

Cedars Park Community Primary School

Pintail Road, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 5FP

Inspection dates

26–27 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Despite improvements by leaders, governors and the trust, they have not secured consistently good quality teaching and achievement.
- For the past three years, key stage 2 pupils' progress in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 has been below national averages.
- Leaders' roles and responsibilities are not clear enough. This work is not well coordinated. This slows the impact of their work and rate of school improvement.
- Leaders are not using their own information to identify where pupils are underachieving. This inhibits leaders' ability to act quickly to address underachievement. This is particularly the case in writing.
- Teaching assistants are not always deployed effectively to support pupils in making the best progress possible.
- Assessment in several subject areas is underdeveloped. Leaders do not know enough about how well pupils are achieving in all subjects across the curriculum.
- Teachers' expectations are not consistently high because their use of assessment is imprecise. They do not set work that challenges pupils to achieve higher standards. This limits the progress pupils make from their starting points.
- Some pupils, especially the most able and those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), do not make good progress because work is not well adapted and suited to their needs.
- In early years, learning opportunities are not consistently purposeful and well enough considered to enable children to achieve well in all areas of learning.

The school has the following strengths

- The trust is providing effective support and has been instrumental in bringing about improvements.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of what needs to improve. Their ongoing work is now securing more sustained improvements, particularly in mathematics and reading.
- Well-led support and oversight of disadvantaged pupils' needs are leading to rapid improvements in these pupils' achievement.
- Pupils' personal development and behaviour are good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and attend regularly.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management, by:
 - continuing to improve the consistency in the quality of teaching and learning
 - clarifying leaders' responsibilities so their actions make effective and efficient difference to school improvement
 - ensuring that the monitoring of pupils' progress is rigorous and used sharply to enable pupils to attain better standards from their starting points
 - securing precise, meaningful assessment in all curriculum subjects so leaders know how well pupils achieve throughout the wider curriculum.
- Further improve the quality of teaching and learning, and secure better outcomes for pupils by ensuring that:
 - teachers use assessment information precisely to ensure that learning activities are well-suited to pupils' ability and needs, including challenge for the most able, so pupils make strong progress from their starting points
 - learning is planned, well thought through and subsequently modified where appropriate to meet the specific needs of pupils with SEND
 - teachers manage and plan the work of teaching assistants more effectively to support pupils to make the progress they are capable of.
- Ensure that teachers in the early years use assessment more precisely to plan learning opportunities so children make the best progress they can from their entry points into Reception.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Over time, a period of instability in staffing has impacted negatively on standards in the school. Leaders' actions have not been able to stem this decline in standards fully.
- Leaders are working hard to implement consistent systems and processes to secure improvement in the school. They are well supported by the trust, governors and staff. However, they focus on the actions they are taking rather than the difference their work is making. This restricts the quality, depth and usefulness of leaders' self-evaluation and, consequently, slows the pace of improvement.
- The trust and leaders have brought improvements to assessment processes. However, leaders do not routinely check the progress of pupils from their starting points throughout the school, including in early years. As a result, leaders do not have a clear enough knowledge and understanding of the progress that pupils make over time.
- Leaders monitor the quality of teaching to identify inconsistencies in teachers' practice. Leaders provide support and deal with weaker teaching in the school. The training which staff receive is starting to improve their practice effectively. However, variations in the quality of teaching remain.
- Senior leaders have successfully introduced a range of actions to improve standards. These include new approaches to the teaching of mathematics and a review of the school's approach to reading sessions to promote pupils' love of reading. However, some leaders are not rigorous enough in checking that these approaches are applied consistently and effectively. As a result, the pace of improvement has not been quick enough throughout the school.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has put in place individual plans for pupils with SEND that are appropriate and suited to their needs. However, the implementation of these plans and the impact they are having on pupils' outcomes is not checked consistently well. This is resulting in pupils with SEND making inconsistent, and not good, progress from their starting points.
- Although the curriculum offers breadth and opportunity for pupils to develop their skills, leaders are not clear about how well pupils achieve in several subject areas. Leaders have focused initial efforts in ensuring that pupils get opportunities to apply their basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics across the curriculum. However, leaders of wider curriculum subjects are at an early stage of implementing assessment systems and monitoring the effectiveness of their subjects.
- Leaders' and governors' evaluation of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is carried out well. The achievement of disadvantaged pupils is improving quickly, owing to the impact of high-quality strategies. The deputy headteacher who leads on this aspect of the school's work monitors the provision in place rigorously. This is ensuring better provision for this group of pupils.
- Leaders and teachers are bringing swift improvements to the attainment for current pupils in some subjects. The mathematics leaders have led mathematics with rigour

and determination. This is ensuring sustained improvements both in the quality of the teaching and the progress pupils are making throughout the school.

