

Cavendish Junior School

URN: 112659 | Inspected: 06 January 2026

Safeguarding

standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

Achievement Needs attention

As reflected in the outcomes of national assessments, over time, pupils' achievement is inconsistent. In 2025, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was significantly lower than that found nationally. Over the last 3 years, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics has been below that of all pupils nationally. However, this is not the case for disadvantaged pupils, who have achieved close to national averages over time. The school does not consistently identify and address foundational gaps in pupils' learning in mathematics. As a result, some pupils, especially those with lower starting points, do not have the underpinning knowledge needed to successfully tackle the work that is set for them. Although pupils are helped to complete their work, this does not always help them to secure the key knowledge that they need for the

next steps

in the curriculum.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Cavendish Junior is a nurturing school that is rooted in consistently positive relationships. Pupils are well looked after and cared for. One pupil summed this up eloquently when they told an inspector: 'School really looks after us. We like it because they care about us and keep us safe.' This sentiment is reflected in the school's positive, and increasing, rates of attendance. Pupils behave well. They are eager to earn the wide range of rewards on offer. 'Gold awards', 'Cavendish currency' and hot chocolate events with the headteacher are particular favourites. Pupils understand how, in the event of poor behaviour, 'reflection sessions' help them to make more positive choices in the future. Bullying is rare. Pupils have confidence in leaders to deal with it robustly, should it occur. Pupils enjoy learning. In lessons, they are typically determined to do well. They value the support that staff provide. Typically, staff ensure that pupils get the help needed to keep up with the curriculum. However, over time, pupils' achievement is inconsistent. Pupils do not achieve as well as they should. This is especially the case in mathematics, where outcomes of national assessments have been lower than those found nationally over the last 3 years. There are also some inconsistencies in how well pupils at the earliest stage of learning to read are supported. This means that some pupils do not become fluent readers as quickly as they could. Pupils are well prepared for life beyond the school. A broad personal development programme provides pupils with opportunities to take on responsibilities and to develop their cultural capital. The 'Cavendish code' sets out the characteristics that pupils are expected to demonstrate. These include being 'collaborative, aspirational,

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visionary, enthusiastic and nurturing', to mention but a few. Pupils know what each of these mean and do their utmost to live up to them.

Next steps

- Leaders should ensure that gaps in pupils' foundational knowledge in mathematics are consistently identified and addressed.
- Leaders should increase rates of attainment in mathematics so that, for all groups of pupils, they are at least in line with those achieved nationally.
- Leaders should ensure that all staff are trained in the school's approach to phonics so that pupils are supported more consistently in this area.
- Leaders should ensure that pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read have reading books that are consistently matched to the sounds that they know.
- Leaders should ensure that the school's plans for improvement consistently make clear how the actions that are taken will be checked and evaluated.

Curriculum and teaching

Expected standard

The school has devised a curriculum that is well tailored to the needs and interests of its pupils. Across all subjects, the curriculum makes clear what pupils should know at each stage of their education. Content is taught in a logical order. Leaders regularly check that the curriculum is being taught effectively. They know where teaching is effective and where improvements are needed. The school's professional learning programme for staff ensures that teachers typically have the necessary subject knowledge. They use this to adapt teaching appropriately where needed, for example for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. In spelling, reading and handwriting, the school accurately identifies any gaps in pupils' knowledge. These are addressed quickly. However, this is not always the case in mathematics. In some cases, the school has not picked up on the gaps that pupils have in their mathematical knowledge. As a result, pupils are not always adequately prepared for the work that they are given. Pupils study a wide range of authors, texts and genres that have been carefully chosen to support pupils' language and vocabulary development. Pupils develop a love of reading because the school has created a positive culture through an environment that celebrates and promotes reading. For example, families enjoy making use of the 'curiosity cabin' to read for pleasure. The school has a systematic approach to the teaching of phonics for pupils who need it. However, not all staff have been fully trained. This has led to some inconsistencies in how well pupils' reading books match the sounds that they know. On occasion, some pupils have reading books that are too easy or too hard for them.

