

# Cherry Tree Primary School

Highfield Road, Farnworth, Bolton, Lancashire, BL4 0NS

**Inspection dates** 8–9 May 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- From their low starting points when they join, throughout the school pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' attainment is rising and is now close to average in Year 6. This shows that pupils achieve well.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well because they are well supported and work is carefully planned to meet their needs.
- Teaching is good, and has improved since the last inspection, especially teaching phonics (the link between letters and the sounds they make). Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and make lessons interesting.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They learn and work cooperatively in a calm and caring environment and are very respectful towards their teachers.
- Attendance has significantly improved. Pupils enjoy coming to school, like learning new things and appreciate their friendships.
- The school is well led and managed by a strong and determined senior leadership team. Together with middle leaders and governors, it has successfully tackled weaknesses since the last inspection as well as improved the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Governors know the school well and have worked very effectively in addressing the areas for improvement.
- Parents are very supportive and appreciate that their children are kept safe, are well looked after, are happy and do well.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Tasks and activities do not always stretch pupils to achieve to the very best of their abilities, especially the most able.
- Pupils are not always given enough time to think carefully about the questions they are asked before they have to answer. As a result, opportunities to deepen pupils' understanding are sometimes overlooked.
- Governors' understanding of how pupils' standards of achievement compare with those in other schools is still developing.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons or parts of lessons, as well as the teaching of small groups of pupils, the nurture group and sessions aimed at helping pupils to learn to read. Two observations were carried out with the executive headteacher.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read from Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, and held discussions with pupils from across the school. Pupils' work in books was scrutinised during lessons and separately with the executive headteacher and head of school.
- Inspectors considered 10 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), as well as the school's own information on parents' views. Meetings were held with 11 parents and one-to-one meetings with five parents took place. Inspectors also took account of 47 questionnaires completed by members of staff.
- A telephone conversation was held with the school's independent consultant and a meeting was held with the school's independent sports coach.
- Two meetings were held with three governors, including the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body.
- Various school documents were examined. These included: the school's review of its own performance and development plans, records of the school's checks on the quality of teaching, reports to the governing body, data on pupils' progress, external evaluations of the school's work, records of pupils' attendance, behaviour records and safeguarding documentation.

## Inspection team

Lenford White, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Terry Bond	Additional Inspector
Louise Murphy	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Cherry Tree is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is more than twice the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children that are looked after by the local authority.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups, or who speak English as an additional language, are below the national average.
- An above average proportion of pupils leave or join the school other than at the usual time in the Reception Year. Many join with special educational needs. The number of pupils joining that speak English as an additional language, or with little or no English, is increasing.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Since the previous inspection, the school's senior leadership team and governing body have been reorganised and a number of staff have left the school.
- The school is part of The Orchards, a federation of three schools. Its partners are the Orchards Nursery School and Green Fold Special School. The schools share two sites. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage share accommodation with the nursery school on the lower school site, while all other Cherry Tree pupils share accommodation with the special school at the upper school site. All three schools share the same executive headteacher but are subject to separate inspections.
- During the inspection, significant building work was taking place on the upper school site.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club managed by the governing body.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is outstanding and, in so doing, raise levels of achievement across the school even further by:
  - making sure that tasks and activities always stretch all pupils to achieve to the very best of their ability, especially the most able
  - ensuring that pupils are given the time they need to think carefully about the questions they are asked before they are required to answer, in order to deepen their understanding of what they are learning.
- Improve the effectiveness of governance even further by ensuring that governors develop an even better understanding of how pupils' achievement compares with that in other schools.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Reception class with very weak skills in all areas of learning. Good teaching, strong partnership with parents and interesting activities which engage their curiosity, all help to ensure that they make good progress. However, the majority enter Year 1 with skills and abilities which are lower than those typical for their age.
- In Years 1 and 2, effective support tailored to the needs of pupils from a wide range of ability groups ensures pupils continue to make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. School data and inspection evidence show that levels of attainment currently in Year 2 are much higher than in previous years. Year 2 pupils are now working at levels similar to those expected nationally.
- Pupils' achievement between Years 3 and 6 is rapidly improving and is now good. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 is on a secure rising trend. In 2013, for example, Year 6 standards in reading and writing, although below average, were much improved on those reached in 2012. School data and inspection evidence show that, by the end of Year 6, standards attained by pupils currently in Year 6 are now close to those expected for their age. This represents good overall progress from their starting points.
- Changes to staff in Key Stage 2 have helped to strengthen the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good. Pupils' achievement is, therefore, continuing to improve.
- Achievement in reading has improved significantly and pupils make good progress across the school. Pupils' knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) has improved because the quality of teaching has been strengthened. Pupils who read to inspectors said that they enjoy reading books from a range of authors. Less-able pupils use their phonic skills well to identify and read unfamiliar words.
- The school's renewed focus on improving pupils' skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar and providing a better range of challenging activities, including for the most able, is helping to raise achievement in writing.
- In mathematics, pupils achieve well. Pupils, particularly the most able, enjoy applying their calculation skills to activities that enable them to solve real-life problems.
- The most able pupils are increasingly been given more challenging tasks during lessons. Even so, tasks and activities still do not always stretch them to achieve to the very best of their ability.
- Experienced, well-trained teachers ensure that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make at least good progress from exceptionally low starting points.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium make good progress. In Year 6 in 2013, the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals was in line with that of similar pupils nationally. Within the school, the gap between their attainment and that of pupils who are not eligible was much narrower than the gap between these two groups nationally, being just one term behind their classmates overall in reading, writing and mathematics. Eligible pupils currently in Year 6, are less than one term behind and this shows that any gaps are continuing to close.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted well. Over several years, the school has ensured that any gaps between the attainment of boys and girls are narrower than those found nationally.
- The attainment of pupils from minority ethnic groups is at least as good as that of their peers. The school works well with a number of partners to ensure that pupils who speak English as an additional language and those new to English are able to access learning as quickly as possible.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is consistently good, with some that is outstanding, and has rapidly improved since the previous inspection. Joint planning between teachers with the same year groups and with teaching assistants helps to ensure that good practice is shared and that pupils

