

Inspection of The Castle Rock School

Meadow Lane, Coalville, Leicestershire LE67 4BR

Inspection dates:

23 and 24 May 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Sixth-form provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Inadequate

What is it like to attend this school?

The culture at this school has transformed. The school is a calm, orderly and happy place. Leaders focus on teaching pupils to 'do the right thing because it is the right thing to do'. The vast majority of pupils welcome the recent changes. As a result of the improvements, pupils are safe and they feel safe. They attend well. They take pride in their work and achievements. They applaud each other in celebration assemblies.

Pupils value their personal development curriculum lessons. They take these seriously. They feel safe and secure asking questions about serious matters. They learn techniques to manage their well-being, such as 'give yourself a pep talk'. They learn to value diversity and about how to show respect.

Pupils study a broad and ambitious curriculum. It is not consistently well delivered across the school, and pupils' learning varies. In the sixth form, students study a range of academic and vocational courses. They value the support and advice that many staff give them to prepare for their next steps.

Pupils receive high-quality pastoral support. They know that they can talk to adults if anything worries them. Pupils who need it get extra help with their well-being, behaviour or attendance.

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

School and trust leaders bring a strong sense of moral purpose to their work to improve this school. They have created the right conditions for learning. Pupils' behaviour and attendance have improved significantly. Leaders have designed an ambitious, well-sequenced curriculum for all subjects, including in the sixth form. They provide high-quality training to support staff to improve their practice. Most staff value this and are working well with leaders to continue to bring about the necessary improvements.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They set tasks to help pupils to retrieve and practise past learning. Most teachers explain new learning clearly. Many teachers check pupils' understanding and address any misconceptions pupils have. Many use the knowledge they gain to plan pupils' next steps in learning effectively. Many teachers provide valuable feedback to pupils. When this is the case, pupils correct errors and deepen their learning. Leaders and staff have brought about improvements in the quality of education, but there is still significant inconsistency. This means that pupils' learning is too variable. There is less variability in the sixth form, where students benefit from more consistent provision.

Leaders make sure that teachers know how to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers use this advice to adapt teaching to meet pupils' needs. Year 7 and Year 8 pupils who need help to catch up in reading

and mathematics get exceptional support. One pupil explained how this support has helped him to grow in confidence when he is required to read across the curriculum.

Pupils know that reading is a priority in this school. All pupils benefit from the registration reading and vocabulary programmes. The books that pupils read contribute to their personal development. Year 7 pupils can discuss the books they read in school enthusiastically.

The personal development provision is of high quality. Pupils learn about careers, healthy living and relationships. As a result, they feel prepared for the challenges they might face. They find visiting speakers interesting and informative. The topics prompt debate and discussion. In the sixth form, teachers deliver personal development lectures. Students like this approach. It prepares them well for later life and study.

Leaders have worked with determination to set high expectations for behaviour and attendance. Pupils get lots of praise when they do the right thing. They find this motivating. Some pupils need help to improve their behaviour or attendance. Leaders make sure that pupils get support that meets their individual needs. As a result, pupils attend school more and they receive fewer suspensions. This means that they learn more. Leaders take swift and appropriate action if bullying is reported. Consequently, pupils are confident to pass on information about incidents of bullying and trust staff to deal with it.

The governance of the school has improved significantly since the school joined Lionheart Educational Trust. Trustees and the local governing body hold leaders to account. They check what leaders tell them. They support leaders and staff and are mindful of their well-being.

The majority of staff are happy and proud to work at this school. They value the good relationships they have with leaders and each other. One praised how senior leaders support them by being present in the corridors and around school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have regular, high-quality safeguarding training. They understand their duties well. They report concerns promptly. Records show that leaders take swift and appropriate action. They communicate well with local safeguarding partners to secure the right help for pupils.

Leaders have rigorous systems to monitor concerns. Trust leaders and governors provide highly effective oversight of the school's safeguarding work.

Pupils learn to keep themselves and others safe, including when online. For example, they benefit from a strong programme of relationships education that includes lessons and talks from visiting speakers.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The implementation of the curriculum is variable. As a result, pupils' learning is variable. Leaders must ensure that the strong practice seen in many areas of the school is consistently embedded throughout the school so that all pupils learn and remember more and produce consistently high-quality work.
- Not all teachers provide pupils with effective feedback. When this is the case, pupils do not improve their work. Leaders must ensure that all pupils receive effective feedback so that misconceptions are addressed and pupils have the opportunity to secure their 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.

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	138478
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10283020
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
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	1,253
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	150
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Anne Lamb
Headteacher	Julia Patrick
Website	www.castlerock.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 and 23 November 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school joined Lionheart Education Trust in September 2022.
- The school uses the services of 12 unregistered alternative providers.
- 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 inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a graded (section 5) inspection under the same Act.

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with senior school leaders, including the executive headteacher and the associate headteacher. They also met with leaders from Lionheart Educational Trust, including the chief executive officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in art, design and technology, mathematics, music and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke to leaders about the curriculum in science and about the school's approach to reading. They visited lessons and looked at pupils' work in a range of subjects.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector met with the senior designated safeguarding lead and reviewed policies, documents and records, including the single central record. Inspectors also spoke to pupils and staff about the school's approach to safeguarding.
- Inspectors visited registration and an assembly. They observed pupils at various times of the school day.
- They visited the 'green room', the school's new behaviour support provision. Inspectors spoke with representatives from a sample of the alternative providers used by the school.
- The lead inspector met with a member of the board of trustees and the chair of the local governing body.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils, parents and staff through discussions during the inspection and the Ofsted surveys.

Inspection team

Aoife Galletly, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
John Morrison	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Sweeney	Ofsted Inspector
Javier Sanchez-Garcia	Ofsted Inspector
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