

# Cherry Tree Primary School, Basildon

Church Road, Basildon, Essex SS16 4AG

## Inspection dates

10–11 July 2018

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>                 | <b>Good</b> |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management   | <b>Good</b> |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | <b>Good</b> |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare  | <b>Good</b> |
| Outcomes for pupils                          | <b>Good</b> |
| Early years provision                        | <b>Good</b> |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Good        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders, including governors, know the school well. They take effective action to ensure that pupils' academic and emotional needs are well understood.
- Pupils typically behave well. In classes and around school, they treat others with courtesy and respect.
- Pupils in most classes make strong progress across the curriculum. Leaders' work to enhance pupils' ability to use mathematical concepts has been particularly effective.
- Early years provision is good. Adults respond well to children's interests and needs. Children are well cared for and make good progress from their starting points.
- Leaders promote pupils' physical and mental well-being effectively. They protect pupils from harm and teach them how to keep themselves safe.
- Teachers typically have strong subject knowledge and a secure understanding of the requirements of the school curriculum. What they teach helps pupils to progress well.
- Most teachers use a range of teaching strategies to good effect. However, a small minority of teachers have lower expectations of pupils and make less effective use of time.
- Sometimes, pupils do not learn from their mistakes, because the mistakes are not identified or corrected. In these cases, misconceptions persist over time.
- When teaching is weaker, pupils' enthusiasm for learning drops. They tend to become distracted and talkative.
- Leaders' work to improve attendance has led to persistent absence falling. However, overall absence remains higher than it should be.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teachers have high expectations of pupils and make the best use of time in lessons to move pupils' learning on.
- Make sure that teachers consistently address the misconceptions in pupils' work so that they do not persist.
- Ensure that pupils' interest in what they are learning is maintained, so that time in lessons is used to best effect.
- Build on leaders' work to improve attendance, so that attendance rises and is at least in line with the national average.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Leaders and governors are ambitious for pupils. They know the school well and continually seek to improve provision. As a result, teaching has been adapted appropriately to meet changing curriculum requirements, and pupils make good progress. Behaviour has also improved.
- Leaders assess pupils accurately when they come to the school. They identify what pupils can do well and what they need more help with. They share this information with teachers and monitor pupils' progress. Where it is helpful to pupils, leaders give extra support. This ensures that pupils, including the large number who join during the school year, make good progress from their individual starting points.
- This close monitoring of pupils' strengths and needs is used for all pupils. It means that leaders and teachers understand the specific barriers faced by disadvantaged pupils well. It enables them to provide support to disadvantaged pupils which effectively addresses the things which would otherwise hinder their progress. As a consequence, these pupils also make good progress.
- Leaders' understanding of, and support for, pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is equally well developed. Consequently, these pupils progress well from their starting points.
- The rate of exclusions has fallen since the last inspection. It is now similar to the national average. This is because leaders identify and monitor pupils' individual emotional needs and provide effective support for them. They work well to prevent pupils who might otherwise misbehave from doing so. Leaders regularly train staff on how to effectively manage pupils' social and emotional needs. As a consequence, poor behaviour is unusual and the need for exclusions is reduced.
- Leaders make effective use of training to develop the needs of staff in line with school improvement priorities. For example, leaders identified the need to enhance pupils' ability to use mathematical reasoning. Following training for all teachers, this is now well developed across the school and common in pupils' work. Leaders also work well with individual staff to provide focused professional development opportunities, based on each person's strengths and weaknesses. School records, observations of teaching and pupils' work all show that teachers improve their practice in response to leaders' guidance. Over 90% of staff who responded to Ofsted's survey of their views feel that leaders use professional development to encourage, challenge and support teachers' improvement.
- Leaders make good use of the physical education (PE) and sport premium funding. Curricular and extra-curricular sports provision is strong. Many pupils take up the opportunity to participate in the free before- and after-school clubs, and are enthused by inter-school competitions. One notable success has been in gymnastics, where pupils have reached regional and national championships. Teachers' skills have been developed by working alongside experts. This ensures that high-quality sports provision is sustainable.

