

Inspection of Cassiobury Junior School

Bellmount Wood Avenue, Watford, Hertfordshire WD17 3PD

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 January 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 16 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils happily attend this friendly and caring school. Staff and pupils have positive relationships with each other. There is a culture of mutual respect. Pupils are confident that adults in the school will help them with any worries or concerns. This means pupils feel safe and are safe.

Pupils live up to the staff's high expectations in terms of work and behaviour. Classrooms are quiet and orderly. This means that pupils can work hard and concentrate. The pupils know that getting the best out of their learning is important as it will help them in the future. They achieve well.

Pupils learn to understand and celebrate differences. They show compassion and kindness to others. Pupils know that everyone is unique. They are proud of their school and their peers.

Pupils love to help. They take on extra responsibilities with enthusiasm and excitement. Pupils learn much from these. For instance, they learn to be sensible role models and give back to their community. This helps pupils to be well prepared for the next stage in their education and life beyond school.

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

The school has ambitious and well-developed subject curriculum plans. These follow a logical order. They help staff to plan lessons that connect and develop pupils' knowledge over time. The staff are well trained and show strong subject knowledge. This means they can answer pupils' questions effectively and guide them to learn more. Teachers explain new learning clearly to pupils. They plan activities that help pupils to use and remember past knowledge. As a result, pupils remember and build on what they have learned.

The school checks the effectiveness of subject plans and teaching approaches. It uses these checks to make improvements and changes to the curriculum. In a small number of subjects, these changes have not yet had time to make a difference. In these subjects, pupils' learning is less secure because teaching has not been as highly effective as in most other subjects.

Pupils love to read. The school is keen to promote this further. There are many engaging spaces across the school where pupils can relax and enjoy books. The school checks pupils' phonics knowledge as soon as they start at the school. This ensures that the school has an accurate view of how well pupils can read. Any pupils who are not yet fluent readers learn a methodical phonics programme. Skilled staff help pupils develop the knowledge needed to read unfamiliar words. Pupils read interesting books that match their phonics knowledge. Overall, pupils achieve highly in reading.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported in class by skilled staff. As a result, they can learn the same curriculum as their peers. The school works closely with families and obtains guidance from external agencies when needed. This means that pupils' needs are accurately identified. The school is able to provide more individualised support when this is needed. Consequently, pupils with SEND achieve well.

Due to the well-established behaviour routines, pupils behave well. They know that staff members will treat them fairly. Pupils work hard as they know their education is likely to help them have more varied career opportunities.

Pupils at this school have an inner confidence that shines through. They are resilient and responsible. The school develops pupils' characters through a rich set of extra-curricular activities that pupils really value. The school enables all pupils to take part and experience new things. Pupils' mental health and well-being are a high priority.

School leaders and governors work well together. They are focused on what can make the school even better. Staff are well considered and included in decision-making, for instance when making changes to subjects. Staff value the opportunities they have to develop and improve their teaching.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The changes made to the implementation of a small number of subjects are not yet fully and consistently in place. Staff are not yet fully delivering all the content and pedagogical approaches as leaders intend. This means that pupils are not making as much progress in these subjects as they could. The school needs to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching and assessment on pupils' learning and put in place support and training where needed.

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	117167
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10242264
Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	360
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Nisha Nyunt
Headteacher	Jenny Sherry
Website	www.cassioburyjm.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 May 2008

Information about this school

- At the time of the inspection, the school was not making 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.
- 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, computing, science and history. They scrutinised work, visited lessons, looked at workbooks and spoke to pupils. The inspectors also gathered evidence about personal, social and health education and writing by meeting with leaders,

looking at workbooks and talking to pupils. The lead inspector listened to several pupils read to a familiar adult.

- The inspectors examined a range of documents provided by the school, including development plans and the school's self-evaluation form.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and senior leaders. The lead inspector also met with some members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- 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, including attendance, that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors considered the 112 responses and the 67 free-text responses made by parents and carers to the Ofsted Parent View survey. Two inspectors met with parents at the end of the school day. The inspectors also considered the 30 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Jessie Linsley, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Michael Scott	Ofsted Inspector
James Adkins	Ofsted Inspector

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