

Inspection of a good school: Castlecroft Primary School

Windmill Crescent, Castlecroft, Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV3 8HS

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 July 2024

Outcome

Castlecroft Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Castlecroft Primary School is an inclusive school. The motto 'we are all different, we are all special' reflects how the school values all its pupils. It is a welcoming place, and pupils are proud to attend. Relationships between adults and pupils are warm and respectful. Because of this, pupils feel very happy and safe at school.

Leaders and staff are ambitious in their expectations of what all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), can achieve. Staff support pupils to do their best. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for their future. Pupils are polite, well-mannered and friendly. They behave well and follow the well-established routines.

The school provides an exceptional range of opportunities for pupils to be involved in, beyond the classroom. This includes trips, workshops and events such as a German café. Pupils enjoy putting on concerts and performances, such as a rock concert in school. They have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument and take part in sports, spelling and poetry competitions.

Pupils enjoy attending a wide range of after-school clubs. These include drama, art, science, reading, football and netball. These help pupils to develop their talents and interests.

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

The school has planned a broad and ambitious curriculum. In subjects where curriculums are more established, pupils achieve well. Curriculums are planned and sequenced so that pupils build their knowledge and skills. For example, in history, younger pupils spoke enthusiastically about legacies from different civilisations such as the Romans and the importance of Roman aqueducts and roads. Older pupils shared their learning about the Second World War and how it started. They could identify key events and use technical vocabulary correctly.

Across most subjects, teachers give pupils time to practise previous learning. This ensures that pupils, including those with SEND, build their knowledge over time. However, in a small minority of subjects, there are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to revisit and recap their learning. As a result, some pupils struggle to remember what they have learned previously and have gaps in their learning.

The teaching of reading and phonics is a priority in school. There is a well-sequenced phonics curriculum. Phonics teaching begins when children start school. Pupils read books matched to the sounds they know. This means pupils enjoy success because they understand the books they are reading. The school plans frequent opportunities for reading. Pupils who need help to keep up receive effective support to focus on what they need to learn next.

The development of reading skills continues into key stage 2 with a focus on developing pupils' reading fluency and comprehension skills. Throughout school, books are carefully selected for the age and interests of the pupils. Teachers read to pupils regularly. Initiatives such as reading certificates, visiting authors, 'fiction fortnight' and an opportunity for pupils to publish their own books all promote a love of reading.

The school identifies the additional needs of pupils with SEND quickly and accurately. Staff are trained to develop their knowledge and expertise of supporting pupils with specific needs. In lessons, they provide adaptive support where appropriate. The school works well with parents, carers and other professionals to ensure that pupils get the extra help and support that they need. This enables pupils with SEND to progress well.

Pupils' behaviour across the school is positive. There is almost no low-level disruption in lessons. Pupils know and follow the school's expectations well. Children in the early years quickly settle into routines that help them learn. Pupils' attendance is a high priority for the school. The school communicates well with families to improve attendance.

The programme for pupils' wider development is exemplary. Older pupils learn about relationships and puberty in an age-appropriate way. Pupils learn about safety, including how to stay safe online. Pupils carry out leadership roles, such as sports leaders and school councillors, with pride. Additionally, older pupils are chosen to be peer readers for younger children. They listen to them read weekly to give the younger pupils extra practice. Character development is a real strength of the school and aims to enhance the aspirations of pupils to consider a variety of professions for their future.

The school's governing body closely focuses on school improvement priorities. Governors have a range of skills, and support and challenge the school effectively. Staff feel well supported and the school ensures there is a broad training programme for them. Staff are proud to work at the school and leaders are considerate of workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, pupils do not yet have regular opportunities to revisit and practise previous learning. This makes it hard for pupils to build up the body of knowledge that the school expects and, as a result, some pupils have gaps in their learning. The school should develop and embed ways to help pupils remember and build on their learning over time consistently in all subjects.

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 November 2013.

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	104311
Local authority	Wolverhampton
Inspection number	10322734
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	254
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ashley Haffie-Hobday
Headteacher	Andy Dyall
Website	www.castlecroftprimaryschool.com
Date of previous inspection	23 October 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school currently does not use alternative provision.
- The school provides before- and after-school childcare on site.

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 COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, who is also the special educational needs coordinator. The inspector met with groups of staff and pupils and spoke on the phone to the local authority school improvement adviser.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector 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.

- The inspector spoke with leaders and pupils about several other subjects.
- The inspector listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector spoke to leaders about pupils' behaviour, attendance, policies, and procedures. The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school and discussed the school's analysis of attendance with leaders.
- The inspector reviewed information about other areas of learning and the wider curriculum.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for improvement.
- The inspector met with those responsible for governance.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the lead inspector: 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.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, and the free-text responses received during the inspection. The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Lynda Townsend, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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