

Inspection of Calderstones School

Harthill Road, Allerton, Liverpool, Merseyside L18 3HS

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 January 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Diversity is celebrated at this welcoming school. Pupils, including students in the sixth form, are proud to be part of a community where everyone is respected. Pupils told inspectors that 'you can always be yourself here'.

Pupils are happy and feel safe at Calderstones. They enjoy learning, and they know that their teachers care about them.

Leaders and staff want the best for every pupil. They have raised their expectations of behaviour and learning. Pupils have risen to leaders' challenge. As a result, they behave well and achieve more highly than in the past.

Bullying and discrimination of any kind are not tolerated. Leaders deal with any bullying swiftly and effectively. Pupils are confident that staff will take their concerns seriously.

Parents and carers, including parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are highly positive about the support that their children receive from staff.

Pupils in key stage 3 value the high-quality opportunities that make up the 'experience guarantee'. For example, they enjoy trips to galleries and museums, performing at local music festivals and raising money for 'Caldie', the sponsored guide dog.

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

Leaders have thought carefully about pupils' needs. They have used this thinking to design a curriculum that is relevant and suitably ambitious for pupils. For example, pupils told inspectors that learning about justice and democracy has a direct impact on their lives.

Leaders have raised their aspirations for pupils, including students in the sixth form. Subject leaders have organised the knowledge that they want pupils and students to learn so that it builds logically from key stage 3 to key stage 5. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is equally ambitious for pupils with SEND.

Although a very small number of pupils in Year 11 still experience a slightly narrower curriculum, the vast majority of pupils study a broad range of subjects. An increasing number of key stage 4 pupils choose to study the English Baccalaureate suite of subjects.

Teachers know their subjects well. In the main, they use this expertise to deliver the curriculum effectively. In most lessons, teachers check whether pupils have learned what they need and consolidate pupils' prior knowledge. However, from time to

time, some of the strategies that teachers use to revisit forgotten learning and address pupils' misconceptions are less effective. This hinders pupils in building new knowledge because they find it harder to link it to earlier learning.

Leaders have increased the importance of reading across the school. Pupils spoke passionately to inspectors about the books that they are reading in form time. Leaders have carefully identified those pupils who are not reading as well as they should. Most pupils catch up quickly because of the support that leaders have provided. However, some pupils, especially in key stage 4, have not caught up in reading as quickly as they should. This is because leaders' support for these pupils started more recently. In the past, support for reading from staff has not been focused closely enough on those pupils who need the most help.

Leaders have thorough systems to identify the needs of pupils and students with SEND. Teachers use effective strategies to adapt their teaching so that these pupils learn the curriculum well alongside their peers. Students with SEND in the sixth form achieve well.

Pupils' conduct is purposeful and calm. They understand how to live up to the school's values. They treat each other with kindness and respect. Leaders ensure that any poor behaviour is dealt with effectively so that learning is not disrupted.

Most pupils attend well. Leaders are working with a group of disadvantaged pupils to help them understand the importance of coming to school more regularly. As a result, the attendance of these pupils is improving.

In key stages 3 and 4, leaders have created a comprehensive personal, social, health and economic education curriculum. This ensures that pupils learn about healthy relationships, consent, misogyny and looking after their mental health. Leaders have plans in place to ensure that students in the sixth form have sufficient opportunities to revisit earlier learning about some of these important topics.

Leaders have ensured that pupils and students have access to high-quality information about careers. Students in the sixth form appreciate the tailored support that they receive. This helps them make informed choices about their next steps.

Senior leaders and governors are acutely aware of those aspects of the school that require further development. Governors work closely with leaders and provide an appropriate balance of challenge and support.

Staff value the training that leaders provide. If they have concerns about their workload, they know that leaders will listen. Staff are proud to work at this school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders' dedication to promoting pupils' welfare has created a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders have carefully identified the support that potentially vulnerable pupils and students may need. For example, leaders ensure that support for pupils is easily accessible through the school's health and well-being hub.

Staff are clear about the procedures they must follow if they have concerns about a pupil. Staff report any concerns promptly, and leaders act on these in a timely manner.

Leaders work closely with external agencies such as the police and the local authority. When pupils and students need additional help, leaders follow up concerns until they are sure that this help is effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In key stages 3 and 4, some teachers do not use effective strategies to revisit prior learning. As a result, some pupils struggle to remember what they learned in the past. This makes subsequent learning difficult. Leaders should ensure that teachers receive the support and guidance they need to help them to address forgotten learning and rectify pupils' misconceptions.
- Some of the weakest readers, particularly those in key stage 4, do not receive the support that they need in a timely and effective way. This hinders their learning of the curriculum and prevents them from achieving as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that the reading interventions they have recently introduced are prioritised to the pupils who need the most help.

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

Unique reference number	104698
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	10244617
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,553
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	223
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Richard Blanchard
Headteacher	Lee Ratcliffe
Website	www.calderstones.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 June 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been a significant number of changes to the senior leadership team and to the governing body since the previous inspection.
- Leaders use five registered alternative providers for a small number of pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection that the school has 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 spoke with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders and members of staff. The lead inspector also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors completed deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, science, geography, history, sociology and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils and students about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' and students' work. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in other subjects.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils and students from Years 7 to 13 about their experience of school and their views on behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes and met with the student council.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation document, leaders' improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings and records of pupils' behaviour and attendance.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority by telephone.
- The lead inspector held meetings with the staff responsible for safeguarding and scrutinised the single central record. Inspectors considered leaders' safeguarding processes and procedures. Inspectors discussed matters relating to safeguarding with pupils, students and staff.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff, pupils and students.

Inspection team

Ben Hill, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Geoff Baker	Ofsted Inspector
Alan Hammersley	Ofsted Inspector
Dawn Farrent	Ofsted Inspector
Christine Veitch	Ofsted 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.

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/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: 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
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023