

Inspection of Cherry Tree Primary School

Church Road, Basildon, Essex SS16 4AG

Inspection dates:	1 and 2 July 2025
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Nicolette Stone-Riley. This school is part of Berlesduna Academy 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), Sean Tobin, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Robin Taverner.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are respectful, safe and ready to learn as a result of the school's rules, which set clear expectations. These are typically followed by pupils in class and around school.

Pupils benefit from a broad, planned curriculum, which starts strongly in early years. Children's early education gives them an excellent start. However, pupils' learning experience is not as positive as they move through the school. Too many pupils leave this school not academically prepared for their next stage of education.

Pupils behave well in class. Classrooms are generally calm, orderly and conducive to learning. While bullying does on occasion take place, pupils have every confidence that staff deal with it quickly and effectively. Trained pupil anti-bullying ambassadors are on hand to settle more minor disagreements.

Pupil leadership roles are wide and varied. Pupils are proud to act as house captains, eco councillors and school councillors. These pupils are starting to have an active and valued voice in school life.

Trips are now very much back on the agenda at this school. Visits to places such as the Tate Modern and Royal Opera House in London excite and engage pupils. These opportunities give pupils memorable experiences they might not be able to access elsewhere.

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

The school is making positive changes to improve how well pupils learn. After a period where standards have slipped, the school has a clear sense of determination to improve. An ambitious curriculum is in place. However, the delivery and impact of this curriculum remains variable.

In the early years, staff set clear routines and expectations, which children meet. The early years curriculum is taught well by skilled staff. It combines children's interests with the knowledge that they need to secure in readiness for their next stage. Trained staff interact meaningfully with children to check and extend their learning. Children in early years achieve well. They are suitably prepared for Year 1.

The school has ensured that there is an appropriate early reading curriculum in place. Trained staff generally deliver the sessions effectively. Pupils read books matching the sounds they have learned. Staff identify pupils who need to catch up. This approach is starting to have the desired impact. Most pupils develop their early reading skills at an age-appropriate level, and others are supported to keep up with their peers.

All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), receive a broad and balanced curriculum offer. However, teaching across the school is inconsistent, which affects how well pupils, including those with SEND, learn the intended curriculum.

Beyond the early years, the curriculum is not delivered in a way that effectively supports pupils to learn the intended knowledge. In lessons, staff do not routinely check how well pupils are learning. This means some pupils are not moved on in their learning quickly enough, while others who find learning difficult are not well supported to succeed. Pupils do not achieve as well as they should across the curriculum.

Many subject leaders have not had the time or the support needed to make a demonstrable impact in their roles. The school recognises their willingness to develop. However, further opportunities are needed for them to reflect on their subject areas and identify the next steps for improvement. As a result, some subject curriculums are not improving as quickly as they could.

Improving attendance is a priority. Creative ways to promote the importance of attending school, alongside rigorous monitoring, ensure attendance remains a constant focus. The school balances support and challenge where attendance falls below the level they would expect. This work is starting to have a positive impact. However, some pupils do not attend school as often as they should. As a result, they miss important learning, which can limit their progress. The school has set clear expectations of how they expect pupils to behave. When behaviour falls below expectations, the school acts promptly and minimises the impact on the learning of others.

The personal development programme is a strength at this school. Pupils get the information they need at the right time. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, both online and in their community. They are respectful of each other and of people's differences. Pupils know how to keep themselves healthy in mind and in body. The school raises pupil aspirations by providing regular opportunities to learn about different professions. This also exposes pupils to potential future careers.

Local governors and the trust recognise the need to make improvements at the school. They are now offering the right support and challenge to school leaders to improve standards. There are early signs of improvement, but there is more work to do. Staff generally feel positive about the recent improvements made. They value the fact their views are considered when changes are being made.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not assess pupils' learning effectively at times. This means learning is not routinely checked to ensure pupils are supported or moved on in their learning in a timely manner. It also means gaps in knowledge are not always addressed. The school

and trust need to further support teachers with their responsive assessment strategies so they can adapt learning to meet the needs of different pupils more effectively.

- Middle leaders have not been given the necessary support and time to monitor and improve their subjects in an effective way. This means they do not have a clear understanding of the key areas of improvement needed within their subjects. The school, with the support of the trust, should work closely with subject leaders to improve their knowledge and increase their capacity to lead improvements in their subject areas.
- Too many pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, do not attend school regularly enough. This means they miss important learning. These pupils do not achieve as well as they could. The school needs to continue to refine and evaluate their approaches to managing and promoting attendance so these pupils attend school more regularly.

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	143452
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10345463
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	425
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Robin Taverner
CEO of the trust	Sean Tobin
Headteacher	Nicolette Stone-Riley
Website	www.cherrytree-pri.essex.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	27 and 28 June 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school's headteacher was not in school at the time of inspection.
- This school is part of the Berlesduna Academy Trust, which consists of ten schools.
- The school runs a breakfast club.
- The school makes use of one unregistered alternative provision.

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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the interim executive headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteachers, members of the trust central team, subject leaders, staff, members of the local governing body, trustees and the CEO from the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils’ work. The lead inspector also listened to pupils read with a familiar member of staff.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 behaviour logs, attendance records, pupil records, records of local governing body and trust meetings, school development plans and external quality assurance.
- The inspection team considered the views of parents through responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and parents spoken to during the inspection.
- Inspectors gathered the views of pupils and staff through Ofsted’s pupil and staff surveys, as well as discussions conducted throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Jonny Wallace, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

Vicki Webber

Ofsted Inspector

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