

Inspection of Cottesmore Academy

Kendrew Barracks, Cottesmore, Oakham, Rutland LE15 7BA

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 May 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	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school. They embrace the school's 'EPIC' values of expectations, pride, independence and collaboration. Pupils say the school is, indeed, 'epic'. Pupils treat each other and adults with respect and consideration. They say that if another pupil were to be unkind, staff would sort it out quickly. Pupils feel safe and valued in school.

Leaders and staff have high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils are enthusiastic about their lessons and are keen to succeed. Many pupils join and leave the school during the academic year due to their family's military deployment. Some pupils' parents are working away for extended periods. The school's programme of support for these pupils is extensive. This helps pupils to manage their worries and emotions. One parent, typical of many, commented that, 'Teachers and staff go above and beyond expectations.'

Pupils value the opportunities that are on offer to them. They enjoy caving and climbing in Derbyshire and visiting a museum to learn important information about rocks and soils. All pupils get to work outside and so learn more about the outdoors. Pupils enjoy taking on roles such as young governors, eco-warriors and sports leaders.

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

Leaders are highly ambitious for pupils. They have built a well-sequenced and structured curriculum. The curriculum requires pupils to investigate and think carefully about their learning. Pupils are encouraged to use precise vocabulary to explain their ideas. During lessons, teachers revisit and check what pupils know and understand. This enables teachers to plan pupils' next steps effectively.

Most subject leaders check what works well in their area of responsibility. They identify how to improve the curriculum further. However, some leaders have had fewer opportunities to make detailed checks. The COVID-19 pandemic has been a factor in this. In almost all subjects, leaders have identified the key knowledge and concepts they want pupils to know and remember over time. However, this is not the case in a small number of subjects.

Leaders make sure that reading is at the heart of the curriculum. They are determined that all pupils read well. Teachers and teaching assistants know how to teach early reading well. They know what pupils should learn and by when. This helps staff to quickly spot those pupils who need extra help. Pupils read books that match the letters and sounds they know. This means they get the practice they need to become fluent readers. Across the school, pupils read often and with enjoyment. They respond well to the rewards on offer, including the chance to earn a book from the book vending machine. Pupils listen raptly as teachers read carefully-chosen books to them.

The mathematics curriculum is well-planned and sequenced. Beginning in the early years, teachers enable pupils to build their knowledge step by step. Teachers explain new concepts clearly. They check that pupils understand and then offer appropriate support and challenge. Pupils regularly practise basic skills, such as times tables. They develop secure mathematical knowledge. Pupils enjoy mathematics because they feel successful.

Staff know pupils well. They quickly identify where additional help is needed. Leaders work closely with staff and external agencies to ensure that pupils get the right support. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well.

Children get off to a flying start in the Reception class. Staff make sure that children are happy and safe. Children are kind and helpful to each other. They enjoy achieving their 'rainbow challenges'. Adults plan activities that support children to learn and use new words. Leaders think carefully about how children's learning in Reception connects to learning in later years. Children are well prepared to succeed in Year 1.

Pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. Leaders plan a range of activities that helps pupils become resilient and reflective. Leaders help pupils understand British values. Pupils relate these to their daily lives, such as respecting other religions or beliefs. Opportunities to promote pupils' emotional and physical well-being are well considered. Well-trained staff provide additional support for pupils to help them understand and manage their emotions.

There is a strong staff team. Staff are proud to work at the school. They appreciate leaders' support for their workload and well-being. One member of staff commented, 'Our opinions as staff really count.' Governors make frequent visits to the school. They support and challenge leaders in equal measure. Trust leaders provide valuable training and support for staff. These are well received.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have developed a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff receive frequent training and updates. They know what to do if they have any concerns about pupils. Leaders have a clear overview of pupils' behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. They know pupils and their families well. There are robust procedures in place to ensure that all adults are suitable to work in school.

The carefully planned curriculum helps pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online. Pupils learn about respectful relationships. They learn how to maintain physical and mental health.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the curriculum does not make clear the most important things that pupils need to know at each stage of their education. This means pupils do not learn and remember the curriculum as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum for all subjects makes clear the most important things that pupils should know and remember at each stage of their education.
- Some subject leaders have not had the opportunity to check on how well the curriculum is being implemented. The COVID-19 pandemic has been a factor in this. This means that these leaders do not have a fully rounded view of how well pupils are acquiring curriculum content. Leaders should ensure that all subject leaders rigorously monitor their area of responsibility.

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	142401
Local authority	Rutland Council
Inspection number	10227385
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	153
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Revd James Saunders
Headteacher	Megan Lucas
Website	www.cottesmoreacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	25 and 26 September 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Cottesmore Academy is located in Kendrew Barracks. Almost all pupils are of service families.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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 met with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, curriculum leaders, and groups of staff.
- The lead inspector spoke with five members of the local governing body, including the chair, and the chief executive officer of the Rutland Learning Trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in four subjects: reading, mathematics, science, and history. For each deep dive, inspectors visited lessons, looked at curriculum

planning, reviewed pupils' work and spoke with pupils and teachers about their lessons. The lead inspector also listened to pupils read to a member of staff.

- Inspectors looked at curriculum plans for other subjects including personal, social and health education, art and design, and design and technology.
- A wide range of documents were scrutinised, including those relating to governance, safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors reviewed the responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. Inspectors also spoke with parents at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Joanne Sanchez-Thompson, lead inspector Ofsted Inspector

Carl Thornton Ofsted Inspector

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