

Inspection of Campton Academy

Rectory Road, Campton, Shefford, Bedfordshire SG17 5PF

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 November 2023

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	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The principal of this school is Sarah Fraher. This school is part of Bedfordshire Schools Trust Limited, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Alan Lee, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Ilona Bond.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Campton Academy as an academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils' safety and well-being comes first at Campton Academy. It shows in pupils happily coming into school. Those who arrive before school starts, enjoy attending the friendship club. On the rare occasion a pupil has a concern, they know adults in school will listen and help them.

Typically, pupils achieve well. They list school subjects, particularly computing and religious education, as their favourite part of Campton Academy. Pupils also enjoy reading. Collecting ticks or stickers to achieve a reading certificate encourages them to read often.

By and large, pupils abide by the behaviour expectations set out in the Campton Code. Doing so results in them earning values badges and the opportunity of becoming a coveted Campton Ambassador. Also, pupils work hard to earn a spot at the golden table at lunchtime. Here they dine with the principal, cheerfully chatting about the goings-on in their life.

There are many service children in the school. The school caters for them well. For example, the welcome and goodbye assemblies serve to bring pupils into the fold or ready pupils for a change respectively. Though change can be hard, the friendships pupils build and the care they receive from staff shows in them being confident and resilient.

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

With support from the trust, the school worked carefully to compile their curriculum. For some subjects, this involved adopting high-quality schemes of work. For others, leaders consulted with experts to determine what knowledge and skills would best prepare pupils for their middle school education. For example, children in the Reception class use basic directional language to program a robot. This prepares them well for debugging more complicated code as they grow older.

Many pupils achieve well in reading. The careful use of on-entry checks identifies those pupils who are behind the pace of learning. These pupils then receive effective, extra tuition, along with a carefully selected book containing sounds they know. Having books pupils can read instils a sense of confidence. How the school engages with parents, be it through the reading cafes or pink books, means parents are well placed to support their child with reading at home.

Though staff watch pupils while they teach, they are not always quick to use their checks on pupils' learning to inform their teaching. So, they may continue with an activity that is not working well for everyone or skim over the mistakes a few pupils make. Partly, this issue persists because leaders' monitoring focuses too little on everyday teaching. So, there are fewer opportunities for leaders to use the insights gained to inform teachers' training and support.

The school's aim is to provide pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) with the care and support they need. To do this, there is careful liaison with external experts. Staff take on board the advice, working hard to script their language and arrange appropriate resources. Consequently, pupils' behavioural and learning needs are well met. Above all else, staff are kind and patient, making school a welcoming place for pupils with SEND and their families.

There is a sufficient personal development programme on offer to pupils. It includes extra-curricular clubs, including lunchtime computing, gymnastics and yoga. The trust also arranges cross-school competitions and events, such as a science fair. These allow pupils to mingle with those from the middle and secondary schools. It instils a sense of excitement about the next stage in education. The strong pastoral support offer ensures there is 'a listening ear' for pupils whenever needed. It includes well-considered contact with military charities to provide tailored support for service children.

Pupils' attendance is high. Many receive certificates to celebrate maintaining 100% attendance. Like the school's systems for safeguarding, there is very little opportunity for any pupil to slip through the net. This is because leaders review their procedures carefully and regularly. They make simple changes, such as to when they send letters or hold meetings with parents, which promptly resolve the issues.

Generally, pupils are kind and focus on their learning. Those pupils who take on roles, such as the sports ambassadors and hall monitors, like to lend a helping hand to pupils and staff. On the odd occasion behaviour does dip, it is in response to how staff use their checks on pupils' learning.

Trustees, trust leaders and local governors have a strong, working knowledge of the school. They care deeply about the well-being of leaders and staff, being supportive in how they check and challenge. This filters down to how school leaders behave. It shows in staff feeling valued and parents overwhelmingly recommending the school to others.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Occasionally, staff do not use their checks on pupils' learning as well as they should. When this happens, pupils make mistakes or the mistakes they make are not addressed quickly enough. Leaders should provide the training and guidance that helps staff to efficiently use their checks on pupils to inform their teaching.
- How leaders monitor is not efficiently ironing out some inconsistencies in staff's pedagogy. As a result, there are fewer opportunities to identify and share out the

best practice that exists within the school. The trust and school should facilitate the training and arrangements that upskill and allow these leaders to monitor the provision they oversee more effectively.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	148104
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10267851
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	126
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Ilona Bond
Principal	Sarah Fraher
Website	www.camptonacademy.org.uk
Date(s) of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Central Bedfordshire Council is running a programme of school development called 'Schools for the Future'. The plan is to move from a three-tier to a two-tier educational system. As part of this, Campton Academy will, at some point in the next few years, move to a new school building on a new site. This will mean Campton Academy expands to become a primary school that caters for pupils aged 4 to 11.
- Currently, there is before- and after-school childcare led by school staff and managed by school leaders. From January 2024, this will change to be run by a separately registered and inspected childcare provider.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with leaders, including the chief executive officer, chief operating officer, director of education, the chair of the trust, two local governors, and the principal.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and computing. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with trust directors and/or subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to staff, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- To further inspect the curriculum and the training and support around it, the lead inspector met with the director of education, principal, assistant special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator, and two subject leaders. As part of this, the principal and lead inspector carried out some further lesson visits.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; examined safeguarding records; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including school policies, the school development plan, self-evaluation form, and minutes from meetings of the trust board and local governing body.
- Inspectors gathered pupils' views by holding discussions with some of them, as well as talking to pupils during lessons and at lunchtime. Inspectors took account of the 16 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at social times.
- Inspectors gathered parents' views by reviewing the 29 responses, including 16 free-text responses, submitted to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. An inspector also spoke to some parents at the start of a school day.
- Inspectors gathered the views of staff by speaking to several of them and reviewing the 18 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Daniel Short, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Bridget Harrison

His Majesty's Inspector

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