

Inspection of a good school: Cuffley School

Theobalds Road, Cuffley, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire EN6 4HN

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 March 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Cuffley School is incredibly warm and welcoming. Pupils feel tremendously safe and well supported. There is a strong feeling of belonging to one large, happy school community. The school's 'POWERS' values such as perseverance and optimism, are fully understood by pupils and celebrated at every opportunity.

The school has the highest ambition for every pupil to be the best they can be and to achieve to their full potential. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) benefit from excellent support provided by expert staff and achieve well. They are fully involved in school life.

Pupils' behaviour is first rate. They behave incredibly well in lessons, at breaktimes and when moving around the school. Older pupils are excellent role models for younger children, looking after them with kindness and maturity. Peer mediators delight in organising games with younger friends at lunchtime.

Pupils benefit from a wealth of additional opportunities. These include a large selection of clubs and school trips. Pupils love their residential visits and relish the chance to be forest school leaders or class ambassadors and to camp out in the school grounds. Pupils keenly welcome visitors from other faiths. They understand the importance of respecting people from different cultures and backgrounds.

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

The school has planned a highly ambitious curriculum. Staff are determined that all pupils will succeed. The curriculum begins in the early years, where children in the Nursery and Reception classes undertake high-quality, well-planned learning opportunities.

The curriculum is carefully sequenced and highly ambitious. Pupils build their knowledge step by step, developing their creativity and imagination as they move through the school. In art, for example, older pupils create exquisite paper sculptures of insects, flowers and mushrooms because they have learned to perfect these techniques in previous years. This supports all pupils to achieve highly.

Children get off to a wonderful start in the early years. They develop a strong understanding of language, communication and number due to the well-constructed curriculum. Children play happily together, exploring the letters and numbers they have learned. Staff expertly support children with skilful questions and conversations. Children are highly engaged in their activities, showing determination and building positive attitudes to school.

Pupils love reading and visiting the well-stocked libraries. The school makes learning to read an absolute priority. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the books adults read to them in class. Pupils appreciate how their core texts help them learn more about the subjects they are studying. The reading curriculum develops pupils' fluency and confidence superbly well. Adults are well trained and they deliver the phonics programme extremely effectively. In lessons, staff continually check that everyone is keeping up. They quickly identify anyone who is struggling and support them to catch up rapidly.

Mathematics is a real strength and the exceptional quality of the mathematics curriculum is further supplemented by a programme of regular, high-quality investigations. In mathematics and in other subjects, daily pupil/teacher conferences deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding. Across the full curriculum, pupils with SEND receive tailored support from adults who adapt learning extremely well. This ensures that by the time they leave the school, pupils are extremely well prepared for secondary education.

Pupils attend school regularly. Staff are determined that pupils make the most of their time in school. Because the curriculum is carefully designed and expertly delivered, pupils love coming to school. This results in the high levels of commitment and the positive behaviour seen in lessons.

Staff prioritise pupils' personal development. Pupils love learning about other faiths and cultures. This includes rituals such as fasting, and celebrations such as Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Pupils have a keen knowledge of fundamental British values. They understand the meaning of respect and tolerance, they are instrumental in creating their own class charters and they know that everyone has differing experiences and families. Pupils love taking on extra responsibilities and value their roles and duties that support the school community.

Leaders are highly ambitious for all pupils. They understand the context of the school exceptionally well. Families are fulsome in their praise for the school and the commitment and dedication of staff. Staff are incredibly well supported by leaders. They appreciate the extra time and support leaders provide, especially when they have additional responsibilities to fulfil.

Governors are highly knowledgeable about the school. They work strategically, in the best interests of pupils, families and staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 October 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	117565
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10294987
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	448
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Lisa Toye
Headteacher	Wendy Wing
Website	www.cuffleyschool.org
Date of previous inspection	20 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school currently do not use any alternative provision.

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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and art and design. 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 listened to some pupils read to a familiar adult.
- The inspector also discussed the curriculum with leaders, and sampled pupils' work in several other subjects.

- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector met with the local authority's district school effectiveness adviser.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 took account of a range of other information, including the school's development plans, school policies and governing body minutes and reports from the local authority.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at other times around school and discussed behaviour with pupils throughout the inspection.
- The inspector considered the views of parents through responses to Ofsted Parent View. The inspector also gathered the views of pupils and staff through interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Nick Rudman, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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