

Inspection of Castle View Primary Academy

Keswick Road, Lancaster, Lancashire LA1 3LE

Inspection dates:	26 and 27 February 2025
The quality of education	Inadequate
Behaviour and attitudes	Requires improvement
Personal development	Requires improvement
Leadership and management	Inadequate
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Claire Bright. This school is part of Cidari 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 (CEO), Peter Ashworth, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by John McClelland.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils do not receive an acceptable quality of education at this school. The strong start that children make in the early years is not continued beyond the Reception Year. Pupils' academic achievement has suffered as a result. Some older pupils are unhappy about this, because they do not feel prepared for secondary school. Despite these weaknesses, pupils feel safe and secure here.

The school's expectations for pupils' achievement are too low. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged. Some pupils receive work that they find too easy, especially in mixed-age classes. The trust has helped the school to improve the curriculum. However, these improvements have been enacted too slowly to have had a positive impact, especially for pupils in key stage 2. By contrast, expectations for children in the early years are higher. These children thrive and learn successfully.

Most pupils follow the school's rules and behave well. However, a small number are, on occasions, inconsiderate of the needs and feelings of others. When this happens, it spoils the enjoyment of other pupils, for example, at breaktimes or lunchtimes.

Pupils appreciate the activities that the school provides for their wider development, such as sports clubs. However, others wish that there were more opportunities for other interests, such as crafts. Some pupils lack the confidence to participate fully in discussions with others. This makes it more difficult for them to share their thoughts and ideas.

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

The school has suffered a lengthy period of turbulence in leadership and staffing. This has slowed its work to improve the quality of education for pupils. The trust has recently reinforced the school's leadership. There are signs that things are beginning to improve. However, it is too early to see a positive impact on pupils' achievement.

The trust has supported the school to put in place a broad and ambitious curriculum. However, this ambition is not realised because teaching often expects too little of pupils. Many pupils did not reach an appropriate standard in English or mathematics by the time that they left Year 6 in 2024. This left them inadequately prepared for the next stage in their education.

The school has not thought carefully enough about how pupils in mixed-age classes should learn the curriculum. In too many subjects, younger pupils do not have the prior knowledge that they need in order to understand some of the learning that they receive. Older pupils frequently receive work that is too easy for them. This prevents pupils from developing a solid body of knowledge, and from deepening their understanding over time.

On occasions, in lessons, staff do not check thoroughly that pupils have fully understood the knowledge that they are learning. Instead, pupils' misconceptions sometimes go unaddressed. Furthermore, in some subjects, the school has not ensured that information

from assessments is used quickly enough to identify when pupils may have missing knowledge, for example, when they have been absent. These weaknesses mean that pupils' knowledge is sometimes insecure.

The school has made the teaching of reading a priority. For example, pupils are provided with a wide range of interesting books to read. Parents and carers receive useful information about reading that helps them to support their child with reading at home. Many pupils enjoy reading.

In the early years, staff use their strong subject knowledge to teach the phonics programme effectively. Children learn to break down and build up the sounds in words in order to read and to write successfully. However, as pupils move into key stage 1, there are inconsistencies in the way that the phonics programme is taught. For example, on occasions, staff do not model sounds correctly to pupils. Pupils repeat the errors that they hear. This limits pupils' ability to blend sounds successfully in order to read well.

The trust has strengthened the way that the school identifies pupils who may have SEND. However, work to improve the adaptations that staff make for these pupils is at an early stage. Pupils with SEND suffer from the same low expectations that the school has for other pupils. They typically achieve less well than they should.

Some pupils lose focus in lessons, when learning does not successfully engage their interest. On occasions, this can distract others from their learning. However, many pupils behave as they should in lessons. Outside of lessons, such as at break and lunchtime, pupils' behaviour is variable. The school is working successfully to improve pupils' attendance over time.

Pupils learn about a range of world faiths and cultures. The personal, social, health education curriculum supports pupils' understanding of how to stay safe, for example, when working online, or when playing near the local canal. A small number of pupils have recently engaged in a project to develop their oracy skills. However, the school does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to share their thoughts, views and ideas with others. This sometimes limits their confidence in discussions.

The trust and leaders take account of the impact of their decisions on the workload of staff. Staff appreciate leaders' concern for their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils, including those with SEND, do not achieve as well as they should in a range of subjects, including in English and mathematics. Many pupils are unable to read, write and/or apply mathematics at an age-appropriate level. This is because the expectations of what pupils can and should be able to do in lessons are too low. The school and the trust must take swift and effective action to ensure that expectations for pupils are raised rapidly, so that the achievement of all pupils, including those with SEND, is of an acceptable standard.
- Pupils' experiences in lessons do not effectively support their learning of the school's curriculum. In particular, the school has not ensured that the curriculum enables pupils in mixed-age classes to build upon what they know and can do. Younger pupils have not had time to develop the knowledge that they need to tackle some tasks. Older pupils receive work that is too easy for them. As a result, pupils are poorly prepared for the next stages of their education. The school should revisit the school's curriculum, ensuring that it takes sufficient account of the learning needs of pupils in mixed-age classes.
- There are too many inconsistencies in the implementation of the phonics programme for pupils in key stage 1. Pupils do not receive the effective guidance that they need to say some sounds correctly. This hampers their ability to blend sounds together in order to read words. This weakness limits the progress that pupils make across a range of subjects. The school should ensure that staff are fully supported to ensure that the school's phonics programme is delivered consistently and effectively.
- On occasions, staff do not check thoroughly enough that pupils have understood new learning before moving on to the next learning. This makes it difficult to identify and address any misconceptions or missing knowledge. The school should set clear expectations for how pupils' knowledge is to be checked so that it is secure.
- The behaviour of some pupils, on occasions, is inconsiderate of the needs of others. When this happens, some pupils feel that their enjoyment of school activities, such as outdoor play and lunchtime, is limited. The school should take effective action to ensure that all staff set sufficiently high expectations for pupils' behaviour, so that all pupils can feel safe and happy during the school day.
- The school is at an early stage in implementing its programme for pupils' wider development. This means that pupils have a limited range of activities to develop talents and interests beyond the academic. Some pupils lack the confidence that they need to express their views clearly, for example, in discussions. The school should now ensure that its programme for pupils' personal development is implemented quickly and effectively, so that pupils are appropriately prepared for future life.

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	148231
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10378029
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy special sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	104
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	John McClelland
CEO of the trust	Peter Ashworth
Headteacher	Claire Bright
Website	https://castleview.school
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Cidari Multi-Academy Trust. Castle View Primary Academy converted to become an academy in September 2022. When its predecessor school, Castle View Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted in December 2019, it was judged to be inadequate for overall effectiveness.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- At the time of the inspection, an acting headteacher was leading the school during the absence of the headteacher.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

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.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the acting headteacher and with other members of the leadership team.
- The lead inspector met with the CEO, with the trust's director of education and with another headteacher from the Trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to some pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects and looked at a range of pupils' books.
- The inspectors considered the views expressed by parents and carers in their responses to Ofsted Parent View. This included free-text comments. The inspectors also spoke to parents at the start and end of the school day.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- The inspectors spoke to some pupils about their experiences of school life. There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- The inspectors spoke with staff to discuss the school's support for their workload and well-being.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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.

Inspection team

Mavis Smith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lindy Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

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