

Roydon Primary School

Epping Road, Roydon, Harlow, CM19 5HN

Inspection dates 9–10 July 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good		2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding		1
Quality of teaching	Good		2
Achievement of pupils	Good		2
Early years provision	Good		2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The head of school, senior leaders, governors and the academy trust provide strong leadership. They ensure good teaching and achievement in this improving school.
- The governors have a thorough knowledge of the school. They and the Chief Executive Officer for the trust are well informed and know how to move it forward.
- Teaching is consistently good across both key stages and the early years. Teachers are ably supported by an effective team of teaching assistants. Consequently, pupils are making good progress and standards are rising.
- Disadvantaged pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress throughout the school.
- Teaching in the early years is effective in ensuring most children make good progress, reach a good level of development and are well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They behave impeccably in and out of lessons, where they are invariably highly attentive.
- The school's arrangements to ensure pupils' safety are exemplary. As a result, pupils say they feel safe and understand how to stay safe.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contributes very effectively in helping them to behave exceptionally well.
- Senior leaders' action to encourage and reward regular attendance has raised pupils' rate of attendance to above average.
- The school links very well with the secondary academy and the other primary schools in the trust to share good practice and training opportunities.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is less effective in ensuring pupils' progress and attainment in writing than in reading and mathematics.
- Teachers do not always make the work for the most-able pupils demanding enough. Consequently, some of these pupils are not reaching the higher levels of attainment in the national tests.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors made visits to every classroom to observe behaviour and learning. Four of these visits were with the head of school.
- Inspectors observed and spoke to pupils during playtime, met more formally with a group of Year 6 pupils and listened to groups of pupils read.
- Meetings were held with staff, senior and subject leaders, members of the local board of governors and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) from the Burnt Mill Academy Trust.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including arrangements for safeguarding, information about pupils' achievement and the work in pupils' books.
- The inspectors took account of the 17 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). The inspectors evaluated the responses from 10 staff questionnaires. Inspectors also took account of a parental questionnaire carried out by governors.

Inspection team

Gillian Bosschaert, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Gillian Walley

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school is part of the Burnt Mill Academy Trust. It became part of the academy trust in December 2013.
- The head of school has delegated responsibilities for areas of leadership and management, achievement, behaviour and the quality of teaching within the school. The CEO has responsibilities across all trust schools and is a member of the school's governing body.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is well-below average. The pupil premium is additional funding provided by the government for pupils who are known to be eligible for free schools meals or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well-below average.
- Children enter the Reception class on a full-time basis from the beginning of the academic year in which they reach age five.
- Year 3 has two classes instead of one, as in other years. This is to accommodate a local authority request for additional places.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that pupils make the best possible progress and attain higher standards by:
 - improving writing in both key stages so that it matches pupils' progress and attainment in reading and mathematics
 - setting more demanding work for the most-able pupils to challenge them and extend their learning in reading, writing and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The head of school, other leaders and governors lead the school effectively. They are committed to making it outstanding. The school is constantly improving and its track record of successful change shows that its capacity for further improvement is good.
- Leaders have successfully moved the school forward since it became part of the academy trust. They have established an ethos which gets the best from pupils and staff. As a result, teaching has improved and pupils' behave exceptionally well and want to learn.
- Checks take place regularly on the quality of teaching. Senior leaders give individual feedback to teachers on how to improve their practice. Leaders also give general feedback to staff on their performance at staff meetings. Links with the academy schools in the trust enable staff to observe others teaching and to be observed themselves. Consequently, staff fully understand what good practice in teaching involves and their own practice has improved from the training opportunities they receive. These effective systems for managing teachers' performance have brought about rapid improvement in teaching across the school.
- Subject leaders are effective. They work alongside teachers and are themselves observed teaching to help raise its quality in their subjects. They have had good opportunities to increase their skills through training, much of which has been provided through the academy trust. Subject leaders regularly review pupils' books. As a result, they make sure that school requirements are followed, work is consistently well presented and standards are kept up.
- Leaders use the pupil premium effectively to support the few disadvantaged pupils individually or in small groups. The impact of this work is carefully monitored to ensure that it is having the positive impact on pupils' learning. Regular meetings to assess all pupils' progress take place each half term and ensure that disadvantaged pupils are making good progress. Teachers are held accountable for the progress of every pupil in their classes.
- The school makes sure that the small numbers of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Progress is thoroughly monitored and confirmed to ensure equal opportunity for all pupils across the school.
- The school's evaluation of its performance is accurate. The school development plan identifies the correct areas to be improved. Regular evaluation shows how much progress has been made towards key objectives. The school and the academy trust review developments regularly and closely. Consequently, improvements are confirmed and any failings are tackled directly.
- The curriculum is well planned and engages pupils effectively in their learning. Stimulating learning opportunities promote the outstanding behaviour seen inside and outside classrooms. An extensive range of activities, clubs, trips and visits – including sport, music, drama and culture – enhances the curriculum. For example, pupils have the opportunity to develop an understanding of the culture and music of Brazil and, for homework, enjoy making festival costumes.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Consequently, pupils respect each other and adults, behave exceptionally well at all times and care for others across the school. Their personal development is reflected in their mature outlook and sense of personal responsibility. Discrimination is not tolerated. British values are thoroughly considered in assemblies and classrooms. The importance of democracy is emphasised through elections to the school council, its formal agendas and minutes of its deliberations. Pupils' familiarity with British values and extensive opportunities throughout the school to debate issues of concern prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- The primary sports funding is used effectively to promote pupils' better health and well-being. A full-time coach gives support of high quality to developing sport across the school. All classes experience a wide

