

# Inspection of Caldecote Church of England Academy

Manor Place, Upper Caldecote, Biggleswade, Bedfordshire, SG18 9DA

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Inspection dates: 24 and 25 November 2021

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils at Caldecote do not achieve as well as they could. In some subjects, teaching does not help pupils to remember the important knowledge that leaders want them to know. This means that pupils find it hard to recall what they have been taught or misunderstand what they have learned.

Pupils behave well at playtimes and during dinnertimes. However, when teaching is not matched well to their needs some pupils' behaviour slips. They lose focus as they either struggle to understand the learning purpose or become bored.

Support for pupils' wider development is not consistent. This is because opportunities for pupils to develop their interests and personal qualities are not clearly planned for.

Pupils enjoy coming to school, they like being with their friends and say their teachers are kind. They enjoy the praise that teachers give them. Pupils say that they feel valued. Pupils feel safe. They know what bullying is and say it is rare. They are confident that adults in the school will deal with any worries that they may have. Parents agree that their children are kept safe in school.

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

Pupils have gaps in their knowledge. This has been exacerbated by the pandemic. Significant staffing changes has hindered leaders to implement their planned curriculum and identify what pupils know and can do. As a result, gaps in pupils' understanding are not being addressed quickly, and pupils are not secure in their recall of key information across a number of subjects.

Leaders' curriculum plans for reading, writing and mathematics build on what pupils have learned as they move across year groups. However, teachers do not always adapt teaching based on what pupils already know. This means that at times pupils either struggle with tasks or find tasks too easy. As a result, individual pupils are not making as much progress in the curriculum as well as they can. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Curriculum plans in several subjects are new. They have been planned clearly with pupils' needs in mind alongside important information that leaders want pupils to learn. However, the impact of these plans is not yet seen because teachers are not yet confident to deliver these subjects. Currently, pupils do not have the intended knowledge or skills in subjects, such as history and science.

In early years, children are taught to read sounds systematically. Adults make sure children read books that match the sounds that they are learning. Children experience a wide range of stories and books and develop a love of reading. Early years curriculum plans for some other areas of learning are not specific enough.

Children do not get enough opportunities to repeat and practise what they have learned. Leaders do not ensure that purposeful adult interactions happen routinely. In some areas of learning, adults do not make sure that new learning builds on what children already know.

Pupils in key stages 1 and 2 enjoy reading and discussing their favourite authors. Pupils who struggle with reading, including those that are disadvantaged and pupils with SEND, receive precise small group support to help them catch up. These pupils are becoming increasingly confident and fluent in their reading.

Leaders provide enrichment to give pupils' experiences of the wider world. For example, pupils experienced a trip to The Shuttleworth exhibition to enhance topic work. However, these activities are ad hoc and not sequenced into the curriculum, so that pupils can extend or build on these experiences over time.

Pupils do not always listen well enough to adults or each other. Outdoor learning provides opportunities for pupils to develop speaking and listening skills. However, activities are not purposefully planned to help pupils routinely practise and reinforce important skills that will help pupils consistently demonstrate positive behaviours. Pupils learn about different religions but are unable to talk in depth about different faiths. The curriculum is not yet planned well enough to build on leaders' intended values and skills.

All leaders are committed to bring about school improvement. Staff are overwhelmingly supportive of school leaders. The recently formed local governing body provides a range of relevant skills, experience, and support to school leaders. The trust has worked with school leaders to set specific and appropriate priorities that link precisely with staff training, which is also being provided by the trust. This is helping staff to improve the quality of education. Clear plans to bring about further stability in the teaching team are firmly in place.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know who to report concerns to and how to record information accurately on the school's system. Leaders meticulously and promptly follow up concerns they have about pupils. Leaders work hard to get the help needed to support the most vulnerable pupils and families, so they get the best help that they need. Staff carry out all necessary safeguarding checks on all adults who visit and work at the school. Leaders and teachers know about the latest safeguarding updates. They welcome scrutiny from the trust to make safeguarding rigorous. Teachers make sure that pupils are taught age-appropriate content about how to keep themselves safe online.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Plans in some subjects such as history and science have not yet been implemented well enough. Teachers are not confident to deliver these subjects as they are intended. As a result, pupils' understanding in some subjects is disjointed, or they have misconceptions. Leaders need to ensure that teachers teach the important knowledge specified in all subject plans and monitor closely that pupils can remember what they have been taught.
- Teachers are not adapting teaching or activities when pupils are struggling with tasks or finding things too easy. As a result, gaps in some pupils' understanding are not being addressed systematically. When this occurs, some pupils go off task and become distracted, leading to less positive behaviours for learning. Leaders need to ensure that teachers are confident to use a range of assessment strategies in lessons to set tasks that meet the needs and abilities of all pupils to ensure that pupils are engaged, stay on task and make good progress in all lessons.
- In early years, leaders have identified where children are not secure in each area of learning. Adults do not always use this information to purposefully interact with children to make sure children practise the specific skills where they are in need of more development. Leaders need to make sure that early years plans are more specific, so that adults can work with children to make as much progress as they can.
- Leaders provide a range of activities that support pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. However, these are not embedded in the curriculum. Pupils experience ad hoc messages and activities that do not provide a solid foundation for pupils' personal development. Leaders must make sure that pupils' personal development is embedded throughout the curriculum as they move through the year groups, so that all pupils develop a full understanding of their role as a British citizen.

## 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	144010
<b>Local authority</b>	Central Bedfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10200557
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy convertor
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	66
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Mike Bailey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Campbell
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.caldecoteceacademy.co.uk">www.caldecoteceacademy.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Caldecote Church of England Academy is a Church of England faith school located in the Diocese of St Albans.
- The religious character of the school was inspected under section 48 of the Education Act 2005 in June 2018. The religious character was judged to be good.
- The headteacher took up the post in September 2018. Since September there has been a significant change in teaching staff.
- The headteacher teaches in key stage 2 two days a week.

## Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and teachers. The lead inspector held a meeting with members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors and several members of the trust.
- Inspectors took account of a wide range of information, including the school's improvement plans and records of safeguarding concerns. School policies, documents and records relating to safeguarding, including the single central register and governor minutes were scrutinised.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Inspectors also reviewed attendance and other information provided by school leaders.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents expressed in the 22 responses to Ofsted's Parent View survey and 17 responses to Parent View free-text. Inspectors also considered 12 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and 12 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey. An inspector spoke with parents on day 1 of the inspection.
- The subjects covered in depth as part of this inspection were reading, mathematics, history, and science. In each subject, inspectors spoke with subject leaders, teachers, and pupils. Inspectors visited lessons and looked at pupils' work.

### **Inspection team**

Cindy Impey, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Kristian Hewitt

Her Majesty's Inspector

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