

Inspection of Briary Primary School

Greenhill Road, Herne Bay, Kent CT6 7RS

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 February 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

The headteacher of this school is Kate Espley. This school is part of the EKC Schools Trust Limited, which means other people in the trust also have a responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Tammy Mitchell, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Graham Razey.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are thriving at this inclusive, nurturing and successful school. There is a keen sense of community, which results in happy staff and pupils. The school has high expectations and staff create an environment where respect and kindness are commonplace. Each pupil is known as an individual and pupils have strong, trusting relationships with each other and with staff.

Pupils are confident, articulate and well behaved. Pupils know they can talk about any concerns they might have and that these will be dealt with swiftly. Disruption is rare, so pupils can concentrate and focus on their learning. They work hard and produce work of high quality.

Pupils are well motivated to assume a wide range of roles across the school. They enjoy these responsibilities and feel that they are making an impact on their school community by helping others. For example, the 'restorative justice' mentors support friendship issues. Sports leaders set up playground activities and the school council has created a 'buddy bench' to provide support for their peers when needed.

Wonderful manners are displayed across the school by pupils. Teachers praise pupils through the Golden Globe awards and gold book certificates. Consequently, pupils are keen to impress and enjoy coming to school.

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

The school is focused on providing the aspirational educational experiences they want pupils to have. There are high expectations for pupils' academic success. In recent years, leaders have adapted the curriculum to ensure that key knowledge is identified in each subject. Careful thought is given to the sequence of learning, so it is logical and enables pupils to build their understanding over time.

Staff have excellent subject knowledge because of the ongoing focused professional development. They help pupils to explore new ideas and embed their learning. The explanations of teachers are clear and help to model the key skills they expect pupils to learn. There are regular opportunities for pupils to revisit the concepts they have learned. This helps pupils to remember their key vocabulary and mathematical concepts over time.

Staff support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to access the curriculum. Any additional support is carefully structured to help all pupils, including those with SEND, succeed. The school works effectively with a range of external specialists, parents and carers to help all pupils to achieve well.

Children get off to an excellent start in the early years. The setting ensures that they develop independence and curiosity through engaging activities. There is a strong focus on children developing communication and language skills. In addition, leaders have recently introduced a new phonics programme to help children learn to read

fluently. This new programme is set out so that children get off to a secure start. They learn to read and write the sounds straight away. Teachers receive regular training and support to teach reading well. They use this information to adjust lessons so that pupils can practise their skills at the appropriate level.

The way the school assesses and checks pupils' understanding in some subject areas, including phonics, is still relatively new. Recently introduced strategies are starting to have a positive impact in identifying any gaps pupils have in their knowledge and skills. The school recognises that there is more to do to ensure that these checks are consistent across every subject.

A love of reading is promoted well around the school through story time and in the choice of books on offer. Pupils are keen to talk about the diversity in the books that they choose and speak with great enthusiasm about reading. Pupils enjoy the stories and poems that their teachers share with them.

Pupils across the school show excellent behaviour during lessons and at playtime. This starts in early years, where staff help children to understand routines and expectations. This helps children settle into school quickly. They learn to express their thoughts and ideas through craft activities. Pupils demonstrate an eagerness to learn across the school and lessons take place without interruption.

Attendance is a high priority. The school offers support to families in removing barriers that might be stopping pupils from coming to school. Plans are in place to continue to strengthen this work to improve the attendance of pupils who are absent too often.

The school prides itself on its inclusive culture. Staff and pupils are proud to be a part of their school community. Pupils have many opportunities to broaden their understanding of the world around them. They develop a profound understanding of fundamental British values, such as democracy and the rule of law. Pupils understand how to demonstrate these values in their daily lives. There are respectful attitudes towards diverse cultures and faiths embedded throughout the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some areas of the curriculum, including phonics, staff are still developing ways of checking pupils' understanding and knowledge systematically. This means that pupils sometimes have gaps in their learning and do not always learn as much as they could. The school should continue to provide training and support for staff to ensure that they use the assessment checks being put in place.

- Some pupils are not yet attending school as regularly as they should. As a result, they are missing out on crucial learning. The school needs to continue to strengthen its actions to support improvement in the attendance of these pupils.

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	147751
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10296464
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	295
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Graham Razey
CEO of trust	Tammy Mitchell
Headteacher	Kate Espley
Website	www.briary.kent.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined the EKC Schools Trust Limited in March 2020.
- The school recently appointed a new headteacher in January who is temporarily supported by an executive headteacher for two days a week.
- The school currently does not use any registered alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- During this inspection, inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leadership team, teachers, support staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors, and with the chair of trustees. She also had a meeting with the chief executive officer.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography, design technology and physical education. In each subject, inspectors met with subject leaders, talked to pupils, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector listened to some pupils read to adults. Other aspects of the school's curriculum were also considered.
- 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.
- The inspection team took account of a range of other information, including the school's development plans, school policies and governor and trustees minutes.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the free-text comments that were submitted. They also took account of the responses to the confidential staff survey and gathered the views of both staff and pupils throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Numera Anwar, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Leah Morgan	Ofsted Inspector
Lesley Fisher-Pink	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024