

Inspection of school: Chadsgrove School

Meadow Road, Catshill, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B61 0JL

Inspection dates: 3–4 March 2020

Outcome

Chadsgrove School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Chadsgrove School is a wonderful, exciting and inspiring place for pupils to learn. As soon as pupils arrive at school, they are greeted by a highly dedicated staff team and are welcomed into a vibrant environment where their successes are celebrated.

All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Communication is at the heart of everything the school does. Staff place huge importance on helping pupils to communicate well. From speech technology, through to communication boards, pupils have the tools they need to be understood.

Pupils work alongside leaders as 'learning detectives'. They visit classes together and continuously reflect on how well the school is doing. They want the school to be the best it can be, and, because of their determination, it is. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about working in the school. They say that the school is exceptionally well led and managed. We agree, and so do parents.

Pupils feel safe in school. They are confident about who to talk to if they are worried. They say that staff listen to them.

Pupils' behaviour in school is exemplary. Pupils were adamant that the behaviour in school is 'fantastic' and that bullying does not happen.

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

Leaders have developed a curriculum that is well sequenced in every subject and carefully matched to what pupils need. Leaders have planned pathways that set out what pupils will learn, and the topics are taught in a sensible order.

Staff encourage pupils to aim high, and they provide the support pupils need to achieve these ambitions.

Lessons are very well planned. Teachers sequence lessons so that they build on pupils' previous knowledge and skills. Pupils know their targets, which are linked to the outcomes in their education, health and care (EHC) plans. The curriculum is well planned and sequenced. It provides pupils with opportunities to revisit work. These opportunities ensure that pupils are remembering more and learning more.

The early years provides an exceptional start for children in the school. Staff are talented and well trained. They quickly develop excellent relationships with all children. These relationships enable children to trust staff and feel safe. As a result, children in the early years rapidly learn the vital communication, physical and social skills that they need.

Staff are committed to developing pupils' love of reading. Leaders do not put a ceiling on pupils' reading abilities. We saw older pupils confidently engaging in challenging extracts from 'Dracula'. The new well-stocked library is one of the many areas where pupils can find and read high-quality books. Pupils can also access books in every classroom.

Leaders know that pupils need to develop both pre-phonics and phonics skills to become successful readers. They have developed a unique and individual approach to teach pupils these skills. An extensive range of therapists are on hand to support the teaching teams. As a result, teachers skilfully match pre-phonics teaching to the needs of all pupils.

Pupils with the most complex needs are highly motivated and engaged by the super books and stories that teachers have written for them. Inspectors saw staff reading these books with imagination and creativity. Teachers use sounds, smells and touch in an engaging and animated way to bring books to life.

The excellent sixth form provides students with a broad curriculum. Teachers in the sixth form create personalised learning programmes for students. They also provide them with a range of other experiences and opportunities. For example, an extensive range of work-related opportunities helps students prepare for the world of work. As a result, students make informed decisions about their future. For example, students told us how the school had inspired them to want to go on to college to learn business skills so that they can run their own business. Other pupils and students are motivated by Ted, the school dog, to take regular exercise and to walk independently. They take Ted for regular walks to build up their stamina and confidence.

Leaders invest considerable time and resources into ensuring that staff receive excellent-quality training. Staff value it. Because of this high-quality training, teachers know what pupils need and how to help them learn.

Leaders provide a rich and varied range of opportunities for pupils. They are keen to provide opportunities for pupils' wider personal development. They plan activities that the pupils will enjoy. For example, inspectors saw some pupils learning to play Beethoven using eye-gaze technology.

The school has a link with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO). Teachers help the CBSO staff to understand how pupils communicate and respond. As a result, the CBSO staff are able to plan highly engaging music sessions, which the pupils enjoy and respond to.

Leaders want pupils to contribute to the decisions that they make. The school council worked with staff to agree on a list of school values. Staff promote these school values through the curriculum. For example, during lessons and when playing in the stimulating outdoor play areas, pupils learn about friendship and respect. Consequently, behaviour is excellent, and attitudes to learning are very positive.

Pupils love coming to this school. They work hard to succeed, and they make friendships.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have developed a strong safeguarding culture in the school. They prioritise training for staff. Leaders and staff are quick to act to keep pupils safe.

The staff are a highly dedicated team that is particularly attuned to the additional risks their pupils might face. Staff are clear about the processes they should follow if they have concerns. Governors take their roles very seriously and are well informed about safeguarding. They play their part in helping to keep pupils safe.

Through the carefully planned personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, older pupils learn how to keep themselves safe when communicating with others online.

Background

When we have judged a special school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding on 13 November 2012.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	117062
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10088600
Type of school	Special school
School category	Maintained special
Age range of pupils	2 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	131
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	23
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Lorraine Petersen
Headteacher	Deb Rattley
Website	www.chadsgroveschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 January 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school caters for pupils with SEND. Most pupils have an EHC plan.
- The school has provision for two-year-old children.
- The school currently uses alternative provision for a small number of pupils. These pupils attend the National Institute of Conductive Education, Russell Road, Birmingham.
- The school is a teaching school. As part of its outreach service, Chadsgrove School supports pupils in other Worcestershire schools.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, we had formal meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject teachers, governors, teachers, teaching assistants and pupils. We also spoke to the local authority adviser and the school's improvement partner.
- We focused on reading, mathematics and communication during this inspection. Inspectors carried out visits to lessons and looked at the work in pupils' books and talked to pupils about their learning in these subjects. We also listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors spoke with parents and took account of the responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire and free-text service. We considered the views of staff and took account of the responses to the online staff survey.
- We explored the school's safeguarding arrangements and reviewed leaders' safety records and site security. Inspectors also talked to staff and governors about safeguarding and to pupils about how they keep themselves safe. We checked the school's single central record and met with the school's designated safeguarding lead and the deputy designated safeguarding lead to discuss their work to keep pupils safe.
- We looked at a range of school documentation including information about behaviour, attendance and leaders' plans to improve the school and the curriculum.

Inspection team

Amanda Clugston, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Derek Barnes

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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