

Inspection of a good school: The Collett School

Lockers Park Lane, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP1 1TQ

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 April 2024

Outcome

The Collett School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Most pupils have previously experienced difficulties in their schooling. Many join the school with significant gaps in their knowledge, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Pupils access a curriculum that is planned to help them catch up.

Pupils benefit from the opportunities to learn how to be independent adults. They achieve success in their work experience. This includes serving in the Horsebox Café, working in the local business and supporting younger pupils as classroom helpers. Pupils gain accreditations linked to potential career paths. They are well prepared for their next steps in education, employment or training.

Pupils are happy and secure at school. They understand and live up to the school's expectations of behaviour. They forge strong relationships with each other and members of staff. Pupils respond well to adults' guidance. They adopt a cheerfully optimistic approach to learning. Pupils are inquisitive and delight in learning. They also support each other well when facing challenge. With gusto, pupils celebrate each other's achievements.

Pupils benefit from high-quality pastoral support. They are taught how to make safe choices at school, home, in the community and online. If they become worried, pupils seek help from trusted staff, who provide the support pupils need.

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

The school has in place an ambitious curriculum that takes account of pupils' varied and complex needs. Overall, the school's curriculum is well designed to ensure that pupils understand and remember important knowledge in sensible steps. Teachers present new knowledge clearly and in small chunks. Usually, they give pupils lots of practice and opportunities to review the knowledge and skills they need. Teachers check that pupils have a secure grasp of this information before moving on to new learning. Pupils' work is

typically of a good quality. For some subjects, however, the school has not provided staff with guidance about the exact knowledge pupils must remember over time. When this is the case, staff do not know what key knowledge pupils need to review. Consequently, pupils sometimes forget important knowledge in certain subjects.

The school provides staff with detailed information about each pupil's individual special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff use this guidance effectively, to support pupils to learn well and overcome any challenges they may face.

Pupils love books and reading. They take pleasure in the stories and texts staff read with them. Pupils read regularly and learn to enjoy reading as a leisure activity. The school effectively supports those at the early stages of reading. Staff consistently follow the school's chosen approach to teaching phonics. They provide expert support that ensures pupils learn what they need to read effectively. Staff also help pupils needing support effectively in order to develop the communication skills and vocabulary needed to start learning phonics. These pupils gain confidence and learn to speak with others fluently.

Pupils behave well at school. They benefit from the school's routines and clear expectations of their conduct. Pupils work hard in lessons and usually learn in calm, purposeful classrooms. Staff expertly support pupils who find it hard to regulate their emotions and behaviour. When these pupils experience frustration and demonstrate unacceptable behaviour, staff respond effectively, using the many high-quality resources available. This ensures that pupils return to learning promptly. Because pupils enjoy school, they generally maintain regular attendance. When pupils start to struggle with attendance, the school works well with families and attendance improves.

The school ensures that pupils learn about the different lifestyles and beliefs in contemporary Britain. Pupils discuss the views of others with maturity. The school teaches pupils how to look after themselves and their peers. Pupils willingly take up positions of responsibility. For example, older pupils supervise younger pupils at lunch. Older pupils model the school's values well. They correct younger pupils' behaviour sensitively. Younger pupils respond to older pupils positively.

Leaders and governors maintain positive relationships with parents and staff. Parents appreciate the school's work. Staff are proud to work at the school. They also enjoy working there. Staff speak highly of leaders' support for staff well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- For some subjects, the school's guidance for teachers does not identify exactly what pupils must learn. Consequently, teachers do not know what they should teach and review in these subjects. This leads to pupils sometimes forgetting key knowledge. The

school must provide guidance that makes clear exactly what pupils must remember and ensure that teachers emphasise this important knowledge so that pupils remember it more readily.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2018.

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 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	117672
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10323655
Type of school	Special
School category	Foundation special
Age range of pupils	4 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	126
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ian Dignum
Headteacher	Stephen Hault-Allen (executive headteacher)
Website	www.collett.herts.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	16 and 17 October 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school caters for pupils with specific and moderate learning difficulties, autism and speech, language and communication needs. All pupils have an educational, health and care plan.
- The school is part of the Blue Tangerine Federation. The school's headteacher is also the executive headteacher for both schools in the federation.
- The governing body and executive headteacher oversee both schools in the federation. There is also a head of school at The Collett, who oversees some of the day-to-day work of the school.
- The school uses part-time, unregistered, alternative provision.
- 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

- This was the first routine inspection the school 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.
- Due to the nature of the specialist curriculum, inspectors carried out deep dives in the following areas: communication, language and reading, personal development, understanding my world and mathematics. In each area, inspectors met with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils and looked at evidence of pupils' work.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including EHC plans, pupil profiles, behaviour support plans and other information about the behaviour of pupils.
- Inspectors held discussions with the executive headteacher, governors, the head of school, members of the senior leadership team, subject leaders, teachers, members of support staff and pupils.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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

Al Mistrano, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jackie Mullan

Ofsted Inspector

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