

Inspection of Copperfield Academy

Dover Road East, Northfleet, Gravesend, Kent DA11 0RB

Inspection dates: 5–6 May 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Inadequate

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders' mantra, 'children are our priority', is front and centre at this diverse and multicultural school. Leaders' actions to improve the school over time have been successful. Pupils, parents and carers, and staff appreciate the many positive changes that leaders have introduced.

Pupils are proud of their school and their work. They listen intently to their teachers. They are well behaved and relish all that the school has to offer. Pupils enjoy their lessons and benefit from a well-rounded education. For example, they visit France, take part in yoga lessons, and learn how to use different mediums in their art lessons.

Pupils say that bullying and incidents of poor behaviour are rare. They learn and play harmoniously together. Leaders have ensured that pupils have a good understanding of equalities. Pupils say that, 'difference is welcomed at our school and we stand up for each other.'

Copperfield Academy is a vibrant school. Classrooms are calm and purposeful places, where pupils learn in a safe atmosphere. Leaders are determined that every pupil's experience, regardless of their individual needs, is a positive and successful one. As a result, pupils flourish and thrive.

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

Leaders hold high aspirations for all staff and pupils. They want pupils to leave school as responsible citizens who understand how to play their part in the world. Leaders provide a broad and interesting curriculum, including a range of opportunities and activities to bring this vision to life.

Leaders make sure that reading is a top priority, starting in Nursery. The teaching of phonics is well organised and effective. Staff support pupils to catch up should they fall behind. The books that pupils read are well matched to sounds they have been learning. As pupils move up the school, their love of reading develops further. Teachers use carefully considered texts that enhance other learning. For example, Year 6 pupils read 'Friend or Foe', which builds on learning in history.

Recent improvements to the teaching of mathematics have been successful. Leaders have carefully considered the important mathematical knowledge that pupils should know and remember. Planning has been adapted to take account of the gaps pupils may have in their knowledge because of COVID-19 (coronavirus).

Leaders are now rightly focusing their efforts on further strengthening the teaching in some subjects, such as history and science, from Reception to Year 6. Leaders are reviewing their plans so that teachers are clear about what is the most important content pupils should be taught. Further work is under way to ensure that this

content is taught in the most efficient order to help pupils learn and remember more. Subject leaders are bringing about these improvements.

Leaders show great tenacity in their work to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils' needs are identified quickly, and well-trained staff offer just the right pastoral and academic support. This means that these pupils learn successfully. The recently established 'ready to learn' provision offers impressive bespoke support for pupils with more complex needs.

Children get off to a flying start in Nursery and Reception. They are settled and happy. Staff plan activities that capture children's interest and develop their curiosity. For example, children learn how to brush their teeth and 'make toothpaste' by counting out quantities. The well-planned outside area further enhances opportunities for children's learning. There is a palpable learning buzz in Nursery and Reception classes.

Leaders and staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils are unfailingly polite and friendly. Leaders' relentless work to make sure that pupils are in school has improved pupils' attendance overall, including for pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils. Nonetheless, too many pupils are persistently absent. Leaders recognise that their work in this area needs to intensify.

Despite COVID-19, leaders are continuing to provide an extensive range of wider opportunities for pupils. This includes lunchtime and after-school clubs, which have recently restarted. Planned activities, such as visiting London or attending concerts, have been paused or undertaken virtually. While the school was closed to most pupils, those in school created a 'secret garden' for quiet reflection and learned to grow vegetables. Visitors have been into school to talk to older pupils about online safety and help them manage risks as they transition to secondary school.

Senior leaders, the trust and the intervention board undertake their duties with great dedication and moral purpose. This is recognised by staff, pupils and parents, who are overwhelmingly positive about the improvements. They value the transformative difference that the executive headteacher has made. There is a strong feeling of camaraderie and teamwork. Staff feel valued and say that they are 'invested in'. They appreciate leaders' careful consideration of their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a culture where the well-being and safety of pupils are paramount. They are alert to the risks that pupils may face and provide staff with effective training, which is revisited regularly. As a result, staff are vigilant and know how to escalate concerns quickly.

Systems and processes in the school to keep pupils safe are robust. There is evident care for all pupils. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in the community

and when online. Leaders ensure that appropriate checks are carried out on all adults who work at the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders are developing their plans to ensure that all areas of the curriculum are equally ambitious and well sequenced. Currently, they are focusing on science and history. Leaders should review existing wider curriculum planning to ensure that essential knowledge is explicitly identified and sequentially mapped out from Reception to Year 6. For this reason, the transition arrangement has been applied in this case.
- Despite improvements in attendance overall, too many pupils remain persistently absent. This could have a negative effect on their learning. Leaders should continue to improve pupils' overall attendance, and further reduce the numbers of pupils who are persistently absent, so that these are at least in line with national averages.

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	139685
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10184667
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	433
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jeremy King
Headteacher	Simon Wood (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.copperfieldacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	11–12 February 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Copperfield Academy is larger than the average-sized primary school. The school is sponsored by REAch2 multi-academy trust.
- The local governing body was disbanded on 21 January 2019 and replaced by an intervention board.
- The board of trustees is the accountable body for all schools in the REAch2 multi-academy trust.
- Just under half of the pupils who attend the school are White British. There are small proportions from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is above the national average for primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average for primary schools.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher and senior leaders.
- The lead inspector met with a representative of the REAch2 Academy Trust, as well as the chair and two members of the intervention board.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors checked the single central register of recruitment checks and talked to leaders responsible for safeguarding. Inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils informally.
- Inspectors considered the 42 responses to the confidential staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school.
- Inspectors took account of the 48 responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire and 18 additional free-text responses. Inspectors spoke to some parents on the second day of the inspection.
- Inspectors met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils informally during social times and in lessons.
- Inspectors visited the school's newly established 'ready to learn' provision, which provides support for pupils with SEND.
- As part of our inspection of early years, inspectors met with the early years leader and visited the Reception and Nursery classes.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the pupil premium and catch-up funding plans.
- Reading, mathematics, history and science were considered in detail as part of this inspection. Inspectors met with the subject leaders for reading, history, mathematics and science. Inspectors undertook a range of lesson visits and met with pupils and class teachers. Inspectors also looked at pupils' work in a range of subjects and heard pupils read.

Inspection team

Frances Nation, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Hanna Miller

Her Majesty's Inspector

Louise Walker

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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