

# Inspection of Chaulden Infants' and Nursery School

School Row, Chaulden, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP1 2JU

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Inspection dates: 13 and 14 January 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Inadequate**

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The quality of education

**Inadequate**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Inadequate**

Early years provision

**Inadequate**

Previous inspection grade

Good

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

Pupils and parents and carers at Chaulden Infants' and Nursery School are welcomed into the 'Chaulden family' from their very first day. It is a school where everyone knows each other and works together well.

Pupils talk happily about their time in school. They like to learn and they try hard to remember what they have been taught. However, pupils need leaders to ensure that the curriculum allows them all to achieve their best.

Pupils follow a curriculum that does not prepare them well enough for the next stages of their education. Adults' expectations of how well pupils achieve throughout the curriculum are too low. Pupils are not given opportunities to show what they are capable of. The curriculum is poorly planned and lacks ambition.

Pupils are happy and friendly. They are well behaved and enjoy coming to school. They play well together.

Pupils say that they feel safe at school. They have positive relationships with staff. They understand different types of bullying and say, 'It doesn't really happen here.' Pupils are confident to talk to familiar adults and visitors to the school. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school.

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

Leaders have not ensured that the quality of education is good enough for pupils to achieve well. Leaders have not monitored how effectively the curriculum is taught. They are not clear about what needs to be better. Therefore, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

With the exception of the Nursery provision, the curriculum is not well planned or delivered for pupils to learn effectively. Leaders are not clear about what they expect pupils to learn and by when.

Teachers have not had the training and guidance they need to teach the curriculum well. This means that teachers do not deliver the curriculum effectively enough. As a result, pupils do not remember what they have been taught. They do not achieve as well as they should

Assessment is not effective. In some subjects, pupils are assessed on content that they have not been taught. Pupils are often not given the chance to check their knowledge or understanding. For example, in the Reception class, pupils do not record number sentences correctly.

A small number of children attend the Nursery class on a part-time basis. They have access to a curriculum that is ambitious and well sequenced. Adults' expectations of children are high. Children get off to a good start in the Nursery class. This

momentum is not continued as they move into Reception and beyond. The curriculum in Reception lacks the ambition and coherence of that in Nursery.

As with other subjects, the curriculum in reading is not good enough. Too many pupils are not fluent, confident readers by the time they leave the school. Leaders have been too slow to put in place a suitable systematic synthetic phonics programme. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to sound out letters to make words. This means that many children do not get off to a good start with learning to read in Reception. This slows their progress in becoming fluent readers. Overall, expectations of pupils' reading are too low.

Pupils in the speech and language base are not having their educational needs met. Pupils are well cared for, but leaders are not clear about what they want these pupils to learn. Teachers do not provide them with the most suitable learning activities. This limits pupils' progress. Pupils are capable of achieving more.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in other classes are given better support. However, the weaknesses in the curriculum mean that pupils with SEND do not learn as well as they should. They are not achieving their potential.

The rate of pupil absence is too high. Leaders have not addressed this with enough rigour. Robust systems to tackle poor attendance are not in place. As a result, attendance is not improving.

Pupils usually behave well. They are kind and respectful to each other. Pupils try really hard to listen to their teachers, even when the learning is not made clear, and it is confusing for them. Relationships between pupils and staff are positive.

Pupils do not have access to a wide range of clubs. Parents and pupils say that they would like more. Leaders have not responded to this. Leaders have not ensured that pupils' talents and interests are stretched.

Pupils enjoy the special responsibilities they are given in class, such as helping to tidy away and keep their classroom tidy. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, pupils were elected by their classmates to be members of the school council. They attended meetings regularly. Pupils went on educational visits to places of interest linked to their learning. Visitors were brought into school to enhance the curriculum. Now that the pandemic restrictions have been eased, leaders plan to start these activities again soon.