variety of sports, including rugby, netball, athletics and football. The sports coach works closely with the academy's director of sports in the primary phase to liaise and contribute to work across the academy schools. Swimming is made a priority for exercise and health. For example, the academy trust arranges a swimming gala at the Stratford Olympic Pool in which many of the school's pupils compete. All pupils are taught to swim in Year 3 and any individuals who cannot swim by Year 6 are given additional lessons to ensure they are able to do so before leaving primary school.

- Leaders have ensured that attendance has risen to be above average. They give pupils special awards to celebrate 100% attendance. Classes are rewarded weekly for the highest attendance. The effective drive to improve attendance includes leaflets that are distributed with the message, 'It's cool to be at school.' A governor has special responsibility for attendance to ensure it remains a high priority. The trust employs two education welfare officers who pursue persistent absentees and, together with the school's own efforts, the result has been a considerable improvement in attendance.
- Communication with parents is good. Parents are welcomed into the school. There is a parents' forum with representatives from each class. This arrangement gives an additional voice to parents to discuss and communicate with the head of school and governors. Regular newsletters from the head of school and another from governors keep parents well informed. As a result of the school's efforts to involve parents, those who express a view acknowledge the school's successful work on behalf of their children.
- The close support of the trust is making a positive difference to the school's success. The helpful advice and challenge from its CEO has helped the school to move forward rapidly.
- Leaders ensure staff are aware of the procedures to keep pupils safe from harm and pupils are kept exceptionally safe in this school. Safeguarding requirements are met.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is effective. Governors are ambitious for the school and have established strong systems to make sure it is effectively governed. Roles, responsibilities and delegated powers are clearly understood. The CEO of the trust communicates and effectively organises activities among the schools to extend good practice. The school's local governing body and the trust have open communication and clear lines of accountability. Arrangements ensure that everyone knows the school's strengths and areas to develop and can explain priorities convincingly.
 - The local governing body is well informed about the quality of teaching and fully understands the link between teaching and pupils' achievement. Decisions on the rate of teachers' pay are determined by the progress and achievement of the pupils for whom they have responsibility. The CEO and members of the governing body set appraisal objectives for the head of school and staff.
 - One governor has special responsibility for evaluating the impact of the pupil premium on eligible pupils and does so effectively.
 - The governing body has a good understanding of the information on pupils' progress and attainment.
 - The trust ensures that all statutory requirements are met, including safeguarding. The Chair of the Governing Body has undertaken training to ensure the recruitment of staff involves thorough checks on their suitability. All appointments are made together with other members of the trust, who are also well trained. The trust sets common policies and procedures for the school and the other schools involved.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils' behaviour in classrooms, around the school and outside the building is exemplary. They are invariably willing to work hard to succeed and are very attentive to their teachers.
- Pupils enjoy their learning. For example, a crossing patrol officer, new to the area, remarked that she had never seen pupils so eager to get to school. They happily chatted and had no trouble separating from their parents.

