

Inspection of Caldecote Church of England Academy

Manor Place, Upper Caldecote, Biggleswade, Bedfordshire SG18 9DA

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 May 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 Sarah Campbell. This school is part of the Diocese of St Albans Multi-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, Anna Rogers, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jenny Jenkins.

What is it like to attend this school?

From the moment children start in the Nursery, they are welcomed into the school's close-knit community. Staff ensure they get to know pupils and their families well. This helps children settle quickly. Parents are positive about the school.

Pupils live by the school's rules of 'be ready, be respectful and stay safe'. They know these rules set them up to learn well. All pupils in the school play well together during breaktimes. They are kind and respectful towards each other and visitors.

Pupils behave well and display good levels of focus in lessons. Teachers have consistent expectations of what pupils should achieve. They ensure that disruption to pupils' learning is rare. This means pupils can work hard without distractions.

Pupils take pride in contributing to school developments. They helped lay foundation bricks for the school's expansion and planted a tiny forest to enhance the grounds. Pupils talk enthusiastically about trips and activities that support their learning, such as visits to Shuttleworth and the British School's Museum. Younger pupils look forward to the positions of responsibility they can take on in key stage 2 such as head pupil or library monitor.

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

The school has reviewed and improved the curriculum since the previous inspection. It now identifies the essential knowledge pupils need to learn from the early years to Year 4. Content is planned out clearly and brought to life through purposeful enrichment opportunities, such as a visit to a virtual rock pool to support a coastline topic.

In the main, teachers display good subject knowledge. They deliver the curriculum effectively and ensure all pupils access the learning. Adults check what pupils already know and use this information to adapt future learning. As a result, pupils make good progress and are proud of their work. However, in some areas of the curriculum, plans are not clear enough about when to check pupils' understanding. Sometimes, teachers' checks on what pupils know are not regular enough. They do not always identify where pupils have gaps in their understanding. New learning is not always adapted to build on pupils' different starting points. As a result, some pupils do not achieve as highly as they should in these subjects.

Reading starts in Nursery Year, where children join in enthusiastically with stories and nursery rhymes. This prepares them well for the phonics programme in Reception. Staff are well trained to teach phonics precisely and skilfully. Pupils read books that are well matched to the sounds that they have already mastered. This helps them read with increasing fluency and confidence. Pupils who do not keep up with the programme receive swift support, enabling them to catch up. As a result, pupils read well.

The school has set up robust systems that ensure swift identification of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school works closely with parents to ensure pupils get the help they need. Leaders regularly review and adapt the support they provide to ensure it remains purposeful. Staff benefit from ongoing training that is focused on the best ways to support pupils with SEND. They use a range of strategies to support pupils with SEND, ensuring they achieve in line with their classmates.

Well-planned transition arrangements enable children in the early years to settle quickly. Staff encourage children to take structured risks and be curious. Children know the class routines and follow instructions carefully. They show high levels of respect and friendship towards each other. Children are well prepared for Reception and Year 1.

The school's rules are well understood by all. Pupils are polite, respectful and welcoming. Their behaviour in class and around the school is positive. Staff work closely with pupils' families to identify any barriers to learning. They provide appropriate help where needed. As a result, most pupils attend school regularly.

Pupils learn about faiths and cultures different to their own. These are brought to life through purposeful visits. For example, pupils visit three different and distinct local places of worship. Pupils learn about diversity through a wide range of texts in the library. Older pupils relish the additional roles available to them such as being a head pupil or a library monitor. Pupils learn how to be healthy and stay safe online.

The governors and trustees provide a high level of challenge and support. They know the school and community well. They work together with leaders on school improvements. Staff welcome this support. They value the consideration of their workload and well-being when changes take place.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some areas of the curriculum, teachers do not routinely check what pupils know and understand. Teachers do not always adapt new content in lessons because they do not know where pupils have gaps in their learning. As a result, pupils do not make the progress that they should in all areas of the curriculum. The school should ensure that plans clearly identify where teachers should assess pupils' learning. It should ensure that teachers have the skills they need to check pupils' knowledge and adapt their teaching where appropriate.

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	144010
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10318638
Type of school	First
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	52
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jenny Jenkins
CEO of the trust	Anna Rogers
Headteacher	Sarah Campbell
Website	www.caldecoteceacademy.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	24 and 25 November 2021, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of St Albans Multi-Academy Trust.
- The school manages a breakfast and after-school club provision.
- This school is part of the Diocese of St Albans. The school's last inspection for schools of a religious character, under section 48 of the Education Act 2005, was conducted in June 2018. The next section 48 inspection will take place within eight school years.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

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 headteacher, the chief executive officer for the trust, a representative from the Diocese of St Albans and governors and trustees, including the chair of the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. 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.
- 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.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents through their responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and parents' free-text comments. Inspectors also considered responses to the Ofsted staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Lisa Massey, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Simon Eardley

Ofsted Inspector

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