12–13 July 2017

Information about this school

- The school is part of Cuckoo Hall Academies Trust. The current headteacher took up her role in September 2018.
- The school was judged inadequate at the previous section 5 inspection in July 2017. The school had three special measures monitoring inspections prior to this inspection.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

- We held discussions with the headteacher and the school leadership team. We met with two trustees and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust. An inspector also met with a representative from the local authority.
- We reviewed the school's safeguarding arrangements. We met with the safeguarding team and looked at documentation provided by the school, including

the single central record. We also spoke with staff, parents and pupils about the school's approach to safeguarding.

- We focused deeply on reading, mathematics, science, geography, music and French. All other subjects were considered as part of the inspection. We discussed these subjects with leaders, pupils and teaching staff. We visited lessons and looked at pupils' work.

Inspection team

Jude Wilson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Danvir Visvanathan

Ofsted Inspector

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