

Inspection of a good school: Cecil Road Primary and Nursery School

Cecil Road, Gravesend, Kent DA11 7BT

Inspection dates:

4–5 December 2019

Outcome

Cecil Road Primary and Nursery School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders are determined that pupils at Cecil Road are 'set up for success'. They do this well. Leaders balance high expectations while ensuring that pupils have the 'tools' they need to learn well and get a positive school experience.

Pupils enjoy their time at school. They are well looked after and kept safe. The school is a friendly and welcoming place to be where 'everyone looks out for each other'. There is very little poor behaviour and bullying is rare. Pupils are polite and respectful. 'Marvellous Monday' assemblies are where the school's values of compassion, commitment, cooperation, courage and creativity are celebrated and explored. Pupils enjoy their friendships and value their different cultures and customs.

This popular school is well regarded by parents and carers, staff and the local community. They say it is a place where 'everyone gets involved'. There are lots of things going on. For instance, during the inspection, preparations were under way for the Christmas fair. Pupils go on exciting trips to Norfolk or London and learn to swim in the school's swimming pool. Leaders take full advantage of local opportunities, for example to study nature on a site nearby.

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

Leaders and governors have high ambitions for pupils to achieve well. The standards pupils attain at the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics are high.

Leaders make sure that reading is a top priority. The teaching of phonics is effective. Teachers and support staff are well trained and highly skilled. Phonics is taught right from the start in Nursery. Teachers encourage parents to borrow story books from the Nursery lending library to read to their children at home. The mantra of 'keep up, not catch up' is rigorously adhered to, with staff providing carefully targeted intervention to support any pupil who starts to fall behind. Early reading books are closely matched to pupils' reading ability. This meticulous approach means that pupils get off to a very strong start with their

reading. The proportion of pupils who achieve the Year 1 phonics screening check is above the national average.

Pupils' love of reading further strengthens as they move up the school. Reading 'toolkits' help pupils develop the skills they need to be successful readers. Pupils read widely and have an impressive knowledge of different authors and books. Teachers use books to inspire pupils with their writing or link up their learning in other subjects.

Leaders' work on mathematics has been equally successful. Leaders have provided extensive training so that teachers are confident in teaching mathematics. Teachers model how to use mathematical resources progressively from Nursery to Year 6. This consistent approach means pupils understand exactly how to use these successfully to help their learning. Teachers carefully consider their planning to ensure that pupils understand key mathematical concepts. Once they have, pupils apply their learning intelligently and creatively to more complex problems.

Leaders are now focusing their efforts on building on their successful and systematic approach to mathematics and reading by applying a similar approach to the teaching of the wider curriculum. Teachers' subject knowledge is not as strong in subjects such as science or modern foreign languages. Planning is not routinely well sequenced in these subjects. Leaders are sensibly drawing on expertise within the school and more widely across the cooperative trust to improve this aspect of the school's work.

Leaders hold the same high ambitions for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils. Leaders are determined that this group of pupils have access to the full curriculum. Pupils' needs are swiftly identified. Appropriate and skilful support is put in place to ensure these pupils get just the right academic and pastoral help.

Pupils enjoy the many opportunities that the school offers. These range from a wide variety of sporting activities, looking after their mental health, understanding how to eat healthily and learning practical skills such as changing a bicycle tyre and fixing a puncture.

Pupils' behaviour is good. They want to learn. Pupils' attendance overall has risen and is now above the national average. They listen carefully to their teachers in lessons and move around the school sensibly. Pupils play well together at social times, enjoying different activities such as 'space hoppers'.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They appreciate the school's team spirit and strong leadership. Staff spoken to, and the overwhelming majority of those who responded to Ofsted's staff survey, say that leaders listen to their views and that workload is regularly reviewed and adapted to consider their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff are well trained. Consequently, staff recognise the signs that

may indicate a pupil is at risk of harm. They know how to report any concerns because the school's safeguarding procedures are clear. There is an evident culture of vigilance and care across the school.

Leaders, including the effective well-being team, respond promptly to any concerns that are brought to their attention. They monitor pupils' welfare carefully and work closely with outside agencies to ensure that pupils and their families get the support they need.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum offers a wide range of subjects for pupils to learn. Some subjects are carefully planned and sequenced such as English and mathematics. However, this is not the case in all subjects. Teachers should ensure that the curriculum plans for the foundation subjects contain the knowledge that pupils should know and the order in which they should learn it. It is clear from leaders' plans and actions already taken to develop the curriculum that they are in the process of bringing this about in a timely way.
- Leaders are determined that the curriculum is taught well. They have ensured that teachers have excellent subject knowledge to teach early reading and mathematics effectively. Teachers now require further training, so they are equally secure in the subject knowledge they need to teach the foundation subjects.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2016.

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 are 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	118258
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10111387
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	442
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marianna Nagy-Byrne and Lorna Nolan (Co-chairs)
Headteacher	Yvonne Quigley
Website	www.cecilroad.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12–13 May 2016

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- In June 2017, the school joined the Norfleet Co-operative Learning Trust.
- The school operates a before- and after-school club each day. It offers wraparound care for pupils who attend the school.

Information about this inspection

- I held meetings with senior leader, subject leaders and teachers.
- I did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and science. I discussed curriculum design with subject leaders, carried out a series of lesson visits, scrutinised pupils' work and spoke to pupils and teachers about the curriculum.
- I evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding. I met with the safeguarding lead and her deputies to check the procedures in place to ensure that pupils are kept safe. I scrutinised the single central record to make sure that the school is checking

thoroughly that there is no known reason that adults should not be working with children. I scrutinised a range of documentation, including a sample of case files as well as speaking to pupils and staff.

- I met with four governors, including the co-chairs of the governing body.
- I took account of the 46 responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and the 46 additional free-text responses.
- I spoke to staff to gather their views of the school and took into account the views of 30 members of staff who responded to Ofsted's staff survey.
- I took into account an email from a parent and a letter.
- I held a telephone call with a representative from the local authority.

Inspection team

Frances Nation, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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