

Inspection of Cranberry Academy

Cranberry Lane, Alsager, Cheshire ST7 2LE

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 April 2022

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 Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at this happy and welcoming school. Staff expect all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to work hard and achieve well. Pupils do their best each day to live up to these high expectations. They get on well with each other and are extremely polite to staff and visitors.

Pupils feel safe in school. They said that there is always someone there to help them if they have any concerns. They learn how to keep themselves safe at home and when playing out with friends. They also learn about managing positive relationships and how to keep safe when online. Pupils said that staff are quick to deal with bullying if it happens.

Pupils develop a great enthusiasm for learning. They listen attentively and are keen to contribute to discussions. These positive attitudes are developed right from the start of early years, where children learn routines that help them to develop independence.

Leaders have developed a well-thought-out programme to support pupils' wider development. Pupils are encouraged to take on additional responsibilities such as those of sports leaders. They enjoy earning rewards for living up to the school's values. They also enjoy participating in clubs and representing the school in sporting events.

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

The new leadership team has made improvements to the quality of education since the previous inspection. Leaders work effectively with staff to encourage pupils to become respectful and responsible citizens. Pupils behave well. Learning is rarely disrupted by poor behaviour.

Staff encourage pupils to value diversity. They work with leaders to provide a broad range of extra-curricular activities and use residential visits and educational trips to bring the curriculum to life.

Leaders have developed a curriculum that reflects their high aspirations for all pupils. They have thought carefully about what they want pupils to learn. In the majority of subjects, leaders have organised the curriculum well to ensure that pupils' learning builds sequentially on what they have previously learned. This helps pupils to achieve well. However, in a small number of subjects, leaders' curriculum thinking is not as precise. This prevents pupils from making the progress that they could through these curriculum areas.

Leaders have prioritised the teaching of reading. They help children to develop their understanding of the sounds that letters represent from their very first days in early years. Staff provide effective support for children and pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read. Staff pay close attention to those who struggle and

provide extra help to ensure that they keep up with their peers. Staff have been well trained to deliver the school's new phonics programme. They are using the programme effectively to help pupils to develop into accurate and fluent readers. They ensure that the books pupils read are well matched to the sounds that they know. Pupils said that they enjoy reading. Older pupils read regularly and have a broad knowledge of different authors and genres.

Leaders ensure that teachers have a strong focus on pupils' language development and communication. This starts in early years, where children enjoy listening to stories and learning rhymes and songs. Older pupils continue to explore vocabulary through the high-quality books that they read. Teachers also make good use of the school's broad curriculum to introduce subject-specific vocabulary.

In most subjects, there are effective systems in place for teachers to check how well pupils are developing their knowledge. For example, in mathematics, teachers use assessment well to identify misconceptions and plan work that matches pupils' stage of learning. However, in a minority of subjects, the use of assessment is at an early stage of development. This prevents teachers and leaders from developing an accurate view of how well pupils are progressing through these curriculums.

Leaders have effective systems in place to identify and support pupils with SEND. They ensure that these pupils' specific needs are identified early. Leaders support staff well and ensure that they have the necessary resources to support all pupils. This helps to ensure that pupils with SEND are able to access the full curriculum alongside their peers.

Staff enjoy working at Cranberry Academy. They appreciate the support and direction that the new leadership team has brought to the school. They feel respected and valued by leaders. They said that leaders consider workload, well-being and work-life balance when making decisions.

There is a wide range of experience and a high level of expertise on the governing committee. Governors and trustees have a detailed understanding of the school's strengths and the areas that require further improvement.

Parents and carers are positive about the work of the school. They appreciate the kind and caring ethos of the school in which their children learn.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that safeguarding is given the highest priority. Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They often consider potential safeguarding scenarios during staff meetings, which helps to ensure that they are alert to the signs that a pupil may be at risk. Governors and trustees make regular checks to ensure that leaders are fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities effectively.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not identified the key knowledge that they want pupils to learn. This prevents pupils from building their learning on what they already know in these subjects. Leaders should ensure that teachers understand what pupils need to learn in each subject and in each year group.
- In some subjects, teachers do not use assessment strategies well enough to check what pupils know. As a result, pupils' errors and misconceptions can sometimes go unchecked. Leaders should ensure that teachers use assessment effectively so that pupils develop the knowledge that they need in order to achieve well in all subjects.

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.

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	139910
Local authority	Cheshire East
Inspection number	10212224
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	393
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Johnny Anderson
Principal	Linda Jones
Website	www.cranberryacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 and 2 October 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The principal took up her post in January 2020.
- An additional new vice-principal and a new early years leader have also been appointed since the previous inspection.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school manages a breakfast club.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school had 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 the headteacher and other leaders.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and during breaktimes. They also met with groups of pupils to discuss behaviour.

- The lead inspector reviewed safeguarding records and the checks undertaken on newly appointed staff. Inspectors also spoke with members of staff to explore their understanding of how to keep pupils safe.
- Inspectors looked in detail at early reading, mathematics, science, geography and religious education. As part of this process, they met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons and spoke with teachers. They looked at pupils' work and spoke with pupils about their learning. The lead inspector also listened to pupils reading.
- Inspectors also considered other subjects. They discussed the curriculums with leaders and looked at pupils' work.
- Inspectors visited the early years classrooms as part of the deep dives and spoke with staff and children.
- The lead inspector met with the trust's chief executive officer (CEO), deputy CEO and members of the local governing committee, including the chair.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's Parent View. They also reviewed the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Paul Tomkow, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Moira Atkins

Ofsted Inspector

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