

Inspection of Chelveston Road School

Chelveston Road, Higham Ferrers, Northamptonshire NN10 8HN

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 October 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good

Previous inspection grade Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Mark Adams. This school is part of the Better Together Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Peter Kelby. There is also an executive headteacher, Sue Ijewsky, who is responsible for this school and one other.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils say they feel safe and are happy at this school. They are proud to belong to Chelveston Road School. They enjoy attending because of the strong relationships they have with the staff who care for them. One pupil said, 'Teachers make learning much easier here because they understand you.' One parent reflected the views of other parents and carers when they stated: 'My child has thrived since starting here. The fantastic work the staff do shines brightly through their pupils.'

The school is a safe and caring environment for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are high ambitions for all pupils. Staff support all pupils to make a positive contribution to society. The school motto of 'every child, every chance, every day' promotes an environment where all pupils are highly valued by staff. Pupils respond to this by showing the same value and care for each other. Behaviour is exceptional. Pupils look after each other and play well together. They are polite and considerate and welcoming to visitors.

The 'Life Skills' curriculum provides a range of opportunities for pupils to learn. Students in the sixth form particularly benefit from this curriculum, which prepares them well for their next stage of learning and for adult life.

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

The school's curriculum is ambitious and designed to meet pupils' individual needs. The curriculum has expanded and been further developed as the school has grown in size to ensure that pupils have a broad and enriching experience. Most pupils are able to access subjects from the national curriculum in a way that is appropriate for them. There is a broad overview and structure for the curriculum. However, the key knowledge that pupils need to learn in some subjects has not been identified precisely enough. This has led to teachers being uncertain about exactly what knowledge and skills should be taught and assessed in these subjects.

Most of the time, pupils benefit from high-quality lessons. They are helped to remember important concepts. They develop good knowledge and skills as they progress through the curriculum. For example, in science, pupils used their prior knowledge about levers to inform their predictions about new learning. In physical education (PE), pupils recalled with accuracy the three skills they were practising in basketball.

In some subjects, teachers are less certain of the key knowledge they must teach pupils. As a result, they are not as confident in adapting how they teach to enable pupils to know and remember more of what they are learning. This, in turn, can lead to those pupils being less confident about what they are expected to know and remember.

Pupils engage well with their learning. They work hard to complete their tasks. They take pride in their work and are keen to please their teachers. Pupils are willing to give new things a go and show resilience when faced with challenges.

Teachers ask questions in lessons to check pupils' understanding. Teachers regularly check that pupils understand any new vocabulary they encounter. Sometimes, the feedback pupils receive does not clearly show them what they have done well or help them know how to improve their work.

All staff know pupils' individual, additional needs. However, on occasions, the targets that pupils are set to achieve in their learning are not precise enough. These targets do not always clearly define what pupils need to achieve to help them reach the outcomes set in their education and health care (EHC) plans.

Reading is prioritised at the school. Staff ensure that all pupils are regularly introduced to a variety of books. A recently introduced structured programme for teaching phonics is used for pupils of all ages. Pupils are now better supported to become confident readers as soon as they are able.

Students in the sixth form enjoy learning through a curriculum that is bespoke to their needs. They study functional skills, learn about careers and employment and prepare for independent living. They enjoy visits to different shops, where they learn how to use money and interact with other customers and staff. Students benefit from a range of work experience placements, both in and outside the school.

There is an extensive range of lunchtime clubs, which pupils enjoy and make good use of. These clubs broaden pupils' learning and develop their interests. Pupils spoke confidently about the five school values that help them to show respect and kindness towards others. They learn about difference and how to understand themselves and others in their personal, social, health and economic education. This curriculum also develops pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding and prepares them for life in modern Britain.

Staff appreciate the support and care they receive in relation to their well-being and their workload.

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 subjects, while the ambitious intent of the curriculum is clear, what knowledge pupils should learn and when is not yet precisely identified. As a result, teachers do not always know how best to adapt what they are teaching to help pupils to become secure in their learning. This can limit how well some

pupils know and remember more. The school should ensure that there is clarification as to what pupils should learn and be able to do in these subjects, so that pupils are supported to build their learning over time.

- The targets set for pupils in their individual education plans do not consistently identify what success for those pupils looks like. This limits staff's ability to know how best to check that these pupils are making as much progress as they should, including when taking into account their larger outcomes as stated in their EHC plans. Furthermore, pupils are not clear as to how best they can fulfil their targets. This, in turn, can limit how well these pupils achieve. The school should ensure that all pupils' targets have the necessary precision and focus to enable staff to support pupils to achieve as well as they can.

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	148583
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10298559
Type of school	Special
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	90
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	9
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Peter Kelby
Headteacher	Mark Adams
Website	www.chelvestonroadschool.org/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school opened in September 2021 with pupils in Year 7 only. The school is now in its third year of operation and there are pupils in Years 7 to 9 as well as sixth-form students in Years 12 and 13.
- The headteacher took up his role when the school opened. Other members of the senior leadership team are new in post from September 2023.
- The school does not use 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.
- 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, and the other senior leaders with responsibility for the curriculum, as well as a range of staff.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the trust, the chair of governors and another governor.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, English, mathematics, PE and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed other areas of the curriculum with leaders and visited additional lessons. The lead inspector observed pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at other times around the school.
- Inspectors considered a wide variety of school documents, including the school action plan. The lead inspector also looked at a sample of pupil's EHC plans and individual education plans and discussed these with leaders.
- Inspectors took note of the responses received on Ofsted's online survey, 'Parent View', and considered the results of the staff surveys. Inspectors met with pupils and parents to gather their views.
- 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.

Inspection team

Dave Gilkerson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Caroline Barton

Ofsted Inspector

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