

Inspection of a good school: Charles Read Academy

Bourne Road, Corby Glen, Grantham, Lincolnshire NG33 4NT

Inspection dates:

2 and 3 February 2022

Outcome

Charles Read Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school where staff want the very best for all pupils. There is a strong sense of community. Leaders are ambitious for what pupils can achieve. The values and culture of the school are woven through every aspect of school life.

Pupils are proud of the school and want to do well. Behaviour in the school is excellent. The atmosphere in lessons is calm. Pupils and staff treat each other with mutual respect. Bullying is rare. Staff deal with it well.

Teachers provide good-quality teaching and support to help pupils meet any challenges in their learning. Pupils know what to expect in lessons. They settle quickly to their learning. All pupils experience reading classic texts.

School life goes beyond the formal curriculum. Pupils relish getting house points to earn rewards. They are taught the skills that they need for life, such as how to stay safe and healthy.

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

Leaders are determined that pupils will achieve as well as they possibly can. They have adopted a curriculum that is well designed and builds pupils' knowledge and skills. The aims of each subject have been carefully considered. Over time, pupils remember more and understand more.

Teachers' subject knowledge is good. Pupils do work that matches the planned curriculum. Expectations are high for all groups of pupils. Teachers regularly check what pupils understand. They use this information well. Lessons follow a consistent pattern. Pupils know what to expect and settle quickly to their work. Leaders prioritise reading. All pupils read every day. Pupils' reading skills have improved and they develop a love of reading.

With the support of the trust, leaders have provided high-quality professional development for teachers. Teachers value this training. They say that it has improved their subject knowledge.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) make secure progress through the curriculum. Teachers have high expectations of what these pupils will be able to learn. Leaders have changed the way in which staff manage provision for pupils with SEND. However, not all parents and carers understand the reasons for these changes.

Pupils behave consistently well. Disruption in lessons is extremely rare and dealt with effectively so that learning continues. Teachers are able to start their lessons straightaway. They feel well supported by leaders.

The curriculum is broad and balanced. Throughout key stage 3, all pupils study the full range of national curriculum subjects. They are well supported in making choices at key stage 4. However, they do not always see the relevance of their studies to their lives beyond school, and some pupils lack ambition when considering what they will study next.

Leaders have enhanced the curriculum through a programme of activities. Pupils participate in more sport and physical activity than they did previously. They explore different interests and a range of activities linked to personal development. Pupils value the advice and support they are given about careers. However, this enriched curriculum does not yet help all pupils to aspire as they might as they think about their future.

Following the pandemic, leaders have prioritised helping pupils return to routines and ensuring that pupils receive high-quality teaching in class. The curriculum has been carefully adapted to ensure that pupils can get back on track and have the knowledge that they need for future learning. Leaders have made sure that pupils get the help that they need. This has included supporting pupils' mental health.

Leaders have acted to improve staff well-being. They have considered carefully staff workload. Staff recognise this and appreciate leaders' efforts.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that staff get the right training and remember the important messages through regular updates. Staff record their concerns promptly. Leaders act decisively to address concerns straightaway. They monitor the actions that are taken to make sure that these are making a difference.

Pupils get up-to-date information about how they can stay safe online. Teachers include important safeguarding knowledge in the curriculum. Pupils feel well supported and safe. They know whom to contact for help if they need it.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have implemented a new curriculum to broaden pupils' experiences and enrich their cultural capital. However, this has not yet enabled all pupils to make ambitious choices about what they will study next. Leaders should continue to refine the curriculum so that pupils understand the connection between what they are learning now and what they might aspire to do in the future.
- Pupils with SEND are supported well. Leaders have changed how these pupils are helped. They have raised expectations of what pupils with SEND will know and be able to do. However, leaders have not ensured that all parents of pupils with SEND understand how their children are being helped or the progress that they are making. Leaders should further develop how they communicate with parents of pupils with SEND.

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 a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2017.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	136479
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10212515
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	259
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mrs Clare Greenhalgh
Principal	Mrs Sue Jones
Website	www.charlesreadacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 and 17 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than average.
- The school is part of the David Ross Educational Trust.
- The school provides alternative provision at The Pilgrim School, Lincoln.

Information about this inspection

This was the first routine inspection the school had 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, geography and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with a wide range of senior leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator.

- An inspector met with representatives of the trust and the academy scrutiny committee.
- Inspectors looked at information around behaviour, attendance and wider enrichment opportunities.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including self-evaluation documents, minutes of governance meetings and safeguarding documents.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of staff about workload and leadership.
- Inspectors talked to the leader in charge of safeguarding arrangements. They met with a range of staff and pupils to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, as well as those to the staff and pupil surveys. They also considered additional communications from parents.

Inspection team

Paul Heery, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Ian Colling

Ofsted Inspector

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