

Inspection of Carlton Road Academy

Carlton Road, Boston, Lincolnshire PE21 8QX

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 June 2025

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The headteacher of this school is Clare Coyle. This school is part of Voyage Education Partnership trust which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Emma Hadley, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Christopher Penney.

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since September 2014. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

Carlton Road Academy is a welcoming school. Positive relationships are at the heart of the school's work. Pupils enjoy coming to school because they are happy and feel safe. They know they can talk to any adults if they have any worries. Pupils explained, 'Our teachers support us if we need help in our lessons or with absolutely anything else in our life.'

The school wants all pupils to achieve their best. Although published outcomes are lower than the national average in several areas, pupils achieve well from where they start. The school carefully considers its diverse community. Pupils' learning supports their language and communication development. This supports pupils' achievement because, for many, English is an additional language.

Pupils are curious and interested in their learning. They are polite in their conversations with staff and each other. At lunch time pupils play happily alongside each other. The school supports pupils to develop their physical health. They enjoy using the outdoor resources such as the athletics track to exercise.

Pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. Pupils access a range of wider opportunities. They explain that their jobs help the school community and teach them about responsibility. Pupils are particularly proud of these extra responsibilities such as being a member of the 'Pupil Parliament'.

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

The school prioritises reading. When listening to pupils read, adults consistently make sure that pupils understand what they have read. This support is particularly helpful for pupils who speak English as an additional language. The school has selected high-quality books for each year group. Adults read these to pupils daily. Staff encourage pupils to read for pleasure. As a result, pupils talk positively about their favourite books, and they enjoy reading.

Staff subject knowledge of phonics is secure but how effectively phonics is taught varies. When practice is strongest, staff model how to blend sounds together to read unfamiliar words. They use language that helps to develop pupils' learning, such as explaining a 'digraph' as two letters together making one sound. However, this does not happen consistently, which means pupils do not all experience the same quality of phonics teaching. Some pupils benefit from attending additional phonics sessions. This extra support helps them to 'catch up' with the programme.

In the early years there is a clear focus on early language development. Staff introduce children to new words well. They model using these words correctly in full sentences. This is effective because children then use this modelled language in their own conversations. There has been a significant improvement in the early years outdoor area. Children develop physically. They explore, learn through play and take carefully managed risks, such as climbing.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive appropriate support. The school communicates proactively with a range of external professionals to make sure that pupils with SEND have the resources and help they need to be successful. The school provides individualised learning for a number of pupils with complex needs. This provision accurately identifies and meets the needs of these pupils. As a result, they achieve well.

The school's curriculum is well sequenced. It shows what pupils will learn in each subject from the early years through to Year 6. In some subjects, the specific knowledge that pupils should know and remember could be clearer. At the moment, teachers interpret curriculum thinking in different ways. Learning does not consistently build upon pupils' existing knowledge. This means that some pupils do not always know what they need to in order to access new learning.

Pupils listen well in lessons and have positive attitudes about their learning. The school's rigorous work with families to change the culture of attendance needs to continue. Although this work has had a positive impact, there are still too many pupils who are regularly absent from school.

The school's personal development offer is exceptional. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. Pupils understand the importance of respect and tolerance. They explain that, 'We learn that we are all allowed to be who we are and that we should be accepting and kind no matter what.' Across the curriculum there are opportunities for pupils to consider different careers. In 'newspaper club' pupils get to be editors and photographers and publish a real newspaper.

The trust board provides the school with an appropriate balance of support and challenge. Staff attend regular training. This has a positive impact on their teaching practice. They particularly value the opportunity to network with other professionals across the trust. The school thinks about staff's workload in all its decision making. As a result, staff feel their well-being is carefully considered.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's phonics programme is not delivered as consistently well as it could be. This means that some pupils are not being taught to read as well as they might. Leaders need to ensure that staff teach phonics with consistent strategies so that more pupils learn to be confident and fluent readers.
- In some subjects, the school has not identified what specific key knowledge pupils need to learn. This means that pupils do not consistently build a secure depth of

knowledge. The school should ensure that it finalises its curriculum thinking to identify specifically what pupils should learn, and when, so that pupils develop knowledge which builds cumulatively year-upon-year.

- Rates of persistent absence are still too high. This means that many pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, do not benefit from the full education that they need. The school should ensure that strategies to reduce persistent absence continue and are sustained to change the culture of attendance for pupils.

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	138751
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10347541
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	454
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Christopher Penney
CEO of the trust	Emma Hadley
Headteacher	Clare Coyle
Website	www.carltonroadacademy.net
Date of previous inspection	17 and 18 September 2014

Information about this school

- The school uses one registered alternative provider.
- The school is part of Voyage Education Partnership trust.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in: reading, mathematics, history and music. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils, and reviewed samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to some pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for behaviour, attendance, personal development, early years and the provision for pupils with SEND.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- The lead inspector spoke with the representatives of the trust. This included the chair of the board and the chief education officer.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including any free-text comments, as well as the results of Ofsted's survey for school staff.

Inspection team

Luella Dhoore, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Heidi Bastock	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Westmoreland	His Majesty's Inspector

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