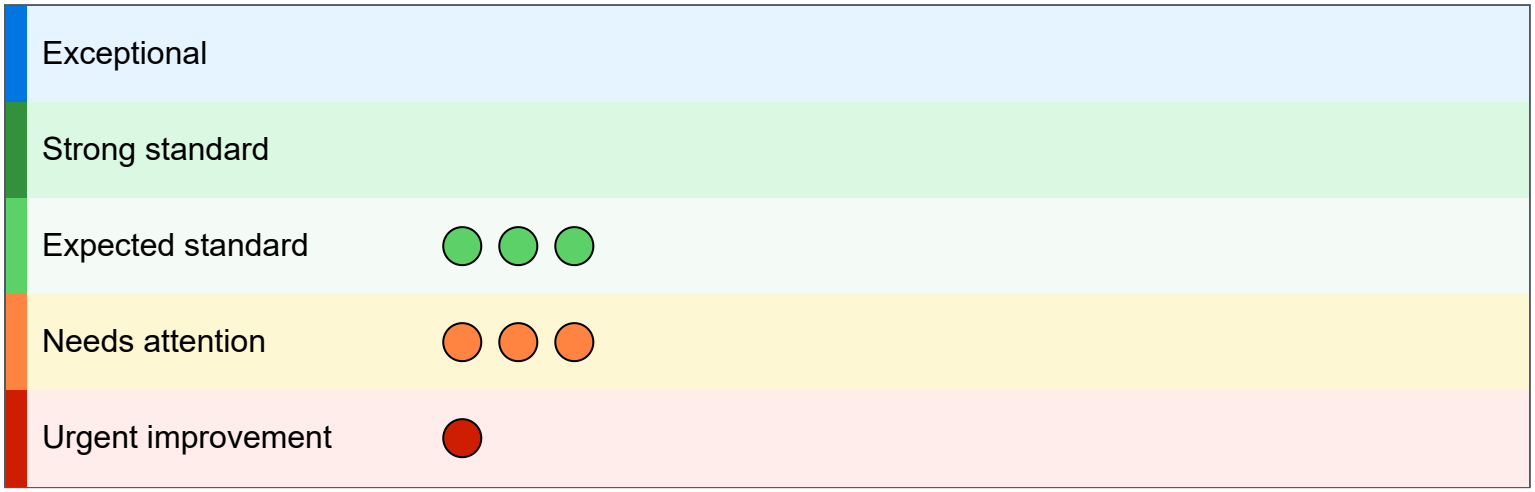
Brierley Forest Primary and Nursery School

Address: Westbourne View, NG17 2HT

Unique reference number (URN): 149209

Inspection report: 2 December 2025



Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met: The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- Not met: The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

⊗ This school requires significant improvement

His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires **significant improvement** because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

Expected standard

Attendance and behaviour

Expected standard

Historically, pupils have not attended school regularly enough. However, leaders' actions are having a positive impact on attendance. While absence rates are higher than the national average, there is a clear trend of improvement. Pupils' attendance increased in the last academic year, and there was a considerable reduction in persistent absence. Current attendance information shows further improvement. Attendance rates are back in line with pre-COVID-19 levels. This improvement is the result of leaders following statutory guidance and doing all they can to raise attendance. They track absence closely and intervene swiftly if pupils are absent, working closely with other professionals when necessary.

Leaders have had a remarkable impact on pupils' behaviour and attitudes. They have established a positive, respectful culture where pupils can be themselves and focus on their learning. Through the 'Brierley Way', staff have consistently high expectations, modelling the school's values for pupils to mirror. Pupils are polite and courteous. They work hard, listening well to their teachers and to each other. Older pupils recognise how much behaviour has improved. The school supports pupils who need help to regulate their behaviour well. Leaders respond to all allegations of bullying or discrimination effectively.

Early years

Expected standard

Most children join the early years with knowledge and skills that are lower than is typical for their age. The well-designed, ambitious early years curriculum takes account of these low starting points and children's needs. Leaders prioritise the areas of learning where children do not have secure knowledge and skills. This enables children to overcome gaps in their learning, so that they are increasingly ready for Year 1.

Children benefit from warm, purposeful interactions with staff. Rich dialogue is commonplace while children are learning and playing. Adults model language well and use open questions to extend children's vocabulary. Children who are behind in their speech and language development receive extra support to help them catch up.

As well as language and communication, there is a sharp focus on reading and writing in the early years. Staff in the Reception Year teach the phonics programme well. They instil good habits from the moment children start to write by teaching the correct sitting position and

pencil grip. The school works closely with parents and carers so the development of literacy and numeracy skills can be supported at home.

Personal development and wellbeing

Expected standard

The school's personal development provision is well rounded. As well as safety being a key theme of the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum, the school teaches pupils how to stay safe through all other subjects. The school enriches its PSHE curriculum with opportunities to learn about the world of work and financial management. It is supplemented further with projects about domestic abuse and policing to develop pupils' understanding of respect and consent. Altogether, this approach provides pupils with the knowledge that they need to lead healthy, happy lives. For instance, pupils talk confidently about diet, exercise and staying safe online. They learn about healthy relationships and understand what it means to be a good friend.