- Pupils respect each other and all the adults. All staff respect the pupils and seek their opinion and help. There is a culture in which everyone is encouraged to share their work and air their views.
- Opportunities to work together and teachers' questioning to encourage pupils' participation in learning engage pupils fully in the learning process. Consequently, pupils take considerable responsibility for their learning and behaviour. They quickly become engrossed in the tasks they undertake and respond well to the help provided by teachers and teaching assistants.
- Pupils get on very well with one another. They accept criticism without fuss and use it as a learning tool. They happily work together and support one another in the classroom and at break times. Older pupils willingly look after the youngest and befriend the new intake each year.
- Parents, staff and pupils are overwhelmingly positive about the standard of behaviour in the school. Parents are encouraged to take an active part in their children's learning at home. This helps parents to understand exactly what their children are doing and gives them the opportunity to emphasise its importance.
- Pupils are proud of their school, their work and their teachers. Their books are well kept and they make neat handwriting and overall presentation key priorities.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils have a well-developed understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They say they feel very safe and well cared for in school. One pupil was heard to say, 'You wouldn't believe how many times we go over cyber bullying!' This shows how seriously the school takes this matter and the effort it puts in to ensuring pupils know what to do should it occur.
- Pupils of different ages are adamant that they are safe from bullying and the school's records confirm this. Older pupils have produced 'bully proof shields' to remind pupils what is meant by bullying and what to do about it. These reminders are at strategic places around the playground and inside the building.
- All pupils, including the youngest, are aware of 'stranger danger'. Older pupils attend a safety day when all forms of danger, including electrical dangers, are considered. Older pupils are taught to ride their cycles safely on the road; the youngest pupils are able to explain how to use the railway crossing and the danger of not obeying the red signals.
- Parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, confirm that they are confident the school deals with bullying well and their children are kept safe. Staff are equally convinced the pupils are safe.
- Attendance has steadily improved and is above average. Absences are quickly pursued and pupils who move away are not taken off roll until it is confirmed that they have been enrolled at another school. All visitors are carefully checked when entering the site and escorted off it.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved since the school gained academy status. The school's records of the monitoring of teaching and pupils' work in their books reflect this improvement and pupils' good achievement.
- All staff have received appropriate training to bring about rapid improvement in their practice. Some of this training has been shared with other schools in the trust and some has come directly from the school itself. Training opportunities have helped teachers and other staff to enhance and refresh their skills. The impact is evident in the good progress pupils are making. However, teachers do not yet consistently challenge the most-able pupils with demanding work to enable them to reach the higher levels of attainment consistently.

