

Inspection of Cliff Lane Primary School

Cliff Lane, Ipswich, Suffolk IP3 0PJ

Inspection dates: 29–30 January 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Most pupils behave well. School is a safe, friendly place to be. They feel free from bullying. Pupils are shown how to keep safe. They know what to do if they feel unhappy. Pupils and parents value the care and support provided. Staff are caring and supportive. Classrooms and corridors include bright displays of pupils' work. Pupils enjoy exciting activities and off-site visits that help them learn. This adds to their overall enjoyment of school. Most pupils attend regularly, but a few do not turn up often enough.

Until this year, pupils have not done well enough. Results in reading, writing and mathematics were too low in 2019. Much of the school's work has been weak. In the Early Years, children have not got off to a good start. Older pupils have not learned well and have left Year 6 without the skills needed for secondary school.

New leaders have quickly found out what needs doing and have put in place plans to improve the school. The new interim headteacher is doing a good job and she has the full support of staff. She needs more time to show that what she is getting staff to do will make the school a better place to be for all pupils.

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

Plans are in place to let staff know what to teach, but they have not been shown how to use them properly. Leaders have not checked that staff use these plans to help pupils learn. They have not found out if pupils are learning well enough in all of their subjects.

In recent years, pupils have not made enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Overall results at the end of key stage 2 have remained well below average. Pupils have not built on their achievements at the end of key stage 1. There are significant gaps in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding, particularly in years 5 and 6.

Joining a different academy trust and appointing new leaders have added good capacity to improve. Teachers are now expected to think more carefully about what they want pupils to learn. New approaches to checking pupils' understanding are leading to better progress in lessons.

Reading has not been taught effectively. Pupils gain a good grounding in phonics but have not built on this in key stage 2. To improve this, experts from the trust and other schools are helping to sharpen the teaching of reading, broaden pupils' vocabulary and encourage them to read more often.

In mathematics, recent staff training has improved teaching so that pupils acquire new learning in the right order and practise mathematical skills. Teachers check how well pupils are progressing, and they spot those pupils who need more help.

Additional support sessions are provided, but this leads to some pupils missing out on learning in subjects taught in the afternoons.

Improvement plans recognise that similar improvements are needed in science, geography, history and physical education (PE) because planning is not used effectively. Leaders' monitoring has not held staff accountable for ensuring that their teaching leads to good progress made by pupils.

Pupils' conduct around school is good. In lessons, most pupils are attentive and respectful. They know the procedures used to manage poor behaviour and feel that, generally, they work well. Attendance has improved and is close to the national average. A few pupils are persistently absent from school.

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils proudly record house points awarded for good work. Their achievements are celebrated. School councillors ensure that pupils' views are listened to and acted on. In assemblies, pupils sing together, reflect and consider the views of others. Regular off-site visits and an annual residential experience enrich pupils' wider understanding.

In the early years, results show that not all children do as well as they could and that they are not fully prepared for key stage 1. To tackle these weaknesses, the trust has provided expert guidance and support and has appointed new staff to build capacity to make improvements. Suitable activities are planned to enable children to engage in learning and play indoors and outside, using a range of equipment. Phonics is taught systematically. Staff keep records of children's early reading skills and take effective action to help those in need of extra support to catch up.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Records of the checks made when appointing new staff are complete and well maintained. A knowledgeable and committed team of leaders responsible for safeguarding oversee child protection arrangements effectively. Records of the actions taken to protect pupils from harm are recorded systematically. Working relations with families and local support agencies are firmly established. Access to school buildings and grounds are carefully controlled.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not make effective use of the school's curriculum plans. Pupils do not build on their prior learning or gain a good range of knowledge and skills in a wide range of subjects. Leaders have not made regular checks to ensure that learning in lessons is well-planned and leads to pupils' good progress. Leaders should provide staff with further training in how to use this planning so that learning is

well sequenced and suitably matched to pupils ages and abilities. They should provide subject leaders and leaders of the early years with further training in how to monitor rigorously the quality of education, and hold them fully accountable for the achievement of children and pupils.

- A small minority of pupils are persistently absent from school. Leaders should take prompt action to ensure that these pupils attend school more often than they currently do.

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 the school and 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	141591
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10121376
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	417
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Professor J H West-Burnham
Headteacher	Nadia Bosse
Website	www.clifflaneprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	31 October–1 November 2017

Information about this school

- The school has undergone significant change since the previous inspection. Following a period of instability and slow progress, the school changed sponsor and joined the Asset Education Academy Trust in March 2019.
- The substantive headteacher is currently absent from school. Interim arrangements are in place to lead the school. A senior leader within the academy trust is the current acting headteacher.
- A new chair of the governing body took up her role in 2018.
- The school is larger than average. The number of pupils on roll has fallen since the previous inspection.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We visited lessons to observe pupils at work. We also visited lessons to observe the support provided for pupils with SEND, disadvantaged pupils and those who speak English as an additional language.
- We walked the school with a senior leader to see how effectively leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
- We held meetings with senior and middle leaders, teachers, newly qualified staff, two members of the governing body and the chief executive of the academy trust.
- We met with the school council and a representative group of key stage 2 pupils.
- We scrutinised pupils' work in books. We looked at safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures, self-evaluation and improvement planning, minutes of meetings of the governing body, records of behaviour and attendance, and other information provided by school leaders.
- We considered 24 free-text responses from parents and 46 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. We also considered 33 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff and 46 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for pupils.
- We conducted deep dives into the following subjects: reading, mathematics, science, geography and history, and PE.

Inspection team

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