- The physical education (PE) leader ensures that the additional funding for physical education and sport is used effectively. The funding has contributed towards providing specialist support to help teachers improve their PE teaching skills. Consequently, the quality of PE teaching is effective. Additionally, there is an increase in the proportion of pupils accessing sports clubs. This supports leaders' school development priority to promote and develop pupils' healthy lifestyles.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through a wide range of activities, including the Year 6 residential trip to Aylmerton that was taking place during the inspection. Other pupils talked enthusiastically about visitors to the school linked to their learning, including the Royal British Legion, members of the local community and members of the local church.
- Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. This is developed effectively through assemblies when pupils learn how to apply their school values: leadership, organisation, resilience, initiative and communication in their day-to-day lives. Furthermore, pupils talked about how they are 'democratic' when they vote for the school council and the house captains when they are in Year 6.
- Parents who spoke to inspectors and responded to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, generally commented positively about the work of the school. While some parents feel that the school needs to do more to improve specific aspects such as communication, the recent parent survey carried out by the school shows a more positive view of the school. Furthermore, inspection evidence shows that while there are areas that require improvement, leaders are forging ahead with this work and are aware of their need to involve parents and work more positively in partnership with them.
- The trust demonstrates a clear strategic vision for the school and provides a wealth of support that is contributing to school improvement. For example, supporting moderation of assessment, carrying out a behaviour review, providing training to support safeguarding and commissioning external support.

Governance of the school

- The governing body receives regular information from leaders about the school's performance and governors visit the school often to find out what is happening for themselves. However, governors do not consistently use this information to hold leaders to account for the impact of their actions on pupils' learning and outcomes, and in particular pupils' progress, over time.
- An external review of governance is being carried out by the trust. This is to assess how this aspect of leadership and management can be improved.
- Governors attend regular training to ensure that they are up to date with expectations for their roles and responsibilities. This ensures they are aware of their legal duties. Governors understand and fulfil their responsibilities relating to safeguarding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Designated leaders are very aware of the safeguarding concerns that are most pertinent in the local community. This enables leaders to respond appropriately and with the necessary knowledge and understanding needed to best meet and support pupils' needs.
- Procedures in place to safeguard and look after pupils are understood well by staff. Training ensures that staff have a good understanding of how to identify potential signs of abuse and neglect. Any concerns are acted upon swiftly and appropriately. The designated safeguarding lead ensures that all records relating to safeguarding are meticulously maintained. Any concerns raised are followed up swiftly to ensure that pupils are not at risk.
- Thorough checks are carried out to ensure that all adults in school are suitable to work with children; this includes volunteers who help in school regularly. These are detailed and well-maintained by the office manager. The trust's central services human resources manager strategically oversees the checks and ensures compliancy with legal requirements.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors said they feel safe in the school. Furthermore, parents agree that their children are safe at school. One parent said, 'Children feel safe, included and valued as a result of a dedicated and caring team.'

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teachers have received focused training and guidance in the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics. These are having a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching across the school. However, variations remain. Too often, teaching is not effective enough to rapidly overcome the gaps in pupils' skills and knowledge from previous weaker and inconsistent teaching.
- Teachers do not always take sufficient account of pupils' existing skills and understanding. Work planned and presented, therefore, does not consistently suit pupils' needs with sufficient precision. This results in a high proportion of most-able pupils not being stretched and challenged enough and therefore not achieving all they are capable of.
- Not all teachers and other adults have high enough expectations. As a result, the tasks they provide do not offer pupils enough challenge. This is the case for pupils of all abilities. From their various starting points, pupils are not routinely achieving as well as they should.
- The effectiveness of teaching assistants' support is inconsistent. Teachers do not always ensure that teaching assistants have a thorough understanding about how to support pupils. While some teaching assistants apply the training they have received to full effect to enhance the support they provide, others are not as confident or clear about what to do to help pupils to learn better.

