School report

Inspection of Carrant Brook Junior School

Hardwick Bank Road, Northway, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire GL20 8RP

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 January 2022

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders are ambitious and want pupils to achieve the very best at Carrant Brook. They have raised expectations of what pupils are capable of, particularly in mathematics. However, in some wider curriculum subjects the quality of education is not yet good. Leaders' actions to put in place a new curriculum are very recent. Consequently, too many pupils do not gain the depth of knowledge they need to be successful in all subjects.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They talk positively about the school's core values and how they help to shape their thoughts and views. Leaders encourage pupils to take on important roles of responsibility, such as 'house points captain' and 'school ambassador'. Pupils like these special jobs as they help them to develop confidence and independence.

Relationships between staff and pupils are caring and supportive. Pupils behave well. They say that the school rules are fair. Staff take any reports of bullying seriously. Pupils have confidence in adults to sort out any worries or concerns.

Leaders place a strong emphasis on supporting pupils' social and emotional well-being. Through carefully planned assemblies and visitors to the school, pupils learn how to stay safe and build healthy relationships.

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

Leaders are redesigning the curriculum. In some subjects they have identified the specific knowledge and skills that pupils need to succeed. This is most evident in mathematics, where leaders have implemented an effective curriculum. Teachers break learning down into small steps to make sure pupils are confident before moving on. However, in other wider curriculum subjects, such as history and computing, leaders are only beginning to set out the most important things that pupils should learn and when. Therefore, pupils do not build up their knowledge well enough over time.

In recent years, leaders have secured improvements to many aspects of the school. They have focused on putting in place stronger systems for teaching reading, writing and mathematics. For most pupils, this helps build a solid foundation in the basic skills. However, not enough staff have the phonics knowledge they need to support some pupils at the early stages of reading. Staff do not provide these pupils with the precise teaching or appropriate reading books to help them catch up.

Leaders promote a love of reading. Pupils appreciate how staff create inviting spaces for them to read in independently. Classrooms are full of various reading materials, including newspapers and magazines. Teachers carefully select well-chosen texts to develop pupils' interests and extend their vocabulary. As pupils move up the school, they develop a range of comprehension skills.

Teachers assess pupils' learning regularly to identify those who need extra help. Staff provide additional support to improve pupils' spelling, handwriting and multiplication tables. Even so, assessment is not as effective in some of the wider curriculum subjects. Some leaders are only beginning to identify the important information they want pupils to know and remember.

Staff understand pupils with the most complex needs well. Teachers adapt learning so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities take part in lessons fully. Specialist staff provide effective support for pupils with social and emotional needs. Pupils typically behave well in lessons, so everyone can learn without disruption.

Pupils are growing into confident and responsible young citizens. Leaders provide many opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of moral and social issues. For example, pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong. They know not to judge others. Pupils say that 'being different makes you special in your own way'. Older pupils say they are confident to challenge all forms of discrimination.

Governors share leaders' ambition. They recognise the improvements that staff are making to the curriculum, including the positive partnership work with the infant school. Governors take part in training and work closely with leaders to check on the workload and well-being of staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, including governors, ensure that pupils' safety and well-being are at the forefront of their work. They only appoint adults who are suitable to work with children. Staff have the knowledge and expertise to notice and report any signs of concern. Leaders keep thorough records to enable them to track any concerns. They do not hesitate to offer support and advice to pupils and families in need of extra help.

Pupils learn how to manage risks and keep themselves safe. Staff teach pupils about sensible use of internet safety. Pupils know who to go to if they have any worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- For pupils at the early stages of reading, leaders have not identified the precise gaps in their phonics knowledge. The books they read are sometimes too hard and prevent them from becoming confident and fluent readers. Leaders must ensure that these pupils receive effective support and read books that match their phonics knowledge.

- Leaders are in the early stages of identifying the essential knowledge pupils need to learn in several subjects. Too many pupils do not remember enough of the information they have previously learned. Leaders need to continue to develop the work they have started to improve the curriculum so that pupils know more and remember more of the essential knowledge they need.
- In some subjects, staff do not use assessment information well enough. As a result, they do not know the gaps in pupils' knowledge. Leaders should ensure that assessments give them the information they need to plan learning that helps pupils progress through the curriculum.

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	115750
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10211715
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	181
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Gillian Horsey
Headteacher	Maria Budd
Website	www.carrantbrook.com
Date of previous inspection	27 – 28 February 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been several changes to staffing and governance since the previous inspection. The chair of governors took up post in September 2018. The deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2018. The special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator started in January 2022.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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 received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, computing and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with

subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of work.

- Inspectors looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about other subjects, including history and religious education.
- Inspectors listened to pupils in Years 3 and 4 read.
- An inspector reviewed the school's safeguarding documentation, including safeguarding checks carried out on staff working at the school. An inspector considered how well the designated safeguarding leader acts on concerns about pupils' welfare and safety. Inspectors talked to pupils, staff and governors about safe working practices.
- Inspectors considered 28 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 17 free-text responses.

Inspection team

Dale Burr, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Marie Thomas	Her Majesty's Inspector

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