

Inspection of a good school: Cottesbrooke Infant and Nursery School

Yardley Road, Acocks Green, Birmingham, West Midlands B27 6LG

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 February 2022

Outcome

Cottesbrooke Infant and Nursery School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending this welcoming school. Staff are caring and supportive. Parents appreciate the help staff give to them and their children. Pupils listen well, and talk about their ideas with others. Pupils know what helps to make them good friends.

Pupils behave well in lessons and at breaktimes. They enjoy a range of activities during social times. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive. Pupils feel safe here, and know who to talk to if they need help. Pupils understand the importance of speaking up if they think that bullying could take place. Pupils are confident that if bullying happens, staff will deal with it.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' achievement. These expectations are realised through the broad and effective curriculum that pupils enjoy. Pupils' knowledge and interests are extended across a range of subjects. COVID-19 has affected leaders' vision for wider opportunities. These extra activities are now restarting, for example in the sport clubs that take place after school.

Pupils know how to keep safe in a range of situations inside and outside of school. They learn about online safety, safe relationships and stranger danger to help them understand how to protect themselves.

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

Since the previous inspection, leaders have developed the school's curriculum. Detailed planning shows the essential knowledge that pupils should learn. In science, for example, teachers understand the vocabulary that pupils need to know to help them build on what they have learned before. This is helping pupils to talk about their work and explain their understanding. In mathematics, leaders have changed the planning to cover gaps in pupils' knowledge that have emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic. Teachers prioritise the key mathematical knowledge that pupils need to learn. Staff know which pupils need support to close gaps in their learning, and are helping them to catch up.

The curriculum is well designed in most subjects. However, in a small number of subjects, teachers are unclear about what pupils should learn. In addition, a few teachers do not have the necessary support to help them deliver the curriculum well. In these subjects, pupils do not make as much progress as they should.

Teachers assess what pupils have learned and use this well to modify, consolidate and develop pupils' learning. Staff feel that the assessment system is useful and their workload is manageable.

Leaders have put in place an effective programme to teach phonics and early reading. All staff are well trained to teach phonics. Most teachers model sounds clearly and accurately. Pupils regularly practise the sounds they are learning. This helps them to secure their phonics knowledge from an early age. Regular assessment helps teachers to identify pupils who need more support to help them read fluently. Pupils receive extra help where needed, to help them catch up. The effective teaching of early reading and phonics helps pupils to become confident readers.

Children in the early years make a positive start to school. They learn to listen to adults and to each other through well-established routines. Children develop their social skills, and learn and play well together. The curriculum supports children well to develop their language and communication, and mathematical understanding. Teachers quickly spot children who are falling behind, and provide additional support to help them keep up with their learning.

Leaders ensure that the curriculum is ambitious for all pupils. The curriculum is adapted well to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Careful checks on how well pupils have learned the curriculum provide useful information for staff helping pupils to catch up. Consequently, pupils with SEND keep up with their classmates because they have the necessary knowledge to build on their learning.

Pupils learn about the world in which they live through the personal, social and health education curriculum. Pupils have a clear understanding of how to be a good friend and how to help others. This is helping them to form positive relationships with their peers.

Staff are proud to work at the school, and support each other well. They appreciate that leaders and governors have considered their workload and well-being, for example by considering the frequency of marking pupils' work. Governors understand their statutory duties, including safeguarding. They form link partnerships with staff to check on the quality of education and well-being of the school community. This helps them to challenge and support school leaders.

Pupils enjoy coming to school, but absence remains a barrier to some pupils' learning. Leaders have restarted the attendance strategies to reduce absence that they had in place before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that all staff are trained to recognise the signs which indicate that a pupil may be at risk from harm. Leaders act promptly when concerns are reported. They work well with a range of outside agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils get the help that they need. Staff understand and play a valuable part in the community they serve. They are sensitive to some of the difficulties faced by families.

Pupils learn how to stay safe online and in the community. For example, they learn about keeping information private online, and what makes a healthy relationship.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not ensured that teachers are clear about what pupils should learn and when. In addition, a few staff do not deliver the curriculum effectively. This means that some pupils do not know and remember essential knowledge. Leaders should make sure that teachers know what pupils need to learn and when, and have the necessary knowledge and expertise to deliver the intended curriculums well.
- Attendance at the school has fallen since the COVID-19 pandemic began, and has not returned to pre-pandemic levels. Leaders and staff should continue to work with pupils and their families to promote and share the school's attendance expectations. Leaders should make sure that the policies and procedures which promoted positive attendance levels before the pandemic are implemented effectively.

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 or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2013.

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	140706
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10211345
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	282
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Keith Fenwick
Headteacher	William Loughlin
Website	www.cottesbrooke-inf.bham.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club for pupils.
- There is nursery provision for children aged from three.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives into early reading, science and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.

- The inspector spoke with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other members of staff. The inspector spoke with pupils about their work and the school. The inspector met with four members of the governing body.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents about safeguarding, including the employment checks undertaken when staff are appointed.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. The inspector reviewed the responses to the staff survey. The inspector also met with members of staff, parents and pupils to gather their views on the school.

Inspection team

Richard Kentish, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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