Governors have not asked enough pertinent questions about the quality of education or how leaders are keeping pupils safe. Where governors have identified weaker practice, it has not been followed up quickly enough. They have not ensured that training is prioritised for staff to improve the school. Governors are not aware of the weaknesses in curriculum areas such as reading and mathematics.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders are not clear about their safeguarding responsibilities. They have not followed the school's policies and procedures for keeping pupils safe.

Governors have not carried out their statutory responsibilities to check the school's safeguarding procedures. Leaders have not been held to account for the significant weaknesses in recording, reporting and acting on safeguarding concerns.

Pupils report that they feel safe in school. They know whom to talk to if they have any worries. Staff are aware of how to report incidents, but do not routinely do so or follow the correct procedures. Leaders have not routinely taken appropriate action where necessary.

The single central record is up to date and the correct checks are in place.

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

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

- Leaders have not put effective safeguarding arrangements in place. Staff rarely record any concerns. Leaders need to ensure that effective systems are in place to ensure that staff identify, report and record all concerns about pupils. Leaders need to ensure they provide information to relevant agencies and make timely referrals so that pupils are protected from harm. Governors must ensure that all statutory safeguarding responsibilities are met.
- Leaders have not ensured that the curriculum from Reception to Year 2 is well planned, sequenced and progressive. Curriculum plans are not in place, are incomplete, not clear, or not followed. Leaders have not been checking on the implementation of the curriculum. Consequently, pupils do not always know what they are learning and do not learn the curriculum as well as they should. Leaders must ensure that a well-planned and sequenced curriculum is put in place and that it is delivered effectively throughout the school.
- The teaching of reading is ineffective. The new systematic synthetic phonics programme is not delivered well. Therefore, too many pupils do not learn to read well by the time they leave the school. Leaders must ensure that staff have the training and support they need to deliver the programme effectively. Leaders must then check regularly that the new approach is having the necessary impact on improving pupils' reading outcomes, and take action where this is not the case.
- Pupils in the speech and language base do not have access to an ambitious curriculum. Expectations are too low. As a result, pupils are not learning as well as they should be. Leaders must re-evaluate the provision and make necessary

changes, so that pupils in this class are provided with a well-matched curriculum that meets their needs.

- Attendance is too low. Too many pupils are frequently absent from school. Pupils miss large amounts of curriculum time, and this has a negative impact on their learning. The school's systems for dealing with frequent absence are weak. Leader must now establish a robust system to bring about the necessary improvement in pupils' attendance.
- Pupils do not have opportunities to take part in a rich and diverse enrichment programme. This means that pupils are not having their talents and interests nurtured and developed. Leaders should find ways to increase the personal development opportunities the school offers pupils.

Leaders and those responsible for governance may not appoint early career teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

## 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>	117202
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10212388
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	142
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Howard Mason
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jacqueline Hood
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.chauldeninfants.com">www.chauldeninfants.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Chaulden Infants' and Nursery School has a specialist resource provision for pupils with speech, language and communication needs. The provision has eight places for pupils between four and seven years old.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

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 met with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the school improvement partner and four members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke with leaders about personal, social and health education, relationships and sex education, and the provision for pupils with SEND. Inspectors spent time visiting the specialist resourced class for pupils with speech, communication and language needs.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of parents during the school drop-off. Inspectors observed pupils during lunch- and breaktimes.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors checked the school's single central record of pre-appointment checks, considered its safeguarding policy, looked at pupils' safeguarding files and spoke with the designated safeguarding lead. Inspectors also spoke with pupils, staff and members of the governing body about safety and safeguarding arrangements at the school.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of school information, including documents on the school's website, minutes of governing body meetings, leaders' improvement plans, their self-evaluation of the school and improvement partner reports.
- Inspectors considered 23 responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and one letter from a member of staff. Inspectors also considered 70 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 44 free-text responses submitted during the inspection.

## **Inspection team**

Isabel Davis, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Daniel Short

Her Majesty's Inspector

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