

# Inspection of a good school: Caldecott Foundation School

Station Road, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6PW

---

Inspection dates:

4 and 5 October 2022

## Outcome

Caldecott Foundation School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

The school's calm, purposeful atmosphere supports pupils' learning well. Pupils are encouraged to 'be ready, be respectful, and be safe'. They enjoy learning new things and grow in confidence as they discover new interests and develop personal skills. By the end of Year 11, pupils are securely equipped with the academic knowledge and personal skills they need to support them in their next steps in employment or education. One Year 11 pupil spoke of his appreciation for the school's advice and support, which has enabled him to aim for his chosen career.

Consistent expectations and well-established routines help pupils to feel secure and supported. They move around the school sensibly. Lunchtimes are well-ordered and sociable occasions, when pupils and staff enjoy chatting while they eat. Pupils usually behave well in lessons. Sometimes, however, they become anxious or frustrated and find it hard to behave as well as they should. Pupils know that adults are always on hand to help when this is the case. Staff develop strong relationships with pupils. They respond to any challenging behaviour with patience, sensitivity and quiet good humour. Leaders address any concerns about bullying seriously and promptly.

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

The school's broad and balanced curriculum provides a secure framework for pupils' academic and personal development. Leaders have made improvements to the curriculum in the past few years, introducing a better balance between academic and personal development. They have ensured greater clarity about what pupils need to learn in each subject, so teachers are clearer about what they need to teach. Some curriculum developments, such as the new personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme, have been introduced very recently and are not fully established in the school's curriculum.

Some subjects are taught particularly well, so pupils make strong progress and achieve well. Staff are knowledgeable about teaching reading, for example, and deliver the primary

school's phonics programme effectively. Pupils develop increasingly secure reading skills as a result. This supports their learning across the curriculum, as well as helping them to enjoy books. Leaders are rightly taking steps to strengthen the teaching of reading for weaker readers in the secondary school. They have introduced a reading scheme which builds effectively on what pupils have learned in the primary school. Staff training has begun, with more scheduled in the coming weeks.

Staff know pupils well. They assess pupils' progress continuously and usually adapt the curriculum skilfully to support pupils' different needs in most subjects. Sometimes, however, staff lack the depth of knowledge needed to do this equally well in all subjects. The therapeutic team plays a key role in advising and supporting staff.

Pupils have often had a difficult time in education before joining the school. Sometimes they have a negative view of learning as a result. Staff are acutely aware of this. They focus on making sure that pupils feel safe and secure so that they can learn. Pupils know that they are liked and respected. They learn a little more about themselves with each passing week. They begin to recognise their own achievements and learn how to regulate their own behaviour. Parents and carers are positive about the school. One said, 'This amazing school has given my child the opportunity to learn that he deserved.'

The school's forest school programme is an integral part of school life. Well-qualified and enthusiastic members of staff lead a wide range of activities to support learning across the curriculum. The forest school curriculum makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal, social and academic development.

Staff report high morale and strong teamwork. They say that leaders are always approachable and supportive. Staff are pleased with recent developments in the school, including the closer working relationship between the primary and secondary schools. Governors provide robust challenge for leaders. They are determined to make sure that pupils are well prepared for life in Britain.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school's safeguarding mantra is 'if it doesn't feel right, tell someone'. Records show that staff follow this advice closely, reporting any concerns promptly, no matter how minor. Leaders follow these up properly, liaising closely with agencies, such as children's services. Staff build strong relationships with parents, and parents have confidence in the school to keep their children safe.

Regular training ensures that staff are knowledgeable about safeguarding. Regular staff debrief sessions are used to keep staff up to date about any safeguarding issues. Leaders make sure that all recruitment checks are completed in a timely fashion.

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

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

- Sometimes staff lack the depth of subject knowledge to teach all subjects consistently well. When this is the case, the curriculum is not always adapted as well as it could be in response to pupils' individual needs. Pupils do not always learn as well as they could in these subjects as a result. This is particularly the case in recently revised subjects, such as PSHE. Leaders know that this is an aspect of the school's work which needs developing. Staff training has already begun, with further training planned in the coming months. Staff say that they find the training provided helpful, and they are keen to learn more. Leaders should make sure that staff have the subject knowledge needed to teach all subjects equally well.

## 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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 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.

## 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>	119027
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	10200539
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	55
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Colin Green
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stacey McShane
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://www.thecaldecottschool.co.uk">https://www.thecaldecottschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	7 and 8 March 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The executive headteacher left the school in August 2022. The school currently has a head of primary and a head of secondary. The head of secondary has overall responsibility for the school.
- Most pupils who attend the school have an education, health and care plan relating to social, emotional and behavioural needs and/or autism spectrum disorder. Many have been excluded from other settings prior to joining the school.
- There were no pupils studying in the school's sixth form at the time of the inspection.
- The school has a small education provision based in Fledborough in Newark, which comes under the same registration as the school.
- A small proportion of pupils attend a small provision at Pine Lodge, Kennington Road, Willesborough, Ashford TN24 OST, which is run and managed by the school.
- The school uses two unregistered alternative providers.

## Information about this inspection

- 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 head of secondary, the head of primary, assistant heads and other senior leaders. They also spoke with a range of staff at different times during the inspection.
- The lead inspector had a telephone discussion with three governors, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, and personal, social and health education. Deep dives included visiting a range of lessons, looking at pupils' work, and talking with leaders, teachers and pupils about how teaching in these subjects builds pupils' knowledge over time.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils in lessons, during breaktimes and around the school.
- Inspectors assessed the school's culture of safeguarding throughout the inspection. The lead inspector reviewed a wide range of safeguarding documents and records. She also checked the single central record.
- The views of staff, parents and pupils were gathered through a range of sources, including Ofsted's surveys and informal discussions.

## Inspection team

Julie Sackett, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Harry Ingham

His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2022