

Inspection of a good school: Benyon Primary School

Tyssen Place, South Ockendon, Essex RM15 6PG

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 May 2024

Outcome

Benyon Primary School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Samantha Oxley. The school is part of Catalyst Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Tony Parfett, and overseen by the board of trustees, chaired by Lea Tyler.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school community is warm and friendly. Pupils are polite and courteous, especially to visitors. They are safe and know that adults are there to help and support them. Most pupils behave well. However, a small number of pupils need more support with their behaviour than others. These pupils get the support they need, which is having a positive impact on their behaviour.

Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning. They enjoy the activities they complete and the topics they learn. Staff have high expectations of pupils and challenge them with their effective questioning. In lessons, there are lively discussions which enable pupils to explore their thinking even further. As a result, pupils develop a deep understanding of topics.

Pupils' physical and mental well-being has been a focus. Most pupils access sporting competitions and events. Sports teams complete regular training and have been successful in local competitions. Some of the older pupils are mental health champions or part of the BP team. They are available to support younger pupils on the playground with a variety of activities, for example dancing, colouring in, or playing in the mud kitchen. Pupils, therefore, have active and well-supported playtimes.

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

The school has a well-planned curriculum. It builds carefully on pupils' knowledge to ensure that they have a clear understanding of all topics. Pupils revisit key knowledge. This helps them to remember it. Subject leaders across the trust evaluate curriculum

documents regularly and adjust, as necessary. They have regular time and a clear focus to check that the curriculum is being delivered as they intend. They are available to support teachers through professional development opportunities if this is needed.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They work with other teachers in the trust to ensure that curriculum plans are clear and detailed. They use carefully thought-out questions to encourage discussions in all subjects. As a result, pupils' confidence and knowledge develops even further.

Pupils' love of stories and books starts in the nursery and continues through the school. The school uses a range of high-quality texts, covering a variety of authors, topics, and cultures. Pupils enjoy exploring texts as well as comparing them to other texts they know well. Children start learning phonics in the Reception Year. Staff are well trained and, therefore, deliver high-quality phonics lessons. They regularly check that pupils are making progress. Staff ensure that additional support is in place if needed. As a result, pupils read books carefully matched to their ability. This allows them to practise letter sounds and develop their reading skills. It supports them to become more fluent and confident readers.

There are many opportunities for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The trust has ensured that there is a wide range of training for staff regarding pupils with SEND. In some lessons, pupils with SEND have their learning adapted to meet their needs and to ensure they are making progress. However, sometimes this does not happen. Staff do not always check that the right extra help is in place for pupils with SEND.

Most pupils are engaged and focused on their learning. However, some pupils need to be reminded about the expectations that the staff have of them. Pupils respond well to these reminders, but they can quickly forget and need to be reminded again. There is some variation in how some teachers use rewards and consequences. This can confuse pupils. The school carefully investigates and monitors the causes of more serious behaviours to ensure that these are not repeated.

Over the past year, attendance has significantly improved. This is due to the effective level of support that is in place for individuals and their families to ensure that pupils attend regularly.

The school carefully plans wider opportunities for pupils alongside curriculum plans. These include a range of trips, visitors or workshops coming into the school, music festivals and themed days. Pupils value these experiences because they get to learn new skills.

The school and trust work well together. They carefully consider how they can share the workload, which in turn supports staff well-being. Many staff appreciate the open-door policy that the school has and how supportive it is. A few staff are unhappy with the way that the school and trust work. However, the school is aware of this and are putting in measures to support staff. Trustees and governors know the school well and the role they play in its continued development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school has not checked that the new systems and processes for pupils with SEND are having the desired impact or being used in the correct way. As a result, pupils with SEND do not always make as much progress as they could. The school must ensure that adaptations and interventions are used effectively and consistently well to support the learning and progress of all pupils with SEND.
- There are variations in how the rewards and sanctions systems are used. This means that some pupils do not strive to gain rewards and are not deterred from misbehaving. The school should ensure that there is a consistent approach to how all staff use the rewards and consequences systems so that pupils understand these and behave well.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2015.

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	139382
Local authority	Thurrock
Inspection number	10323730
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	406
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Lea Tyler
CEO of the trust	Tony Parfett
Headteacher	Samantha Oxley
Website	www.benyonprimaryschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Catalyst Academies Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's educational provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke with the chair of governors, the chair of trustees and the chief executive officer of the trust.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and history. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited

a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of work.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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 inspector gathered the views of pupils by speaking to them during lessons, in the dining hall and at breaktimes.
- The inspector spoke to groups of staff, to gather their views of the school. The inspector also considered the response submitted to Ofsted's staff survey.
- The inspector considered 70 responses, including free-text responses, to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. The inspector spoke to parents at the school gate at the end of the day.

Inspection team

Katie Devenport, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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