The school's values underpin pupils' character education. Over time, staff deepen pupils' understanding of belonging, caring, resilience and integrity. Pupils know, for instance, that integrity is about doing the right thing, even when no one is watching. Instilling these values so well has had a clear impact on pupils' behaviour and attitudes. Pupils learn about fundamental British values and the differences between themselves and others. They understand right from wrong, and they show empathy to others. Pupils learn about different religions, although they sometimes find it difficult to recall what they have been taught.

The school ensures that all pupils, including those who face additional barriers, benefit from its personal development provision. There are high rates of participation in the school's enrichment offer from pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. There are many leadership roles for pupils, such as reading ambassadors, lunchtime leaders, play leaders, attendance directors and school council members. Clubs are wide ranging, including art, choir, football, judo, polo and mathematics. Pupils enjoy developing their talents, interests and attitudes further through residential trips and outdoor adventurous activities.

Needs attention

Curriculum and teaching

Needs attention

The school does not help pupils with gaps in their foundational knowledge to catch up quickly enough. Many pupils, and particularly disadvantaged pupils, repeat the same mistakes in relation to spelling, handwriting and simple sentence construction. In many cases, staff do not resolve these errors swiftly or effectively. Leaders have identified this weakness, but their work to ensure that pupils master these important basics is at an early stage of development.

Leaders have ensured that there is an ambitious curriculum for all subjects. They check how well the curriculum is being taught and learned. Following the results of the Year 6 tests and assessments in 2025, leaders have identified the curriculum content that pupils find most

difficult. As a result, leaders have adapted the English and mathematics curriculums to better meet pupils' needs. For example, there is now a greater focus on comprehension, grammatical accuracy and problem-solving. However, this work is in its infancy.

Staff generally deliver the curriculum well, exhibiting secure subject knowledge. They model new learning precisely. Staff prioritise communication and language development, helping pupils to express their understanding. Staff adapt the curriculum so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities can access learning.

Inclusion

Needs attention

Leaders' efforts to reduce the barriers to learning faced by disadvantaged pupils are not having enough impact, particularly in key stage 2. While leaders check closely on the progress of their work to support disadvantaged pupils, the school's pupil premium plan does not address disadvantaged pupils' gaps in reading, writing and mathematics well enough. Some staff are unsure about the needs of disadvantaged pupils and how best to support them.

In contrast, the school supports pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. It identifies and assesses the needs of these pupils quickly and accurately. There is a sharp focus on identifying additional needs in the early years so that children get the support they need as soon as possible. Thorough training ensures that staff understand how to support pupils with SEND effectively. Leaders check closely on the effectiveness of the SEND provision, responding well to pupils' evolving needs and working alongside families. SEND support plans are usually precise. The school uses a wide range of specialist support for pupils with SEND, including for speech and language development. Pupils who access the school's Treehouse provision benefit from highly individualised support for their social, emotional and mental health needs.

Leadership and governance

Needs attention

Leaders' actions to raise attainment have not had enough impact. Leaders know that academic outcomes are too low. There are clear plans in place to improve pupils' achievement, but these are at an early stage of development. It is too soon to evaluate the impact of the changes that leaders have made to the curriculum and their work to strengthen pupils' foundational knowledge.

In contrast, leaders have had a sustained, positive effect on many other areas since the school joined the trust in 2022. They have established a safe, respectful culture where pupils behave well and attend more often. Leaders have improved the early years provision and created effective support for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs in the form of the Treehouse.

The trust board and the local governing body provide suitable support and challenge in relation to most aspects of the school's work. They mostly meet their statutory responsibilities. However, trustees and local governors do not have precise oversight of all the ways leaders are trying to improve pupils' outcomes, including closing the gaps for disadvantaged pupils.

Staff benefit from a wide range of professional development, including training on the school's strategies to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. Leaders manage staff's wellbeing and workload carefully. Staff report feeling well supported by leaders.

The school works closely with parents and carers through weekly reading sessions, open mornings and adult learning courses. Many parents praise how the school has improved in recent years.

Urgent improvement

Achievement

Urgent improvement

Pupils do not achieve well enough. Most pupils do not reach the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. In 2024 and 2025, pupils' attainment in these subjects at the end of key stage 2 was significantly below the national averages. Pupils are not well equipped for their move to secondary school.

Very few disadvantaged pupils secure the knowledge and skills they need in English and mathematics, leaving them unprepared for secondary education. Disadvantaged pupils' attainment at this school is much lower than disadvantaged pupils nationally. This gap widened further in 2025.

More pupils are now mastering basic knowledge and skills in reading, writing and mathematics in key stage 1. However, this has not been the case over time. Too many pupils in key stage 2 lack this foundational knowledge. Across the curriculum, pupils do not remember important prior learning. In science and history, for instance, pupils struggle to recall key knowledge from previous years.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

School and trust leaders have improved many aspects of this school in recent times. For example, they have ensured that children in the early years get off to a positive start, and they have established a culture of positive behaviour and improved pupils' attendance. However, leaders have not dealt with other areas of the school that need improvement as quickly or as effectively.

