

Coppice Spring School

Pack Lane, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG22 5TH

Inspection dates

11–12 July 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Over the last three years, Delta Education Trust and the local governing body have ensured that the school has improved rapidly.
- The headteacher's determined and purposeful leadership has successfully ensured that high expectations are shared by all the staff at the school.
- Outcomes for pupils are good. Pupils are making good progress from their starting points. They make particularly strong progress in vocational courses at key stage 4.
- Leaders make good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Leaders promote British values consistently well. Pupils learn to understand the world around them well.
- Teaching learning and assessment are strong and improving. Teachers feel supported through good-quality training that helps them hone their skills.
- Leaders make effective use of additional funds to support the learning and progress of disadvantaged pupils. As a result, these pupils make strong progress from their starting points.
- Staff know their pupils well. They show compassion, providing consistent care to pupils. They are positive role models.
- Pupils' behaviour is good and improving. Pupils place great faith in their teachers. Pupils who need extra help with regulating their behaviour are supported well.
- Pupils say that they feel safe. The school is calm.
- As a result of highly effective training from the trust, middle leaders are instrumental in driving standards up.
- Impartial information and careers guidance help pupils to focus effectively on progression to their next stage of education.
- Many pupils' attendance has improved since joining the school. While leaders provide good support to pupils and their families, a few pupils do not attend school regularly enough.
- Pupils' literacy skills, including spelling, are improving. Reading skills are not yet fully developed. A few pupils could be helped by more precise guidance on improving their grammatical skills.
- There are a very few instances of low-level disruption that are not managed as consistently as they could be.
- While local governors provide good support and challenge to school leaders, governors are not yet fully evaluating the success of the school's plans for improvement.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - developing teachers' probing questions so that pupils prove and explain their answers
 - building on the actions already planned for pupils to read more widely
 - providing precise guidance to pupils to improve their grammatical skills
 - managing the few instances of low-level disruption consistently.
- Improve further the effectiveness of the local governing body's monitoring by ensuring that governors are able to measure the success of the actions identified within the improvement plans.
- Improve attendance of the few pupils who are persistently absent.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the school became an academy in 2014, it has been transformed from a low base. The academy trust identified many areas of improvement, systematically and effectively working to improve all aspects of the school. The academy trust provides effective support and challenge to the leaders of the school.
- The current headteacher, appointed in September 2015, has led the school with determination and vision. He has instilled a culture of high expectations which all staff share. He has successfully developed a community with a team ethos that has pupils' needs at its heart. As a result, over the last three years the school has improved beyond recognition.
- Leaders have established clear and effective routines, systems and structures so that all staff and pupils understand what is expected of them. Monitoring and evaluation procedures are developed well so that the school has a culture of continual improvement.
- Teaching has been strengthened over the last three years. A number of teachers have left the school. New and existing staff take part in comprehensive training to hone their skills. Staff speak very positively about the support they receive from school leaders. All members of staff who took part in the staff questionnaire enjoy working at the school. Staff morale is high.
- Middle leaders effectively drive improvements for their areas of responsibility. They work well as a team and support each other. Leadership training from the academy trust has enabled leaders to improve their skills further. Middle leadership is strong.
- Leaders have effectively focused on improving pupils' behaviour. Effective, targeted support is provided for each pupil. Communication between members of staff is strong, so that all adults understand the specific needs and actions to be taken for pupils. Because of the high degree of consistent and effective support, pupils' behavioural needs are met well and they are making good progress.
- The curriculum of the school now meets pupils' needs effectively. The rich curriculum has contributed further to increased pupil motivation and satisfaction within the school. Pupils follow a broad and balanced curriculum at key stage 3. The development of skills-based learning, such as catering, provides well for pupils. At key stage 4, pupils follow an academic route or a vocational suite of courses. Leaders also place pupils at off-site alternative provision, should a pupil have special interests for which the school cannot provide. As a consequence of a highly personalised curriculum, pupils are keen to learn and achieve well.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is developed well. Teachers encourage pupils to talk and write about their views of life in modern Britain. Assemblies contribute further to pupils' knowledge and understanding of the importance of British values. As a result, pupils learn about tolerance and respect and show empathy towards others.
- Pupils enjoy opportunities for extra-curricular visits. For example, pupils who study travel and tourism carried out an assignment on a trip to Malta. The school regularly

makes effective use of local sporting facilities, including when providing a whole-school sports day. Pupils speak enthusiastically about weekly enrichment activities, such as football and music club, that encourage teamwork and cooperation.

