

Inspection of a good school: Caludon Castle School

Axholme Road, Wyken, Coventry, West Midlands CV2 5BD

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 February 2024

Outcome

Caludon Castle School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Sarah Kenrick. This school is part of Castle Phoenix Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Michele Marr and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Peter Freeth.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school. They feel safe and listened to. The school's values of 'respect to all, from all' are evident throughout the school. Pupils show positive attitudes to their learning. They come to lessons well prepared and ready to learn. Pupils listen to each other respectfully and follow the teachers' instructions. Pupils behave well around school. They socialise well together at break and lunchtimes. Pupils are confident that teachers deal with any bullying issues promptly and effectively.

Pupil leadership roles are embedded in the life of the school. Pupils can take on a range of different leadership roles, from literacy or subject leaders to house captains. Sixth-form students model leadership skills. For example, they raise money for local charities and support younger pupils through reading or mentoring activities.

Pupils live up to the school's high expectations. The school has embraced digital technology. Pupils benefit from the opportunities created by using their own digital device. In most lessons, pupils learn and achieve well.

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

The curriculum is ambitious and well planned. Curriculum leaders have made sensible decisions about how to organise the curriculum so that pupils' knowledge builds in logical steps. Many subjects have thoughtfully selected topics that build on pupils' interests and offer opportunities for pupils to work creatively.

Teachers present new information clearly and model this effectively using digital technologies. They build in frequent opportunities for pupils to practise their new knowledge. In many subjects, teachers use strategies that help pupils remember their learning over time. Teachers question pupils effectively to check their understanding. In some subjects, they ask challenging questions and are skilful at deepening pupils' understanding. This was particularly notable in sixth-form lessons. Pupils receive regular individual feedback from their teachers. In most subjects, pupils are very clear about what they need to do to improve their work.

However, on a small number of occasions, teachers do not have consistently high expectations. They do not routinely check that pupils understand their work or support them well to remember their learning over time. Where this happens, pupils make less progress.

In some learning, teachers give pupils opportunities to talk about their ideas before they complete their written work. This helps them to build confidence in their answers. The school is keen to build pupils' communication skills to help prepare them for life after school. However, opportunities for talk and discussion are not consistently offered in all learning.

There is a coherent reading strategy in place. Pupils are regularly assessed on their reading skills and weaker readers receive additional support. This has led to some improvement in reading. Pupils are encouraged to read in form time and younger pupils have a regular lesson in the library. However, there are inconsistencies in how well subject teachers provide opportunities for reading in lessons.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported to access the same learning as their peers. Teachers use a variety of strategies to help pupils with SEND learn well. They make sure they have suitable resources in lessons. Many pupils with SEND value having a digital device to support their work.

There has been a significant focus on improving attendance in the last year. Additional staff have been employed. They use rigorous procedures and involve parents early in the process. The school has an excellent understanding of pupils and their families and work hard to get the most vulnerable pupils to attend school regularly. The number of pupils who are persistently absent from school has now dropped significantly.

The school takes care to ensure pupils have access to a rich, engaging enrichment offer. Pupils have many opportunities for trips and visits. There is a wide range of clubs available, some of which have been set up as a response to pupils' requests. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. Almost all pupils said that their school encourages them to respect people from other backgrounds and to treat everyone equally.

Pupils receive high-quality guidance about careers. There are multiple events for pupils to attend and many external speakers and visitors. Year 12 pupils all have the opportunity for work experience and younger pupils have regular opportunities to engage with the world of work. High-quality guidance about apprenticeships, with regular external inputs, has led to a very high take up of apprenticeships at the end of key stage 4.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On a small number of occasions, the curriculum at key stage 3 and 4 is not implemented effectively. Weaknesses exist in how new information is delivered, how pupils are helped to remember new ideas and the methods used to check that pupils understand their learning. This limits the progress some pupils make. Leaders should work with staff to ensure that the curriculum is delivered effectively in every subject.
- Pupils do not consistently benefit from opportunities in lessons to build their literacy skills. This means that some pupils have fewer opportunities to regularly practice their reading and speaking. Leaders should ensure their planned approach to reading and speaking in lessons is consistently applied in all subject areas.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2016.

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	139292
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	10312785
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,570
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	318
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Peter Freeth
Headteacher	Sarah Kenrick
Website	http://www.caludoncastle.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of an academy trust, the Castle Phoenix Trust.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider and two unregistered providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- 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 COVID19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the trust, the chair of the local governing board, the chief executive officer, the headteacher, and senior leaders.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science, history, modern foreign languages and art. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, discussed the curriculum, and visited a sample of lessons. Inspectors met with teachers and spoke with pupils about their learning. Inspectors also scrutinised samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders and staff working in pastoral roles. Inspectors spoke with pupils about their wider development and other aspects of school life.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; 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.

Inspection team

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