achieve well. Teachers have high expectations as to what pupils are capable of achieving and ensure that tasks and activities interest and challenge them.

- Pupils very much enjoy learning. Pupils in Year 1, for example, found it difficult to contain their excitement when asked to name the kind of animal that 'helps us to make jumpers and scarves', and an animal that makes a 'neigh' sound. Despite their excitement, they sensibly put their hands up to share their ideas and listened carefully to each other.
- Most teachers set pupils a variety of different tasks during lessons. In mathematics in Year 5, for example, five groups of pupils solved number problems of varying degrees of complexity using games, different methods of calculation, flip charts and various resources from around the classroom. All groups were fully challenged to make their best possible progress, with pupils describing their activities as 'tricky'. However, this good practice is not always as evident. Teaching does not always make sure that the work set challenges pupils enough to achieve to the very best of their ability, especially the most able.
- Most pupils know how well they are doing in their learning, and what they need to do to be even better. After their work is marked, pupils are allowed time to read teachers' comments and to add their own contributions.
- Teachers ensure that all pupils access tasks and activities during lessons. Good support for pupils with English as an additional language, for example, enables them to quickly participate in learning alongside their classmates.
- Pupils are effectively helped to develop their confidence in speaking in class, such as Years 1 and 2 pupils were reading and writing about bats. Pupils were asked to find out and prove whether bats were likely to attack people or not. After a very careful reading, one pupil clearly expressed that 'Bats may seem frightening, but they are really very timid.'
- Pupils are not always given the time they need to think carefully through their answers to questions before being asked to share their thoughts with their classmates. This sometimes slows progress because their understanding of what they are learning is not always probed deeply enough.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This includes during lunchtime, at breaks, when moving around the school, during breakfast club and after-school clubs and when in class. Pupils enjoy coming to school, as evidenced through their average, but much improved attendance; they like learning new things, appreciate their friends and are very respectful towards their teachers.
- Behaviour is consistently well managed by staff who work exceptionally well to ensure that pupils, some of whom find it difficult to manage their own behaviour, make a positive contribution towards the calm and orderly atmosphere of the school.
- Pupils are well mannered. They wear their school uniform with pride and are very polite and welcoming towards visitors. Older pupils are very mature, and relish the opportunities that they have to take on responsibilities, for example as play leaders and reading buddies.
- Pupils, staff and parents all agree that behaviour is good. School records show that behaviour is typically good over time. Pupils are confident in talking to adults about any concerns that they have and say that they like the 'feelings boxes' because they allow them to post any worries to their teachers.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that bullying is rare, and always dealt with. They know how to look after themselves and keep themselves safe. Pupils conducted themselves impeccably during the inspection when playing outdoors, despite building work taking place.
- The Internet Safety Week helps to ensure that all pupils have a good understanding of dangers and risks when online. Older pupils know that cyber-bullying can take place on social networking sites, mobile phones and hand-held games. They know they should never share information about themselves on the internet and should always seek adult advice if they are unsure about anything.