- Leaders have used extra funding for disadvantaged pupils well. Additional funding provided for pupils in Year 7 to catch up with their literacy and numeracy skills has been used effectively.
- Leaders and all staff work hard to maintain strong relationships with parents. Communication includes weekly reports to give parents constant feedback on progress in behaviour and achievement. Good communication was raised as a strength by the few parents who responded to the online questionnaire.

Governance of the school

- The ambitious academy trust and the local governing body are dedicated to providing an excellent quality of education. Strategic oversight by the academy trust members enables those responsible for governance to have detailed understanding of all aspects the school.
- The trust has not yet relinquished full governance responsibilities to the local governing body. Therefore, many of the functions of governance over the last three years have been carried out by the academy trust.
- Local governors represent a range of backgrounds, skills and experience. Local governance is effectively holding leaders to account for the progress of pupils. For example, governors are ensuring that the pupil premium grant provided for disadvantaged pupils is used effectively.
- Governors ensure that the headteacher has developed robust and effective procedures to manage staff performance.
- While local governors now provide good support and challenge, they are currently not providing as much help as they could in monitoring the success of leaders' actions to improve the school. This is because the school's action plan does not have sharp enough criteria to measure the success of their actions.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Child protection procedures are robust and leaders work closely with external agencies to protect vulnerable pupils. The suitability of staff employed is secured through safer recruitment practices. Health and safety checks are routinely undertaken, including risk assessments of the school site.
- Staff are well trained in safeguarding matters, including how to keep children safe from the risks of extremism and child sexual exploitation. A culture of safeguarding is developed well. There is good communication with parents, should the school have any concerns about their child.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers and other adults have high expectations of pupils. Teachers know the pupils well and build strong relationships with them. This underpins learning and pupils feel supported in their work.
- Teaching pitches activities so that pupils of all abilities are challenged well. Pupils are set individual learning goals every lesson, chosen so that pupils are challenged. Teachers assess pupils' progress against these milestones. As a result, learning objectives are clear to pupils and they are motivated to make progress. Teachers follow up slow progress by systematically revisiting topics so pupils have another opportunity to deepen their learning.
- Teaching captures pupils' imagination and interest effectively. In science, a chemistry lesson was set up as a crime scene investigation and pupils made good progress in developing their practical skills. In humanities, a discussion about conscientious objectors during the First World War engaged pupils well. Pupils enjoy and achieve in most subjects.
- Teachers give pupils helpful feedback about their progress. Pupils readily act on their teacher's advice and make improvements to their work. For example, pupils correct misspelled words that teachers have identified.
- While pupils' extended writing skills are being developed well, pupils' grammatical errors are not rectified consistently. For example, omissions of capital letters or paragraphs are sometimes not corrected.
- The teaching of mathematics is strong and builds pupils' confidence. Teaching encourages verbal discussion about how to solve mathematical problems and a scrutiny of their work revealed that pupils are beginning to write down their reasoning in words.
- Teachers develop pupils' skills well in practical subjects such as physical education and art.
- Occasionally, in a number of subjects, teachers do not provide pupils with challenging work so that understanding is deepened. Therefore, pupils do not always explore and consider their understanding fully so that they can reach higher levels more quickly.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff know their pupils exceptionally well. All adults treat pupils with compassion and sensitivity. Therefore, pupils feel secure in the knowledge that they are well cared for.
- Pupils have a growing positive attitude towards their learning. All staff contribute effectively to the school's positive environment. A member of staff explained, 'The positivity in our school filters from the top down to the pupils.' Pupils show pride in their work.

