

Inspection of Caversham Primary School

Hemdean Road, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire RG4 7RA

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 November 2022

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

This school was last inspected 13 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time. From then 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 inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this welcoming and vibrant school. They respect and celebrate differences between themselves and others. Pupils can discuss what a healthy and unhealthy relationship looks like and how to be a good friend. They know how to stay safe, including online.

Most pupils behave sensibly and rise to the staff's high expectations. Pupils are kind to each other, listen and respond appropriately to each other. Pupils know who to turn to if they have a worry or a problem, feeling confident that they will get the help they need. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and supportive. Incidents of bullying are rare.

Pupils appreciate the wider opportunities and experiences they have that enhance their learning. These include a range of visits, visitors and clubs that build upon pupils' interests and talents. Pupils are enthusiastic about the many positions of leadership they hold because they know they make a positive difference to others. Pupils are doing well overall and are well prepared for their next stage of education.

However, leaders do not have the required knowledge to keep pupils safe from harm. They have not taken prompt and proper actions when pupils are at risk. They have not ensured that safeguarding is effective throughout the school.

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

Governors have an ambitious vision for pupils and staff. However, they have not ensured that they fulfil their statutory safeguarding responsibilities. Until the inspection, they were unaware of significant weaknesses in the school's arrangements to keep pupils safe.

Leaders have worked with determination to strengthen the quality of education. They have given priority to early reading, English and wider subjects such as history and physical education. Their hard work and sound thinking have paid off. This has led to greater consistency and pupils are achieving well. Changes to the mathematics curriculum demonstrate leaders' high expectations. However, some teachers require further training and support to ensure they are implementing the mathematics curriculum consistently and effectively.

Reading is a high priority. Staff in Reception and key stage 1 closely follow the school's phonic programme. This helps pupils get off to a flying start with their reading. Any pupils who are finding reading tricky get the right help to catch up quickly. Staff promote a love of reading. Pupils thoroughly enjoy hearing their teachers read well-chosen books that extend their vocabulary and enhance their understanding.

Clear routines and expectations mean that children in Reception get off to a strong start with their learning. They share, take turns and play together well. Interactions

between adults and children support learning and rightly focus on developing communication and language.

Pupils' behaviour in lessons is exemplary. They love to learn and they relish the challenges that teachers provide. Pupils who struggle with their behaviour benefit from the pastoral care they receive from leaders and staff. During unsupervised times, including during wet playtimes, some older pupils make poor behaviour choices which go unnoticed and can put others at risk of harm. Overall, pupils' attendance is very high, but there is a small group of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, who are persistently absent. School leaders do not have robust processes in place to help these pupils attend school regularly.

Staff start every lesson with a recap to help pupils reconnect with previous learning. Leaders identify any additional needs pupils have as soon as they join the school. Teachers adapt lessons to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, the expectations that staff have for some pupils, including some pupils with SEND, are not always as high as those set out by leaders. In these cases, pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

Leaders provide pupils with extensive opportunities for personal development. They are passionate about making sure that every pupil has access to the wide range of visits, visitors, clubs and events that are available. Personal, social, health and economic education is well sequenced and ensures that pupils are ready for their move to secondary school. Pupils have a strong understanding of democracy and show respect for other people's points of view. They learn how to stay healthy both physically and mentally.

Staff are supportive of senior leaders. They feel respected and appreciate the consideration leaders place on well-being and workload. Those who replied to the staff survey were unanimous in their view that they enjoy working at this school. Equally, parents spoken to and those who completed the survey were very positive. One parent, who echoed the sentiment of many, said, 'I am impressed with how happy my child is at the school. The staff are brilliant and caring, inspiring them to be the very best they can be.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders have a weak understanding of safeguarding requirements and procedures. They have not exercised sufficient leadership or oversight of this important work. As a result, records of safeguarding concerns and the tracking of subsequent actions are poor. Leaders have not ensured that all required employment checks are complete for some staff employed at the school. These weaknesses pose potential risks to pupils.

Some staff have not had the necessary training to be able to record concerns accurately using the school's online system. However, staff know how to identify

concerns about pupils and to report these to the appropriate leader. The pastoral support provided for pupils is a strength and they appreciate this level of care.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders do not fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities effectively. They have not exercised sufficient oversight and rigorous monitoring of safeguarding processes. Leaders need to improve their own safeguarding expertise and ensure that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood by all staff at the school.
- Leaders, including governors, have not maintained effective oversight of safeguarding. They do not have strong systems in place to ensure that record-keeping and subsequent follow-up work are effective. Leaders and governors must ensure that robust systems are implemented so that they are assured actions taken are prompt and proper.
- Leaders have not ensured that there is always appropriate supervision during breaktimes. This means that pupils are potentially at risk of harm. Leaders need to urgently address these significant weaknesses in safeguarding arrangements.
- Leaders and governors' oversight of attendance is not as strong as it needs to be. They do not have an appropriate policy or systems in place to identify patterns and trends quickly enough or connect these with vulnerable groups of pupils. Leaders must address this swiftly.
- Staff expectations of pupils with SEND are not always as high as they could be. As a result, some pupils with SEND are not achieving as well as they could. School leaders need to ensure that the curriculum is consistently implemented and that expectations of pupils with SEND are consistently high.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	109778
Local authority	Reading
Inspection number	10242325
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	414
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Neil Walne
Headteacher	Ruth Perry
Website	www.cavershamprimary.org
Date of previous inspection	26 February 2009 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Many staff have joined the school since the last inspection. Many members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body, are also new to the school since the previous inspection.
- There has been a change of leadership at the school following the death of the headteacher who was in post at the time of the inspection.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school care club for pupils who attend the school.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement,

because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

- 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.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector met with two governors, including the chair of governors. He also held a separate meeting with a representative from Reading local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and teaching assistants, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work. The lead inspector also heard pupils read.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors reviewed a wide range of safeguarding documentation, including the school's record of recruitment checks. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead. Inspectors also spoke with pupils and staff.
- Inspectors took account of parents' responses to Ofsted's survey, Ofsted Parent View, and parents' written comments. An inspector also spoke to groups of parents on the morning of the first day of inspection.
- Inspectors gathered pupils' views throughout the day, including during lesson visits and at breaktimes. They also took into account responses to the pupils' survey.
- Inspectors met with a range of staff to gather their views about the school and took account of staff's responses to Ofsted's confidential staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Alan Derry, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Gavin Evans

Ofsted Inspector

Clare Wilkins

Ofsted Inspector

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