- Leaders have developed a curriculum to meet the needs of pupils in the school. By combining their accurate understanding of pupils with curriculum models which they know work well, leaders ensure that pupils develop a secure understanding of a range of different subjects. In mathematics, pupils develop strong reasoning skills over time. In English, they make good progress in style, content and stamina. Pupils revisit themes in history, geography, religious education and science to deepen and broaden their understanding. Where pupils fall behind, they are helped to catch up. As a result, pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors support leaders well. They have a thorough understanding of what the school does well and what it needs to improve. They know the challenges facing the school and hold leaders to account to ensure that pupils receive a good quality of education. Governors track the impact of leaders' work, such as the introduction of new strategies in teaching mathematics and the use of pupil premium funding, by reviewing and questioning the information they receive about pupils' progress.
- Governors' chosen approaches, such as visiting the school, work well for them in enhancing leadership. Subject leaders explained the value they gain from working with governors, while governors use their time in school to ensure that decisions taken by leaders are being implemented and are working.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding is well led. Leaders are thorough in their record-keeping and vigilant in following up with actions to support pupils. Files are well maintained and up to date, with clear timelines showing how concerns are dealt with. Adults across the school are trained regularly on safeguarding matters and routinely receive updates on pupils' needs, as well as national developments. Staff at all levels follow clear systems for reporting concerns. These are centrally recorded and monitored, with timely actions taken when a pupil is at risk of harm.
- Pupils are taught how to stay safe in personal, social and health education, in computing and in workshops led by other organisations visiting the school. All pupils spoken with by inspectors, and all those who responded to Ofsted's survey, said there is someone in school for them to talk to if they were worried about something. Though pupils recognise that there is some bullying, they are confident that it is consistently dealt with well. Pupils feel safe.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Most teachers across the school have strong subject knowledge and a clear understanding of the requirements of the subjects they are teaching. As a consequence, what pupils learn prepares them well for further study.
- Teachers and teaching assistants know pupils well. They have developed positive relationships and understand how to support different pupils in the class. As a result, pupils typically work well in lessons and respond positively to adults' guidance.

- The teaching of mathematics is now a strength of the school. Leaders and teachers recognise the importance of pupils being able to understand and apply different approaches to solving problems. They ensure that pupils use mathematics in different ways and think about why particular approaches suit specific problems. Teachers reinforce mathematical terminology by using it themselves and by expecting pupils to use it when they write and speak. Pupils develop a deep understanding of mathematics.
- Teaching assistants enhance the work of teachers. They help pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities to participate fully in lessons. They work well with small groups and help those pupils to move forward from their own starting points.
- Most teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. They require pupils to speak using subject-specific vocabulary. They ask questions which require pupils to think. Because of this, in most classes pupils develop the skills of effective learners. They listen carefully and make good use of time when working together. They answer questions with care and accuracy.
- A small minority of teachers do not demonstrate the same high expectations typically seen across the school. They do not demonstrate the strengths of most teachers and do not secure the same good progress for pupils. In these classes, pupils do not demonstrate the same enthusiasm for learning seen elsewhere in the school. Leaders are aware of where teaching is not as strong and have credible plans in place to improve it.
- Teachers do not consistently identify pupils' misconceptions well. This means that some pupils continue to make the same mistakes over time.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

**Good**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils' physical well-being is well promoted. They benefit from high-quality PE lessons, extra-curricular sporting activities and lessons about healthy eating. Pupils are taught how to keep safe and they say that they feel safe.
- The school is a welcoming place where it is fine to be different. Pupils treat each other well. There is little bullying, and pupils who spoke with inspectors were positive about their experiences. One pupil captured the culture of the school well, saying, 'We are encouraged to look after each other and celebrate who we are.'
- Pupils are confident to answer questions and to try out their ideas in front of others. They have faith in leaders and teachers to help them and to resolve any problems that they may have. Leaders have been successful in ensuring that pupils enjoy their time in school.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils typically conduct themselves well. They are courteous to visitors and respond politely to adults' requests. The dining area is a calm place, while pupils play well together outside. Most pupils who responded to Ofsted's survey said that behaviour is usually good. This view was echoed by staff and parents. Pupils explained that when something does go wrong, adults deal with it well.
- In most classes, pupils work well and make good use of time. Low-level disruption is rare, and pupils are often enthusiastic about their work. A small minority of teaching does not inspire pupils. When this is the case, pupils lose concentration and talk to their friends.
- Leaders' diligent and effective work has improved the attendance of pupils who miss significant amounts of time from school. Strategies, such as sending letters home to reward good attendance and meeting with parents where pupils' attendance is low, have led to a reduction in persistent absence. However, despite leaders' efforts, attendance overall remains below the national average.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- In 2016 and 2017, pupils' progress in mathematics to the end of key stage 2 was below the national average and in the bottom 40% of schools nationally. Leaders recognised the need to improve the outcomes of pupils in mathematics and have successfully revamped the way in which mathematics is taught. As a result, pupils across the school now make good progress in mathematics.
- Over the academic year, leaders have provided teachers with training on how to teach writing well. They have also focused on teaching pupils to make good use of a wide range of subject-specific vocabulary. Leaders' careful use of assessment allows them to identify when pupils who arrive during the year have weaker levels of literacy than they would expect. They put effective help in place for these pupils. Pupils make good progress in reading and writing throughout the school.
- Pupils' phonic understanding in key stage 1 is strong. Many pupils join the school with weak reading skills. By the end of Year 1, they have caught up with other pupils nationally.
- The curriculum is effectively structured and well taught. Pupils learn about a wide range of subjects, including science, religious education, geography and history. Because lessons are well sequenced, pupils revisit topics and deepen their knowledge.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress, because leaders analyse and help pupils to overcome the things which prevent them from learning.
- Pupils' SEN and/or disabilities are equally well understood and supported. These pupils also make good progress from their individual starting points.
- In the small minority of classes where teaching is not as effective, pupils' progress is slower.