- Many pupils have anxiety or mental health issues. Effective therapeutic support helps pupils with strategies to improve resilience. Adults in the school regularly share information about procedures to help pupils. Consequently, pupils receive highly consistent care and are thriving in this environment.
- Pupils report that they feel safe in the school. While they reported that sometimes bullying does occur, they know that adults act swiftly to resolve any issues. Pupils report that they are able to approach staff should they have concerns.
- Pupils are provided with impartial information and guidance to help them with choices leading to a future career. Pupils have opportunities to explore their ideas, through discussion, work experience and visits. Careers education is effective.
- A small number of pupils attend alternative provision such as FLE Fishing and Military College. In both placements, contact between the school and the provision is strong and pupils' needs are met well.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Many pupils arrive at the school with difficulties with self-regulation of their behaviour. Staff are skilled in managing pupils' behaviour. Staff effectively act as a team to help pupils learn skills to improve inappropriate responses. While pupils may exhibit extreme behaviours from time to time, staff calm down acute situations effectively. Pupils are supported to reflect and learn from such situations. As a result, for individual pupils, there is clear improvement in the number of negative behaviour incidents over time.
- The school is a calm learning environment. Staff members' unruffled approach enables them to be good role models for pupils. As a result, in lessons and around the school pupils are typically polite and respectful to each other and adults.
- There are a small number of occasions when low-level disruption, such as calling-out, is not tackled consistently by adults.
- Leaders effectively track attendance and it is improving for many pupils. Overall attendance compares unfavourably with national averages due to a small number of pupils with specific attendance issues that skew school figures. There are many pupils with improving attendance, especially for those who are new to the school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils join the school at varying points in the school year with a number of pupils arriving in key stage 4. Some pupils have significant gaps in their knowledge and skills prior to joining the school. Their previous educational experience may include periods of absence and unhappiness. Therefore, pupils may not have made enough progress in the past.
- Over time, pupils' achievement and progress in national examinations do not compare favourably with national figures. Leaders make assessments of pupils' standards on entry to the school and closely monitor how well pupils make progress from these starting points. Therefore, leaders are able to show that most pupils make good and

accelerated progress throughout their time at the school, despite weaker comparisons to the national outcomes data.

- Over half the pupils are disadvantaged and eligible for extra funding. Because of the support that these pupils receive, they make better progress overall than their peers.
- Standards in English and mathematics are rising. Pupils are entered for appropriate courses, such as functional skills. The most able pupils are entered for GCSE examinations and achieve well from their starting points. The school recognises that sometimes pupils' anxiety hampers their performance in formal examinations, despite careful preparation and support. Consequently, some pupils' portfolios of work show better progress than the exam results indicate.
- Pupils are making good progress in their speaking and listening skills. Pupils share views and opinions regularly in all year groups. Similarly, pupils' writing shows maturity and skill over time.
- Pupils achieve very well in vocational subjects. For example, pupils' work in hospitality and catering courses is of a high standard, reflecting strong progress. Pupils' good outcomes enable them to be well prepared for future post-16 courses within this vocational field.
- Leaders have developed a formal curriculum for most-able pupils to follow at key stage 4. The majority of most-able pupils make strong progress overall. There are instances of pupils continuing to post-16 A-level courses in the recent past.
- Pupils make excellent progress in art. Sketchbooks show experimentation with different media and strong development of skills. Pupils' developmental work enables them to produce high-quality end products. Displays of artwork demonstrate high achievement across year groups.
- Pupils read often during lessons. However, a culture of reading widely for enjoyment is yet to be developed fully. Consequently, some pupils' reading skills are not as advanced as they could be. Leaders recognise this and are already taking actions to raise the profile of reading.
- On leaving school, most pupils continue with formal education or apprenticeships.

School details

Unique reference number	141187
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10032830

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Special
School category	Academy special sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	56
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Acting Chair	Sarah Watkins
Headteacher	Matthew McLoughlin-Parker
Telephone number	01256 336601
Website	www.coppicespringschool.com
Email address	info@coppicespringschool.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- Coppice Spring School converted to an academy special school in September 2014. The school is part of Delta Education Trust.
- The school provides for pupils with complex social, emotional and mental health needs. It also has additional provision for supporting pupils with autistic spectrum disorder.
- Over half of the pupils are eligible for the pupil premium grant provided for disadvantaged pupils. All pupils have education, health and care plans.
- The school uses alternative providers, FLE Fishing and Military College, for a small number of pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders and a selection of staff. Inspectors also considered 21 responses from staff to the online questionnaire.
- Inspectors met with two representatives from Delta Education trust and the acting chair of the local governing body. A telephone call was held with a parent governor. Telephone calls were held with alternative education providers.
- Inspectors considered seven responses to the online questionnaire and a further five written responses from parents. The school's own parent survey was considered.
- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in around 16 lessons. All lessons were visited jointly with senior leaders.
- The lead inspector carried out scrutiny of pupils' work across year groups and subjects. Meetings were held with two groups of pupils.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents, including: the school's self-evaluation; the school improvement plan; analysis of the school's performance data; information relating to the attendance and behaviour of pupils; safeguarding and child protection records; and minutes from governing body meetings.

Inspection team

Sue Child, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Jo Yates	Ofsted Inspector

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