

Inspection of Castle Wood Academy

The Avenue, Gainsborough, Lincolnshire DN21 1EH

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 March 2024

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	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Melanie Ryan. This school is part of the Tall Oaks Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Sue Wilson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Lee Wallhead.

What is it like to attend this school?

Castle Wood Academy is an inclusive and welcoming school. Pupils are enthusiastic about the school. One pupil echoed the views of many when they stated, 'I love learning here.' Pupils understand the importance of treating people equally and with respect. Many pupils told inspectors that it is 'OK to be different' at this school.

Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), meet the high expectations that the school has for them. Children in the early years make a positive start to their time at school. There is a focus on reading across the school and staff foster a love of reading among all pupils. Recently, pupils in Year 1 visited the local library to help them to become independent in their reading choices.

Behaviour in the majority of lessons is calm. Occasionally, there is some low-level disruption. However, staff support pupils to manage their own behaviour. Pupils feel that any bullying that happens is dealt with effectively. One pupil who recently moved to the school from another school said: 'This school has helped me to make the right choices.' Pupils feel safe. They know that they can speak to an adult if they have any concerns.

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

All pupils study the same ambitious curriculum. Teachers know precisely what to teach and when. The curriculum has been designed to allow pupils to revisit their learning over time. However, teachers do not always clearly explain the connections between the different topics that pupils study. This means that some pupils struggle to recall and connect their learning over time. Teachers adapt their lessons to ensure that pupils with SEND can access the learning and feel confident. This helps them to learn the curriculum alongside their peers. In lessons, teachers use questioning and modelling to help pupils develop their understanding and address any misconceptions. At times, pupils do not always receive precise feedback to help them deepen their understanding.

There is a focus on reading across the school. Pupils develop a love of reading. They are enthusiastic about the class novels their teachers share with them. Pupils are able to talk confidently about their favourite books and authors. Phonics is delivered right from the start in the early years. Pupils practise their reading regularly. Books are appropriately matched to suit pupils' reading ability. Pupils who need extra help with their reading are given timely support.

Children in the early years follow clearly established routines. There is a focus on reading and writing development. Children are keen to talk about their learning. They benefit from a carefully designed environment which provides them with opportunities to learn independently. Children enjoy school and there is a clear culture of care throughout the setting.

When pupils' achievement does not meet the school's expectations, the school is quick to identify the reasons for this and takes effective action. Leaders across the trust have supported the school in raising pupils' attainment. There are clear monitoring systems in place to ensure that current pupils achieve the best possible outcomes.

Staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and achievement. As a result, most pupils behave well and show kindness towards each other. There are systems in place to support pupils with their behaviour. During social times, pupils play respectfully together. Most pupils attend school well. Staff support families to ensure that pupils arrive to school on time. Pupils know the importance of attending school and talk about enjoying all aspects of school life.

The school is inclusive and encourages pupils to respect cultures that are different to their own. Pupils are able to talk about the fundamental British values and protected characteristics. For example, they were keen to tell inspectors how they engage with democracy through class voting systems. Pupils recognise the importance of helping others, for example through raising money for different local and national charities. Some pupils struggle to recall their understanding of world faiths.

Trustees and governors understand their roles well. They provide effective support and challenge to the school. There is a focus on staff's well-being. Staff appreciate opportunities to collaborate and share good practice with colleagues across the trust. Previously, leadership roles have not been well defined. This has led to a lack of oversight of the effectiveness of some of the strategies that are being used to support pupils. However, the newly appointed headteacher has quickly identified areas for further improvement. Staff, parents and carers are positive about the future direction of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders' oversight of the school's work is not consistently clear. Actions to improve some aspects are not yet fully embedded. At times, this leads to a lack of clarity about the effectiveness of the school's strategies to support pupils, including the provision for disadvantaged pupils. The school should ensure that there is robust oversight of all areas of the school's provision so that the experiences and outcomes of all pupils continue to improve.
- Some feedback given to pupils does not help them to deepen and improve their understanding. This means that pupils do not always know how to improve their work and extend their learning. The school should ensure that all staff delivering

input to pupils are trained to assess pupils' knowledge and give them timely feedback to consolidate and extend 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' 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	140329
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10324173
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	283
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Lee Wallhead
CEO of trust	Sue Wilson
Headteacher	Melanie Ryan
Website	www.castlewoodacademy.eschools.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 May 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The newly appointed headteacher started at the school the week before the inspection.
- The school runs a daily breakfast and after-school club.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the chief executive officer, the headteacher and curriculum leaders. The lead inspector held a meeting with trustees and members of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, history, art and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at other curriculum plans and met with leaders to discuss plans to improve published outcomes.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for pupils' behaviour and attendance, and pupils' personal development. They also met leaders responsible for the provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors met with the leader responsible for the early years, visited the early years and spoke with children.
- Inspectors met formally and informally with groups of pupils.
- 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.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. They also considered responses to the Ofsted surveys for school staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Roxanne Fearn-Davies, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Rebecca Thompson	Ofsted Inspector
Steven Barnes	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 2024