

Inspection of Edward Peake CofE VC Middle School

Potton Road, Biggleswade, Bedfordshire SG18 0EJ

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 May 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

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 enjoy their school. Teachers care about their needs and keep them safe. Pupils are taught to maintain their physical and mental well-being.

Pupils are enthusiastic about their subjects. They like learning and they enjoy reading. However, some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not receive the precise support they need to learn well.

Most pupils behave very well. They are respectful to each other and to adults. At times, a small number of pupils do not make the best behaviour choices. Teachers kindly help pupils to behave better. Most pupils consider that bullying is rare. They are confident that their teachers deal with bullying, and it stops.

Pupils have many opportunities to take part in a range of clubs and other activities outside of lessons. Pupils support the school and local community by fundraising and improving the local environment. Many pupils take on additional responsibilities. They learn to lead and support others. They learn how to build positive human relationships. Pupils are kind and show considerable empathy. They respect difference and welcome new pupils to their school.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum that helps most pupils to embrace a diverse, wider world. Teachers often carefully present the knowledge they want pupils to learn. They break learning down into manageable chunks. This helps pupils to clearly understand new knowledge which builds on what they have learned before. For most pupils, learning becomes more demanding as they get older. This prepares the majority of pupils well for the rest of their secondary education.

A minority of teachers, however, do not have the subject knowledge to ensure that pupils learn as much as they could in some subjects. They are not able to pick up on errors and misunderstandings. As a result, pupils continue to make the same mistakes. Some pupils do not have opportunity to apply their knowledge to more demanding tasks. Leaders know this. They are supporting teachers so that they understand better what knowledge to teach and how to teach it.

Leaders have not clearly identified the needs of a considerable minority of pupils with SEND. Teachers, therefore, are not aware of how best to help those pupils with complex needs. Staff do not ensure that the right strategies are used to help pupils with SEND learn well over time.

Leaders have established a powerful caring ethos. The school's motto of 'live, love and learn' resonates throughout school life. Pupils enjoy a rich extra-curricular offer that enables them to have fun, to work with others and to hone new skills. They take part in purposeful trips to help them expand and apply their knowledge further.

Leaders have worked with teachers to develop a more positive culture around dealing with behaviour. They have invested in the 'Hive'. Here pupils explore why they behaved the way they did. They learn how their behaviours may have affected others and what they can do to make amends. Most teachers fully embrace this approach. Leaders acknowledge that they need to continue to work with a significant minority of staff members who are less supportive of the behaviour policy.

Leaders have a clear understanding of what the school does well and how it needs to improve. There is capacity within the leadership team to ensure future improvement. Governors hold leaders to account for their actions in areas of school life such as the curriculum and safeguarding. However, they have not made thorough checks on how the school is providing for pupils with additional needs. As a result, some pupils with SEND do not learn as well as they could.

Parents' perceptions of the school are mixed. Some parents are highly appreciative of how the school provides for their children. Others are less convinced. Leaders know that there is work to do to communicate more effectively with parents about school life.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff receive regular safeguarding training. As a result of this training, staff fully understand how to report concerns about a child's welfare. Leaders act quickly and make appropriate referrals to the local authority. They involve a variety of outside agencies to provide pupils with the support they need.

Pupils are fully aware of how to keep themselves safe when online. They know how to respond to any potentially inappropriate activity.

The school meticulously checks all new members of staff to make sure of their suitability to work with children.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The needs of some pupils with SEND are not clearly identified nor communicated well enough to staff. As a result of this, pupils with SEND do not receive the precise support they need to help them to access the curriculum, and to learn well. Leaders must ensure that the needs of all pupils with SEND are reliably identified and that there is a shared understanding of these needs among staff. Staff should meet these needs and provide the precise support pupils require to help them learn more effectively. Leaders need to regularly evaluate the quality of

support provided to ensure that they have a clear understanding of how well pupils' needs are being met.

- Governors' quality assurance of school life is inconsistent. They have not held leaders fully to account about how well the school is meeting the needs for pupils with SEND. Governors must ensure that there are more thorough systems of monitoring to have an accurate view of the quality of education for all pupils.
- Parents hold mixed views about the school. This is because leaders have not communicated well enough with parents. Parents have not been fully informed about the reasons behind the actions of leaders. Leaders need to communicate more effectively with stakeholders. This will ensure that parents are better informed about school life and have a clearer understanding of decisions taken by leadership that are in the pupils' best interests.

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	109694
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10210937
Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	9 to 13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	567
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Vaughan Johnson
Headteacher	Zoe Linington
Website	www.edwardpeake.beds.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 October 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors met the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, art, geography and history. These included discussions with subject leaders, visits to lessons, meetings with staff and pupils, and scrutiny of pupils' work. They also considered curriculum documentation and spoke to leaders about the curriculum.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's single central record and met with the designated safeguarding lead.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils, staff and parents. There were 97 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey, 45 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and 120 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also considered 70 free-text responses from parents.

Inspection team

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