

Inspection of a good school: The Cavendish School

Eldon Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN21 1UE

Inspection dates:

19 and 20 September 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

This school is part of Cavendish Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Peter Marchant, who is also the headteacher, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Peter Midwinter.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school has very high expectations of its pupils. These expectations are built around its ethos of 'respect, resilience and responsibility'. Pupils from the earliest years are taught about these shared values, and they demonstrate them consistently throughout the day. Pupils behave very well in the classroom and around the school. This creates a calm and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils thrive. Pupils benefit from highly bespoke support to help them meet the school's high ambitions. Pupils achieve very highly in both the primary and secondary phase and in a wide range of subjects.

Pupils are happy at school. They know that if they raise concerns they will be dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils play an active role in the school, suggesting and setting up clubs and providing support for a range of different initiatives on diversity, the environment and digital leadership.

There is an excellent programme of enrichment opportunities termed 'The Cavendish Offer'. The school has planned out activities over the years that it has decided all pupils are entitled to. The school pays particular attention to the needs of disadvantaged pupils and others who may miss out on these wider opportunities.

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

The school has created a curriculum that runs seamlessly from children in pre-school to pupils in Year 11. Working across the two phases of the school, staff have drawn thoughtfully on the expertise of primary and secondary colleagues to design this

curriculum. They have ensured that the curriculum is well sequenced so that pupils build on what they already know. Pupils use their new knowledge to complete challenging work, and they are very confident in discussing what they have learned. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are given high-quality, individual support with this work where necessary. The school has created guidance on specific adaptations for each subject so that everyone knows how best to offer this support. The school works effectively to identify the needs of different groups of pupils. It puts in place very targeted interventions that help to meet those needs.

There is a very strong culture of reading throughout the school. Pupils at the earliest stages of reading quickly gain the knowledge and confidence they need to read fluently. Pupils' progress in reading is closely monitored. If pupils fall behind, they are helped to catch up and keep up. Pupils across the primary and secondary phase have many opportunities to read and to hear others read to them. This helps to ensure that reading remains a priority across the school.

Learning is very rarely disrupted. Almost all pupils behave well almost all of the time, both in and out of the classroom. When they do not, the school uses extensive and effective pastoral support to help those pupils improve their behaviour. The school has put in place additional support for those pupils who struggle with attendance or to meet the school's high expectations for behaviour. This support is working well, and many of these pupils achieve very highly.

Pupils learn about people from different cultures, backgrounds and religions. The school teaches pupils from the youngest years to be tolerant of and celebrate difference. The school provides an excellent programme for personal, social, health and economic education. Pupils are confident and comfortable talking about relationship and sex education at an age-appropriate level. The school adapts this programme, as needed, to reflect the emerging needs of the pupils and to make sure that they get the information they need, when they need it.

There is a very well-established programme of careers education. This begins in the primary phase, where learning about different job opportunities is woven into the curriculum. This work has led to the school being asked to share its approach to this excellent work with primary schools in the local area. In the secondary phase, pupils get timely advice on different routes into employment and further education, and all have the opportunity to take part in work experience.

Staff feel very well supported by leaders. They know that the school considers their workload when bringing in new initiatives and that the focus is always on those things that will bring the greatest benefit to the pupils. There is effective collaboration across the trust, which is helping to reduce workload for staff at all levels. Governors and trustees are very active in ensuring that the school's vision is upheld and of benefit to all pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in 20 and 21 March 2018.

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	138475
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10288028
Type of school	All-through
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,362
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Peter Midwinter
Headteacher	Peter Marchant
Website	www.cavendishschool.net
Dates of previous inspection	20 and 21 March 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The Cavendish School converted to an academy in 2012 and is part of Cavendish Education Trust. It became an all-through school in 2015.
- The school includes a provision for two-year-olds.
- The school currently uses five registered alternative provisions.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with leaders, including the executive headteachers, heads of the primary and secondary phase, special educational needs coordinators and other senior

leaders. The lead inspector also met with trustees, local governors, and the school improvement partner.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, English, geography and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. They also discussed curriculum planning in a wider range of subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record. They also sampled case studies and documentation and spoke with a range of staff and pupils, and they considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors met with a range of staff and considered their views through the confidential online staff survey.
- Inspectors met with pupils, formally and informally, around the school, in lessons and at break and lunchtimes. Inspectors spoke with some parents and carers and took account of responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey.

Inspection team

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