- Pupils with SEND are not always well supported in lessons because staff have not identified their specific needs precisely enough. Group and individual sessions led by teaching assistants vary in quality and some lack focus and impact.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved. Teachers' subject knowledge has developed. This is having a positive impact on pupils' progress and achievement. Teachers provide regular opportunities for pupils to develop their fluency in mathematics, solve problems and, increasingly, require pupils to explain their mathematical reasoning.
- The teaching and achievement in reading is improving. Leaders have implemented a trust-wide initiative to support teachers' training and development. The focus on developing comprehension, deduction and inference skills helps pupils to explore the meaning of text and apply this to their independent reading. For example, in Year 4, pupils verbally summarised the text they were reading, interpreting information with evidence from the text, to successfully show their understanding of what they had read.
- The teaching of early reading skills and phonics is effective. This is because teachers' subject knowledge is sound. Additionally, teachers use clear sequences of teaching, so pupils build upon the names of letters and the sound combinations they make to be able to use them in complex words and apply these in their writing. Consequently, pupils' progress in reading is improving and this is subsequently reflected in pupils' writing.
- There are examples of better-quality writing throughout the school. Pupils are provided with opportunities to write for different purposes and produce a wide range of types of writing in their English lessons. However, pupils do not consistently apply their learned skills to their writing in other curriculum subjects.
- Effective working relationships exist between all staff and pupils. These contribute towards pupils fostering positive attitudes to learning and encourage pupils to try their best.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good, including for the most vulnerable pupils.
- Pupils' welfare is a school priority. Leaders work successfully with other agencies to identify any pupils or families that may be at risk. Staff know the pupils well, and pupils benefit from the school's 'wraparound' care, including a breakfast- and after-school club.
- Leaders put in place appropriate support for the most vulnerable pupils, including careful consideration of how to ensure that pupils are well supported through alternative provision and more intense support. This is making sure these pupils' school experiences are positive and gives them the best possible chances to be successful.

- Relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Pupils feel valued. They know that adults care about them and confidently report that all adults will listen to them when they have any concerns or worries.
- The curriculum offers opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. This extends further to older pupils being 'internet safety ambassadors', who promote safety when online and share their knowledge and understanding about how to stay safe when using computers with younger pupils.
- Pupils respect and take care of the school learning environment, which is bright and inviting. Pupils talk with pride about their school. Pupils' work makes up a high proportion of the high-quality displays which celebrate pupils' achievements.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' behaviour and positive attitudes in lessons support their learning. They are attentive, respond well to instructions and show a willingness to work hard.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of the school's chosen systems to support their behaviour. They can explain the school's 'zone board' and report that pupils respond well to the rewards this brings. Parents who spoke with inspectors and the majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that the school ensures that pupils are well behaved.
- Staff support pupils to manage their behaviour. Where staff identify pupils who may find some school situations difficult and struggle to cope well, these pupils access the school's Jigsaw club. This successfully helps pupils to experience and enjoy social scenarios in smaller groups and develop social skills they can use when they return to their classrooms.
- Over time, attendance is consistently good. Most pupils attend school regularly. The school rewards and celebrates good attendance and actively follows up absenteeism. Improving the attendance of pupils who are most at risk has been a high priority and this has had a positive impact on reducing absences, particularly of disadvantaged pupils and those pupils with SEND.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Over time, inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment have led to slow progress for a large proportion of pupils throughout the school.
- In 2018, the progress Year 6 pupils made from their starting points was weak. This was the case in reading and writing, but most notable in mathematics. Consequently, the proportion of Year 6 pupils who reached the expected standard in combined reading, writing and mathematics was below the national average. These pupils were not well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- In 2018, the proportion of Year 2 attaining the expected standard in reading and mathematics was in line with the national average and similarly so for the proportion of

pupils achieving greater depth in mathematics and writing. However, standards in reading were below the national average.

