

Inspection of Carnforth School

Carnforth Drive, Worcester, Worcestershire WR4 9HG

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 January 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Carnforth School is a welcoming and inclusive school. Pupils and their parents, staff and governors are proud of the school. Pupils learn in a calm and positive learning environment because relationships are positive. Pupils are polite, courteous and respectful.

Pupils behave well. There are high expectations for pupils' behaviour, including from the pupils themselves. Pupils say bullying has no place in their school. One pupil reflected the views of many when they said, 'Bullying is not ok here. We do not stand for it.' Pupils feel safe in school. They know they can talk to trusted adults. As one pupil said, 'Adults who wear green lanyards are a trusted adult. They have had checks to be able to work in our school. We talk to them if we are worried.'

Leaders have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They have planned an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and or disabilities (SEND). Staff make sure pupils get a good start to their education.

Pupils know how to keep both physically and mentally healthy. They take part in the 'daily mile' and regularly practise mindfulness.

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

The school's curriculum has been carefully planned in most subjects, including English and mathematics. Key vocabulary is mapped out and the sequence of learning considered. However, in some subjects, for example art and physical education, the plans do not identify the most important things that pupils should know and remember. This stops pupils from achieving as well as they could as pupils do not always remember the important knowledge they should. Leaders have begun work to address this, but work is at an early stage.

Reading is at the heart of the school's curriculum. Many children arrive with limited reading skills. Leaders have ensured that pupils read a wide range of authors and texts. Pupils enjoy reading. One pupil said, 'We read every night for 15 minutes as the head inspires us to. The difference is we are inspired to read so we want to do it ourselves; we are not forced to do it!'

Children in the early years make an excellent start to learning to read. Children in Nursery are introduced to stories, books and rhymes. In Reception, children make a quick start learning to read. Adults are experts in teaching phonics. Pupils who fall behind in reading catch up quickly as staff provide effective additional support. Pupils practise their reading regularly with books that are well matched to the letter sounds that they know.

The mathematics curriculum is carefully sequenced so that pupils' knowledge builds on their previous learning. New learning is broken into manageable steps and pupils revisit previous learning to strengthen their understanding. Leaders use assessment

well to identify gaps in pupils' learning. As a result, there has been a focus on strengthening pupils' fluency in calculation and number skills since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Leaders ensure that the needs of pupils with SEND are identified and supported effectively. Adults provide strong care and support for these pupils. No pupil misses out on learning. Teachers use assessment well to identify what pupils can and cannot do and adapt learning accordingly.

Pupils relish the different roles and responsibilities they are given, including head boy and girl, school counsellors, peer mentors and eco counsellors. All pupils know their role contributes to the life of the school.

Pupils' low attendance has historically been an issue. Most families now understand the value of school because of leaders' focus on improving pupils' attendance. Attendance has improved considerably, although leaders know improvements can still be made by engaging with the families of pupils whose attendance is still not good enough.

Pupils are respectful and accepting of differences. One pupil said, 'We accept people. We do not accept racist or homophobic language.' Pupils have a good knowledge of the fundamental British values and how they apply to life in the school.

The early years has a stimulating and well-ordered environment that enables children to access resources independently. Staff's relationships are warm and nurturing. Staff model good behaviour and treat the children with respect. Staff foster independence by encouraging children to do things for themselves, for example putting on clothes, washing their hands and cleaning their teeth.

Governors are rightly proud of the school and what pupils achieve. They are informed, evaluative and actively involved in monitoring the school. They know the school community well and work hard to engage with parents, pupils and staff. They are proactive in supporting staff's workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong safeguarding culture in the school. Staff are well trained in identifying and reporting safeguarding issues. Weekly safeguarding briefings ensure all staff are aware of concerns.

Pupils are kept safe in the school because there are clear systems for identifying pupils who may be at risk. The safeguarding lead is unwavering in her determination to ensure pupils and families receive the help and support they need. Safeguarding records are kept meticulously and are well organised.

The curriculum teaches pupils how to stay safe in different ways and situations. Pupils have worked with the local police community support officer about drugs and stranger danger.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the essential knowledge that pupils should learn is not outlined clearly enough in the curriculum plans. This hinders some teachers from being able to design learning that helps pupils to remember the planned curriculum. Leaders should ensure that, across subjects, curriculum plans from the early years to Year 6 specify the building blocks that pupils should learn and remember.

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

Unique reference number	143416
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10212200
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	196
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paul Shoesmith
Headteacher	Sara Wood (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.carnforthschool.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Carnforth School converted to become an academy school in August 2017. When its predecessor school, Fairfield Community Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, head of school, curriculum and early years leader and the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead and checked safeguarding documents, including the checks made on staff. They also examined documentation relating to pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the views of staff in the online staff survey.
- Inspectors also spoke with pupils informally during the school day, including at the before- and after-school clubs.

Inspection team

Eve Morris, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Karen O'Keefe

Ofsted Inspector

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