Leaders' work has not had enough impact on pupils' achievement. Teaching does not ensure that pupils gain secure basic knowledge and skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' attainment at the end of key stage 2 remains significantly below the national averages. The attainment of disadvantaged pupils is much lower than other disadvantaged pupils nationally. Leaders have not reduced the barriers to learning faced by disadvantaged pupils well enough.

Based on the shared values of belonging, caring, resilience and integrity, leaders have created a positive, nurturing environment where pupils feel safe, welcome and valued. Pupils say that staff listen to them and treat them with respect. Pupils know that there is help on hand if ever they are worried or upset. The school provides high-quality pastoral support to enable pupils to understand how they are feeling and to manage their emotions.

Pupils' behaviour is calm and orderly. Pupils follow routines and respond well to staff. If bullying should occur, staff deal with it quickly and fairly. Pupils understand the school's expectations and say that behaviour has improved a lot.

Pupils enjoy learning, especially in the early years, where children progress well through the curriculum from their starting points. Pupils appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular activities and enrichment experiences on offer. They make the most of the numerous leadership opportunities available. They fulfil these roles proudly, making an important contribution to school life by helping others. Such opportunities prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

Next steps

• Leaders must ensure that the recent changes to the curriculums for reading, writing and mathematics are embedded quickly and effectively, so that there is a significant, swift and sustained improvement in all pupils' achievement, and particularly for disadvantaged pupils.
• The school must ensure that there is a sharp focus on closing the gaps in pupils' foundational knowledge, especially in writing in key stage 2, so that pupils have the basic skills that they need to succeed across the curriculum.
• The school must ensure that staff identify and resolve pupils’ mistakes swiftly so that pupils’ misconceptions are not embedded and repeated, particularly in relation to spelling, handwriting and sentence construction.
• The school must review and refine its strategy to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils. Leaders must ensure that staff understand where disadvantaged pupils have gaps in their knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics and how these gaps can be closed swiftly and effectively.
• Those responsible for governance must ensure that they have precise oversight of the school’s work to close gaps and improve outcomes, checking closely and frequently on leaders’ progress and holding them to account, so that all pupils, and particularly disadvantaged pupils, are well prepared for their next steps.
• The school must retain its sharp focus on reducing absence so that the improving attendance trend continues and even more pupils attend school regularly.

About this inspection

This school is part of Transform 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), Rebecca Meredith, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Michael Butler.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other senior leaders at the school. They spoke with leaders from Transform Trust, including the CEO. Inspectors also met with a range of staff. Inspectors carried out learning walks across the school in a range of subjects. Inspectors reviewed pupils' work. They met with groups of pupils and observed social times. Inspectors examined a range of school documents relating to the curriculum, behaviour, attendance and governance, as well as the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan.

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Brierley Forest Primary and Nursery School converted to become an academy school in October 2022 as part of Transform Trust multi-academy trust. When its predecessor school, Brierley Forest Primary and Nursery School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.

Headteacher: Sarah Griffith

Lead inspector:
Shaun Carter, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:
Mark Anderson, His Majesty's Inspector
Anne Maingay, His Majesty's Inspector
Jonathan Keay, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

This data is from 2 December 2025

School and pupil context

Total pupils

279
Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

420
Above average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

46.18%
Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

2.51%
Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

26.52%
Well above average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		61%	
2024/25	20%	62%	Below
2023/24	24%	61%	Below
2022/23		60%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		74%	
2024/25	44%	75%	Below
2023/24	33%	74%	Below
2022/23		73%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		72%	
2024/25	40%	72%	Below
2023/24	43%	72%	Below
2022/23		71%	

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		73%	
2024/25	38%	74%	Below
2023/24	45%	73%	Below
2022/23		73%	

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		46%	
2024/25	13%	47%	Below
2023/24	22%	46%	Below
2022/23		44%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		62%	

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25	39%	63%	Below
2023/24	31%	62%	Below
2022/23		60%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		59%	
2024/25	32%	59%	Below
2023/24	41%	58%	Below
2022/23		58%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average		60%	
2024/25	32%	61%	Below
2023/24	50%	59%	Close to average
2022/23		59%	

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference

between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		68%	
2024/25	13%	69%	-56 pp
2023/24	22%	67%	-46 pp
2022/23		66%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		80%	
2024/25	39%	81%	-42 pp
2023/24	31%	80%	-48 pp
2022/23		78%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		78%	
2024/25	32%	78%	-46 pp
2023/24	41%	78%	-37 pp
2022/23		77%	

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average		80%	
2024/25	32%	81%	-48 pp
2023/24	50%	79%	-29 pp
2022/23		79%	

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (1 term)	8.2%	5.1%	Above
2023/24	7.4%	5.5%	Above
2022/23	7.8%	5.9%	Above

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (1 term)	23.8%	14.3%	Above
2023/24	26.8%	14.6%	Above
2022/23	24.1%	16.2%	Above

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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