- Teaching assistants have received training specific to their needs. They contribute well to pupils' learning, especially in phonics (sounds and corresponding letters). Teachers and teaching assistants use their questioning skills effectively to encourage pupils to think carefully, extend their learning and enable staff to test pupils' understanding. Teaching assistants complement the work of teachers well.
- Mathematics is taught well. Pupils are given practical situations in which to extend their problem-solving skills. For example, pupils were encouraged to calculate the perimeter for different animal cages in the zoo. Pupils found these learning activities challenging and stimulating, and were able to extend their mathematical skills.
- The good teaching of reading enables pupils to read well, enjoy reading and discuss favourite stories and authors. Older pupils develop their skills by writing a synopsis of what they have read. Reading diaries are kept up to date and older pupils have to maintain their own diaries with three entries each week. If they fail to do so, they are required to write up their diaries in school. Stimulating books are provided in a well-equipped library and teachers frequently require pupils to read in lessons in different subjects to enhance their skills.
- The teaching of writing has been a school focus. However, it has not yet had the same impact on pupils' standards as the teaching of reading and mathematics. Pupils are getting more opportunities to write and their skills in writing are developing. Spelling is taught by reminding pupils of spelling rules then applying the rules to similar words. This practice reinforces their understanding of phonics and improves the accuracy of their spelling.
- Teachers ensure that disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported in full classes and individually. Effective support helps them to make good progress.
- The marking policy is applied consistently well across the school and pupils are given opportunities to respond to marking. Senior leaders closely monitor pupils' books to ensure that all are given advice on how to improve their work and that all corrections and improvements are followed up by teachers.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment is rising in both key stages. In Key Stage 1 in 2014, standards were above average overall. However, standards in writing were lower than those in mathematics and reading. The school's information on Key Stage 1 results in 2015, which have been confirmed as accurate by the trust, shows improvement in all subjects compared with 2014.
- Attainment in Key Stage 2 in 2014 was average overall. The school's analysis of results in 2015 shows marked improvement in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school's information on its performance in 2015 shows pupils have made good progress across Key Stage 2 in all subjects. Progress in writing showed further improvement from that of 2014. Inspectors' observations of learning and scrutiny of pupils' books endorsed the school's evidence of progress during the last year.
- There were too few disadvantaged pupils in 2014 to report their progress and attainment without identifying individuals. Inspection findings show that the progress of disadvantaged pupils is carefully checked to ensure that the pupil premium is used effectively to support them. As a result, all disadvantaged pupils were seen to learn successfully and make good progress in line with their classmates in all subjects.
- The few disabled pupils and those with educational special needs make good progress across the school. Their learning needs are rapidly identified and pupils are well supported throughout the school with one-to-one tuition and work in small groups.
- The most-able pupils make good progress and achieve well. However, too few reached the higher levels of attainment in the end of Year 6 tests in 2014. More reached the higher levels in 2015, as shown in the

school's own analysis of pupils' attainment and progress. The links and training opportunities across the trust's schools have improved the teaching of the most-able pupils, especially in mathematics. Nevertheless, not all who are capable of reaching the higher levels are yet doing so.

The early years provision

is good

- Children in the early years make a good start to their education in school. Most children leave the Reception class with good levels of development from starting points that are no more than typical for their age. They are well prepared and equipped to enter Year 1.
- There are close links with parents and effective liaison with nursery providers. These partnerships ensure children settle quickly into the Reception class.
- The children are well taught by staff, who all work well together. The staff have an accurate understanding of how children learn and provide interesting activities to capture their enthusiasm and interest. They combine to plan learning and to assess what the children achieve. They have an accurate view of how well the children are progressing, which has helped them to focus improvement in attainment where needed.
- Relationships among children and staff are warm and happy. Consequently, children gain a love of learning in a safe, secure environment. Adults know the children well and ensure that activities are purposeful and well focused, and that children are fully involved in their learning.
- Children behave very well and show excellent attitudes to learning. They listen attentively to staff and concentrate well on what they are doing. For example, a group using sweets of different colours to count and then halve the number were fully involved in discussion with a partner; they paid no attention to the inspector walking around.
- The children have many opportunities to write inside and outside the classroom. A group seen writing were able to compose sentences unaided. Adults had only to offer simple reminders about finger spacing and full stops for these reminders to be rapidly applied. Questioning by adults ensures children are clear in what they are to learn and confirms their understanding.
- Staff check children's progress regularly and use this information to plan activities to extend children's learning. Staff work effectively to meet the needs of individual children. Any disadvantaged or vulnerable children are well supported and make good progress. Children's progress is captured in highly informative learning journeys, which tell a detailed story of the interesting and varied learning experiences that children experience every day.
- The early years is well led. Staff are well trained. They have benefited from liaison with the other schools in the trust and share ideas and good practice.

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

Unique reference number	139399
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	450016

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	201
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tracy Seymour
Head of school	Gill Doyle
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
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