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Inclusion

Expected standard

The school has an effective approach to supporting pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This is consistently understood and applied. Working with pupils, parents and carers, and external agencies where appropriate, the school ensures that pupils' needs are accurately identified. The targets for improvement that are set for pupils with SEND are well tailored. Progress towards these is closely checked and evaluated. As a result, the barriers that pupils with SEND face are incrementally reduced. Staff receive regular training so that they know how best to support pupils with SEND, including those who may have experienced trauma in the past. In classes, staff know which pupils are disadvantaged and ensure that they get the help needed. Disadvantaged pupils typically achieve as well as, and in many cases better than, their disadvantaged peers nationally. The school's pupil premium strategy is fit for purpose. It accurately outlines the barriers that the school's disadvantaged pupils face. The actions to address these are well selected and typically successful. However, in some places, the strategy does not make clear enough how the impact of the actions taken will be evaluated. In these areas, this reduces leaders' understanding and accountability of the effectiveness of the decisions that are being made.

Leadership and governance

Expected standard

Leaders have a clear and ambitious vision for the school. They are determined for this vision to be a reality. They have built a cohesive team of staff that shares their drive and ambition. The 'Cavendish code' is clearly understood and strived for by the whole school community. All decisions are made in the best interests of pupils. Leaders have an accurate understanding of what is working well at the school and where improvements are needed. The school's plans for improvement focus on the right things. However, in some places these plans do not make clear how the impact of the actions taken will be checked for effectiveness. As a result, leaders do not have as clear an understanding as they could of the impact of their decisions. Leaders take great care to ensure that everyone feels valued and respected as part of the school community. Staff benefit from a well-considered programme of professional development so that they have the skills and expertise needed. Staff workload is considered. The wellbeing of staff is a high priority for leaders. The school has established positive working relationships with parents and carers. Parents have high praise for the school. The governing body carries out its responsibilities effectively. It provides the school with the right level of challenge and support, including for leaders' and staff's workload and wellbeing. It has an accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

Pupils benefit from a broad and rich personal development offer. This is underpinned by well-planned and sequenced curriculums for personal, social and health education, and relationships and sex education. These are

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tailored closely to pupils' knowledge and experiences. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is prioritised. This is reflected in the aims of the 'Cavendish code'. Pupils consistently know what is expected from them and are supported to develop their independence and to be healthy and safe, both online and offline. They learn about a wide range of people and cultures from around the world. They are taught to respect other people's views and the cultural diversity of modern Britain. This includes developing their understanding of the fundamental British values and equality. Pupils further benefit from a wide range of trips and visits that contribute to their experiences of the world around them. These include a programme of residential visits, a trip to London, a programme of theatre visits and events within the local community. The offer is further enhanced by a suitable range of extra-curricular activities. The school ensures that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, access these. Pastoral support is a strength. Leaders and staff know pupils well and are quick to put help in place where it is needed. Pupils who need additional support benefit from personalised mentor support in the 'jungle room'. Pupils value the 'Cavendish college' that regularly takes place. Pupils relish selecting from a range of activities that help to prepare them for life beyond school. These include cooking, outdoor adventurous activities, arts, crafts and social studies. The school makes sure that, over time, all pupils benefit from each of these. Pupils are proud of the roles and responsibilities that they take on. They wear their badges of office with pride. Led by the school's prime minister, the school parliament plays an active role in bringing around improvements for all. Needs attention

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

The school takes good care of its pupils. It is a happy, safe and caring environment that pupils are eager to attend. This makes a significant contribution to the positive, and increasing, rates of attendance. Incidents of repeated absence are low. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities attend more than that typically found. The school monitors attendance closely. It takes swift action where challenge and/or support is needed. This typically results in demonstrable improvements. The school has a clear and consistent approach to parents' and carers' requests for pupils' holidays during term time. The school's behaviour policy is consistently understood and applied. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and relish the rewards on offer. They talk about their achievements with a high degree of pride. They are eager to earn 'house points', 'gold awards' and the 'Cavendish currency' that can be exchanged for prizes in the 'Cavendish emporium'. Poor behaviour is dealt with swiftly and bullying is not tolerated. Pupils are helped to understand the impact of their actions on others and to know how to manage tricky situations more positively. Pupils who need extra help to live up to the school's expectations get the help that they need.

For detailed performance data including disadvantage gap analysis, historical trends, and comparison tables, visit the school's profile on WhatSchool:

<https://whatschool.ai/en/school/cavendish-junior-school-chesterfield>