## Early years provision

Good

- Early years is well led. Leaders work through their detailed development plans effectively to ensure that those areas which could be better are improved. For example, this year leaders identified the need to ensure consistency of practice between Nursery and Reception, particularly with regard to the teaching of phonics. Leaders opted to provide teachers with time together to plan. Teachers have used this to improve the way they work together. Leaders' aim of improving phonics teaching has been achieved, and phonics is well taught throughout Nursery and Reception.
- Many children join the school with low starting points. By the end of the early years, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development is in line with the national average. As in the older year groups, disadvantaged children in the early years make good progress from their starting points.
- Children in the early years are well taught. Children's learning journeys show the breadth of well-structured activities which help children to develop. Adults monitor the progress that children make effectively and build well on what children already know and can do. They make good use of questioning to guide children and to develop children's understanding of interlinking topics. For example, during the inspection teachers' skilful questions enabled children playing with cars to develop their number skills, scientific knowledge and linguistic ability. Teachers guide children to make good use of time and resources to explore all the areas of early learning well.
- Children in the early years are happy and well cared for. The statutory welfare requirements for the early years are met. Children are encouraged to eat healthily and to try new types of food. They learn good table manners and how to take turns when speaking. Children in Nursery and Reception respond well to adults' high expectations of behaviour.

## School details

|                         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Unique reference number | 132833   |
| Local authority         | Essex    |
| Inspection number       | 10045762 |

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

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|---|--|
| Type of school                          | Primary  |
| School category                         | Community  |
| Age range of pupils                     | 3 to 11  |
| Gender of pupils                        | Mixed  |
| Number of pupils on the school roll     | 453  |
| Appropriate authority                   | The governing body   |
| Chair                                   | Rebecca Walsh  |
| Headteacher/Principal/Teacher in charge | Nicolette Barrand  |
| Telephone number                        | 01268 523017   |
| Website                                 | <a href="http://www.cherrytree-pri.essex.sch.uk">www.cherrytree-pri.essex.sch.uk</a>     |
| Email address                           | <a href="mailto:admin@cherrytree-pri.essex.sch.uk">admin@cherrytree-pri.essex.sch.uk</a> |
| Date of previous inspection             | 2–3 October 2013   |

## Information about this school

- Cherry Tree Primary School is a larger than average primary school.
- It has a higher than average proportion of pupils who have been eligible for free school meals in the last six years.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils whose first language is not English is broadly in line with the national average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards for the minimum standards and progress that pupils should achieve at key stage 2 in English and mathematics.
- The school makes use of the Surrey Teaching Centre, Tadworth, for some aspects of education provision.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors met with senior and other leaders, as well as members of the governing body. They also met with a representative from an organisation which supports collaboration between local schools, known as the Basildon Education Partnership, and spoke with a representative of the Surrey Teaching Centre.
- Inspectors visited all classes, sometimes accompanied by leaders, and reviewed the work of pupils in their books as well as listening to pupils read.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including leaders' evaluation of the school and their improvement plans, leaders' records of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and documents demonstrating the work of governors. Inspectors considered the school's information on pupils' progress, attendance, behaviour and exclusions.
- Inspectors considered the 18 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 18 responses by parents to the free-text option. Inspectors considered the 23 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and the 34 responses to the staff survey. They spoke with parents before the start of the school day and with pupils during the inspection, both individually and in groups. Inspectors also spoke with a range of staff during the course of the inspection.

## Inspection team

|                                 |                         |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Andrew Hemmings, lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Tessa Holledge                  | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Vicky Parsey                    | Ofsted Inspector        |

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