

# Inspection of Chaulden Junior School

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

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Inspection dates: 21 and 22 June 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

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

Most pupils at Chaulden Junior School use their school's values of 'be brave, be kind, be a Chaulden Learner' as a guide to help them to achieve their best. Pupils feel safe. Adults support pupils well in school. If bullying happens, pupils are listened to and helped.

Pupils respect others' differences. They show empathy and understanding towards others. Pupils contribute to the wider school life by being part of the school council, being head boy or head girl, or by joining the 'eco committee'.

Pupils enjoy the enrichment activities that are planned for them. For example, these include school trips, visitors and 'express' and 'speak up and be heard' sessions.

Many pupils enjoy their learning and are actively involved in lessons. This cannot be said for everyone. A number of pupils are not motivated to learn. Additionally, a significant proportion of pupils struggle to follow leaders' behaviour expectations, which too often interrupts the learning of others. This means that pupils do not learn as well as they should.

Not all pupils are well prepared for their next stage of learning. This is because they are not taught the full range of the curriculum.

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

Chaulden Junior School has been through a period of turbulent leadership. This has stalled many of the improvements that leaders, including the trust, have planned to implement. Due to the pandemic, leaders have focused on English and mathematics to ensure that pupils develop their basic skills. As a result, pupils have not had as much access to other subjects. This means pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding, for example in modern foreign languages (MFL). A small number of Year 6 pupils have missed some of the knowledge they need to prepare them for secondary school. While the new leadership team has quickly identified the immediate priorities, improvements are in the early stages of development.

Some curriculum areas are further along in their development and implementation. The curriculum is well thought out, and learning is planned in logical steps that ensure pupils build on what they know and have learned previously.

In some areas of the curriculum, teachers do not know enough about what pupils already know and understand. This is because teachers do not have agreed systems to find out what pupils already know. As a result, new learning in these areas does not build on pupils' previous learning and so pupils have gaps in their knowledge. Where this happens, pupils can sometimes struggle with new learning or find the work too easy. Therefore, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

The development of essential reading skills has a high priority in the reading curriculum. Pupils read every day. Class reading texts are carefully selected to match the topics being taught as well as to cover a diverse range of content related to pupils' experiences. Pupils who need additional support with their reading get the help they need to become more confident, fluent readers.

Pupils with SEND have their needs accurately identified, and in many cases, there are carefully considered plans in place that ensure they can access the curriculum successfully. However, the targets for pupils with SEND are not always sharp enough. This means that the progress towards meeting their targets is often not clear. In addition, plans are not regularly reviewed. This means that provision for pupils with SEND is not adapted as their learning moves forward, and consequently, they are not progressing as well as they should.

Teachers do not deal with poor behaviour fairly. Expectations are too low, and too many lessons are disrupted by low-level behaviour. Leaders have begun to adapt behaviour policies and procedures to address the poor behaviour in the school. As a result, the number of incidents is reducing. However, there remain instances when learning is disrupted and this impacts on pupils' learning.

Leaders plan and provide opportunities to promote pupils' personal development. This, in part, contributes towards pupils being ready to learn. It also helps pupils to develop valuable skills to support them in their adult life. However, some pupils have not had access to the full range of national curriculum subjects, so they are not as well prepared for future learning, which hinders how well they develop and achieve.

Trust leaders and governors carry out their statutory duties effectively. Most governors are new to the role and do not have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. This is particularly the case when holding leaders to account for the quality of education. Steps have been taken to address this. The trust, through its own monitoring of the school, is aware that school improvement work has been progressing too slowly. Recent leadership changes are beginning to bring about the improvements that are needed.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a positive culture for safeguarding. Checks carried out by leaders ensure all staff are suitable to work with pupils.

Staff know they all are responsible for safeguarding pupils. They are well trained on what signs to look out for if pupils are at risk and know what systems to follow to seek help and support.

When concerns are raised, these are followed up promptly by leaders. Leaders work effectively with outside agencies to ensure that families can access the support they need.

Pupils know how to keep safe, both in school and in the wider world, for example by staying safe online.

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

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

- Leaders have focused on post pandemic issues and prioritised addressing gaps in English and mathematics. For some pupils, this means they are less well prepared for learning in other subjects, for example in MFL. Leaders need to ensure that all pupils access a curriculum that is ambitious, broad and balanced so that it prepares pupils well for their next stage of their education.
- The support for pupils with SEND is not consistent. Plans are not accurate enough and do not contain the detail needed to support these pupils well enough. As a result, pupils with SEND are not making the progress they should. Leaders must ensure that all pupils with SEND have plans that support them to access the same curriculum as their peers.
- Teachers do not always deal with low-level behaviour well enough or fairly. This means that learning is regularly disrupted. Leaders need to ensure that the behaviour policy is understood and is implemented consistently and fairly so expectations are raised, and pupils' learning is not interrupted.
- Some staff do not assess pupils well. This means they do not know what pupils can already do before teaching new learning. Leaders need to train staff so that they are able to accurately check what pupils already know to guide them when planning and presenting new learning.

## **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>	139550
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10227308
<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	152
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Andrew Mayo
<b>Headteacher</b>	Bernadette Dempsey
<b>Executive Headteacher</b>	Alex Lindley
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.chauldenjm.herts.sch.uk">www.chauldenjm.herts.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6 and 7 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Chaulden Junior School is a smaller-than-average-sized junior school.
- There has been a significant period of turbulence and change in school leadership.
- The current executive head has been in post since Easter 2022.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for eight pupils across the school who have speech and language difficulties. This provision is funded by the local authority and managed by the school. Pupils receive specialist teaching in 'the base' (Forest Class) and are integrated into their year group classes for some of their learning.
- Leaders use a registered 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.
- During the inspection, inspectors held meetings with senior leaders. This included the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors met with three members of the local governing body (LGB), including the chair. Inspectors met with three trust members including the co-chief executive officers. Inspectors looked at minutes of LGB and the Educational Trust Committee meetings.
- Deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, history, and Latin were carried out by inspectors. They met with curriculum leaders and visited lessons. They reviewed pupils' work in these subjects, as well as speaking with teachers and pupils.
- Inspectors observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors met with pupils and talked to them informally during break and lunchtime.
- The arrangements for safeguarding were looked at by inspectors. This included scrutinising the single central record and meeting with the designated safeguarding lead to review other safeguarding documentation.
- Inspectors considered the 35 responses received to the Ofsted Parent View online survey were considered by inspector, and 35 free-text comments. Inspectors also considered the 11 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

## Inspection team

Sharon Waldron, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Tracy Fielding

Her Majesty's Inspector

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