- Pupils have a good understanding of different forms of bullying and know that it is unfair to treat anyone differently because of their skin colour, religion, where they are from or what they look like.
- The school's 'Children and Families team' helps to ensure that all pupils, especially those whose circumstances might make them most vulnerable, are safe and well cared for. Regular visits from community police officers, firefighters and discussions during the Anti-bullying and Friendship Week, all help to ensure that pupils understand how to avoid unsafe situations.

## **The leadership and management are good**

- The executive headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher, supported by committed governors and loyal, industrious staff have worked tirelessly to improve standards for pupils.
- The recent reorganisation of the senior leadership team, including the appointment of a permanent deputy headteacher, has helped to strengthen the quality of leadership since the last inspection.
- Middle leaders, including those responsible for leading subjects, work well together as a team. They play a crucial role in improving both the quality of teaching and pupils' attainment. For example, they assess the quality of teachers' marking and feedback to pupils, share what they learn from training courses with colleagues and report their work directly to governors.
- The leadership of teaching is good. Senior leaders have taken decisive action to eradicate all teaching that was not good enough, and to support teachers and teaching assistants through well-targeted training.
- Arrangements to manage the performance of staff are good. Teachers are held to account for their performance. They are set challenging targets as part of their appraisal. In addition to this, teachers' classroom performance is regularly observed and the work in pupils' books is carefully reviewed. No teacher is awarded a pay increase or promotion unless they can demonstrate their contribution to improving pupils' achievement.
- Pupils' experiences are widened through a well-thought-out curriculum that they find exciting. Pupils in the Reception Year and Year 1, for example, participate in the toy workshops and puppet theatre. Older pupils get to meet a Roman soldier and observe a magic show. Leaders ensure that through the provision of such activities, pupils are given plenty of opportunities to develop their reading, writing and mathematical skills.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils are very considerate towards each other, and towards pupils in Green Fold Special School. Pupils' spiritual development is enhanced through assemblies, some of which are led by the Sister from the neighbouring church. Pupils have opportunities to play various instruments, including brass and percussion, and regularly visit museums and theatres.
- The new primary school sport funding is being used profitably to provide additional activities and has increased pupil participation in a wide range of sports. It has for example, enabled the school to form a competitive girls' football team.
- The school has very strong partnerships with parents. Parents were very eager to share their exceptionally positive views about the school with inspectors. They say that they are listened to and that they are kept well informed about their children's progress.
- The school works very effectively in partnership with an independent consultant, who advises senior leaders and governors through the raising achievement group. The local authority led a very recent whole-school review of teaching and learning. These partnerships have helped to bring about improvements since the last inspection.
- Safeguarding procedures are followed closely and meet requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors know the school well. They keep themselves abreast of new developments in education through regular training and this, in turn, helps them to hold the school effectively to account in key areas. Governors receive regular reports from senior leaders and middle

managers, which gives them a good understanding of how well the school is improving.

- Governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching across the school because they spend time observing teachers and talking to pupils about their work. They have taken decisive action to ensure that all teaching is good and continues to improve. They make sure that procedures to manage the performance of teachers are securely in place and know that pay awards are linked to teacher performance and pupils' progress.
- Governors know that the funding for extra support that they have endorsed is helping to ensure that there is very little difference between the performance of pupils supported through the pupil premium and their classmates. However, their understanding of how well the school's performance compares to that of other schools is not yet fully developed.
- Governors know that the primary school sport funding is successfully improving pupils' participation in sport and effectively promoting their health and well-being. They are not fully clear whether it is also helping to develop the skills of teachers in leading sporting activities so that improvements are sustainable.



## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	105187
<b>Local authority</b>	Bolton
<b>Inspection number</b>	442328

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	376
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Laurie Williamson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jane Grecic
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 January 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01204 335883
<b>Fax number</b>	01204 333034
<b>Email address</b>	head@theorchards.bolton.sch.uk

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