- Progress for pupils with SEND is inconsistent. When these pupils are supported effectively and given appropriate work accurately suited to their needs they achieve well. However, too often tasks and support are not precisely targeted, so pupils do not learn as well as they should. This is limiting their progress and, consequently, their attainment.
- The most able pupils are not making sustained progress to ensure that they achieve as well as they should in reading, writing and mathematics, given their capabilities. They are currently making better progress than pupils did in 2018, but their curriculum subject 'discovery' books show this is not consistently so across all subject areas.
- There are variations in the quality of work and the adaptation of work to meet the needs of different groups of pupils in other curriculum subjects. Consequently, outcomes are not improving as quickly in some subjects in the wider curriculum such as history and geography.
- The effective teaching of phonics has led to the proportion of pupils reaching the standard required in the Year 1 phonics screening check being consistently similar to, or above, the national expectation. In 2018, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in phonics was in line with the national average. Pupils are developing their early reading skills well in Reception and throughout key stage 1.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is improving. This is because of the leader's focus and careful pinpointing of pupils' academic and personal, social and emotional needs. Consequently, by the end of Year 6, the differences between disadvantaged pupils' attainment and that of other pupils nationally are starting to diminish.
- Progress and attainment are beginning to improve in key stage 1 as a result of better teaching. Although key stage 2 has been slower to improve, current pupils are now beginning to make better progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Year 6 pupils are better prepared for their move to secondary school than previously.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- A significant proportion of children join the school with skills and knowledge above those which are typical for their age. However, few go on to exceed the standards expected by the end of the Reception Year. Children do not make good enough progress from these higher starting points.
- Staff have not been fully effective in ensuring that they build upon children's prior knowledge and understanding when they enter Reception. Consequently, expectations of what children can achieve are not high enough to ensure that progress is consistently good, and an increasing proportion of children are ready for Year 1.
- The quality of teaching in the early years is inconsistent. Too often, the activities on offer for children to choose are not suitably challenging. In these cases, children are not given sufficient opportunities to explore and investigate so they can plan and find out for themselves. Additionally, resources are not readily available to inspire children to develop their learning. This limits the progress children are able to make.

- The outdoor area is used to develop children's physical development; for example, children ride bikes in the external area. However, staff do not routinely plan learning activities in the outdoor areas that promote and encourage learning in all areas of the early years curriculum. This is particularly the case for number, shape and measure.
- The early years leader has a secure understanding about how young children learn. Her enthusiasm and dedication to young children ensure that children enjoy their time at Cedars Park.
- Strong, positive relationships between adults and children ensure that children are happy and confident. Children are eager to learn and want to do well.
- Leaders have developed a welcoming environment that promotes children's social and emotional development well. Children behave well, help each other and play harmoniously together.
- Parents have opportunities to share information with the school about their children's development. Their relationships with adults in the setting are positive. Transition from any pre-schools is well thought through and this supports children in settling well.
- Leaders ensure that the statutory welfare requirements are met. As is the case throughout the school, staff are vigilant and understand the procedures for safeguarding. They encourage children to play safely and to care for each other.

School details

Unique reference number	143360
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10088716

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	436
Appropriate authority	Local governing body
Chair	Mr Mark Gillett
Headteacher	Mr Andrew Emms
Telephone number	01449 778230
Website	www.cedarspark.suffolk.sch.uk
Email address	admin@cedarspark.suffolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 May 2016

Information about this school

- Cedars Park Community Primary School is a larger than average-sized primary school. The school became a full primary school in September 2015, following the Suffolk school organisation review.
- Currently the school is organised as a two-form entry school; however, there are three classes in Year 5 and Year 6 due an increased need for school places when these cohorts started in Reception. It is expected that Cedars Community Primary School will revert to two-form entry in September 2020.
- The school joined the John Milton Academy Trust (JMAT) on 1 September 2016.
- At the time of the inspection, only a small proportion of Year 6 pupils were present in the school as others were on a residential trip.
- The school uses and carefully monitors suitable specialist off-site provision for a very small number of pupils who require this support to meet their needs.

- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding, although increasing year on year, remains lower than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection the majority of Year 6 pupils were attending a residential. Inspectors observed the small group of remaining Year 6 pupils and looked at Year 6 pupils' books.
- Inspectors visited all classes, on most occasions jointly with leaders. During visits to lessons, inspectors looked at pupils' books, spoke with pupils and looked at their current work to find out how well they are learning.
- Alongside leaders, inspectors looked at a sample of pupils' books across a range of subjects to evaluate pupils' learning in English, mathematics and across the wider curriculum. Inspectors talked to pupils about their learning and observed pupils reading and learning phonics.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils about their experiences of school life and their learning to find out what it is like to be a pupil at Cedars Park Community Primary School. Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and during lunchtime, including the school's nurture provision, Jigsaw.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the assistant headteacher who is also the SENCo. The lead inspector also met with the curriculum leader and the key stage 1 lower and upper key stage 2 leaders. Other inspectors met with the early years leader, the English and both mathematics leaders.
- The lead inspector also spoke with a group of governors, including the chair of the governing body, and the chief executive officer of the John Milton Trust.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, exclusions, the school's evaluation of its own performance, the school's development plans and the trust's work to support the school.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents gathered from the 68 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the 69 free-text responses. Inspectors also took account of the school's own recent parental and pupil surveys. They also took account of the 37 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and the 97 responses to the online questionnaire for pupils.

Inspection team

Tracy Fielding, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lou Nelson	Ofsted Inspector
Mary-Jane Edwards	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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