

Inspection of Cherry Tree Academy

Cobblers Lane, Pontefract, West Yorkshire WF8 2HN

Inspection dates: 30 and 31 January 2024

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Adam Dawson. This school is part of Waterton Academy 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), Dave Dickinson, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Steve Johnson.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have high expectations for all pupils who attend Cherry Tree Academy. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school's expectations are not consistently realised across the curriculum.

Since the last inspection, the school has experienced some turbulence in staffing. Despite this, the curriculum has been redesigned to ensure that pupils' learning builds over time. Staff deliver the curriculum with accuracy and understanding. In some curriculum areas, this work is very recent and its impact is not measurable.

Pupils at Cherry Tree Academy are safe. They behave well in school and at breaktimes. Bullying happens rarely. Adults sort it out immediately. The school has invested wisely in learning resources and the learning environment. This includes step-out spaces throughout the school. These spaces support pupils to reflect on their behaviour and regulate their emotions, when needed.

The school provides a range of extra-curricular clubs. These include singing and sports clubs. Opportunities for pupils to develop and explore their talents and interests are plentiful. The curriculum is enhanced by educational visits. These visits are carefully considered and link to the curriculum well.

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

The school ensures that all pupils become readers. Pupils read in school every day. Reading sessions are delivered by highly skilled adults. They model the sounds that make up words precisely. This supports pupils' phonics development. The books pupils take home to read with their parents and carers are well matched to their ability. This helps to develop pupils' accuracy and fluency when reading. Adults identify when pupils fall behind. The school provides additional phonics sessions, which enable these pupils to catch up quickly.

All curriculum areas have been reviewed by the school since the last inspection. Well-sequenced lessons build on what pupils already know. Teachers revisit pupils' prior learning at the beginning of each lesson. This supports pupils to make links in their understanding. Pupils with SEND, with the support of practical resources such as recording frames, access the same curriculum as their peers. Teachers check pupils' understanding during lessons. Currently, they use this information to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. However, pupils in key stage 2 have too many existing gaps in their knowledge and understanding. These gaps are not being addressed quickly enough. These pupils are not as well prepared as they should be for their next stage of education.

In some subjects, including reading and mathematics, the school checks on the implementation of the curriculum. It uses this information to make changes to the curriculum when needed. The curriculum is effective in these subjects. The curriculum is less effective in the subjects that the school has not checked. In these

subjects, inconsistencies are not addressed and pupils are not learning as much as they should be.

Early years is a strength of the school. The provision is carefully planned. Activities encourage the children to practise and rehearse their learning. Children's understanding is reinforced well. Adults' subject knowledge is thorough. They have an accurate understanding of the next steps needed for children's development. Adults use this understanding very well during their interactions with children. Language is modelled at every opportunity. This extends children's understanding and the range of vocabulary they use.

The school has implemented a range of initiatives to improve pupils' attendance. These are not having enough impact. Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. These pupils miss valuable learning. They have gaps in their knowledge and understanding. These pupils fall behind their classmates in school.

Pupils are taught how to stay safe online. They are aware of the risks that they may face outside school. The school welcomes external visitors to support its delivery of the curriculum. This work aids pupils' understanding, including their understanding of road safety. The school ensures that pupils are accepting and tolerant of others' differences. Pupils talk with confidence and clarity about the importance of tolerance in today's multi-cultural society.

The school has made a number of changes recently, including to the curriculum and its approach to managing behaviour. Staff are positive about these developments. They are well supported through training and professional development. Staff take pride in their work. The school is considerate and aware of the workload and well-being of staff.

The local governing body has been strengthened by the appointment of new governors. Governors provide regular support and challenge. They have assisted the school in identifying areas of its work that require further development. The governors report regularly to Waterton Academy Trust board. The trust deploys resources and staff accordingly.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Too many pupils do not attend school regularly and too many are persistently absent. These pupils miss essential learning and fall behind their peers. The school should develop its work with parents further to ensure that these pupils attend school more often and on time.

- The school has not checked on the impact of some curriculum initiatives. The success of these initiatives is unknown. The school should ensure that systems are put in place to check whether its ambitious vision is being realised across the curriculum.
- Some older pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding. These pupils are not achieving as well as they should. The school must address the gaps in older pupils' knowledge quickly to ensure that they are ready for the demands of secondary schooling.

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	144400
Local authority	Wakefield
Inspection number	10313565
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	257
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Steve Johnson
CEO of the trust	Dave Dickinson
Website	www.cherrytreeacademy.org
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 March 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up post in February 2023.
- There has been a high turnover of staff in the last 12 months.
- The school does not make any use of alternative provision.

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 educational provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The lead inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in the team's evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspectors met with the headteacher and members of the senior leadership team.

- The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body and the trust's CEO.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. The team considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys. An inspector spoke with parents to gather their views and opinions about the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and science. For each deep dive, the inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around school and in lessons. They spoke with pupils to gather their views about behaviour and safeguarding in the school.

Inspection team

Andrew Yeomans, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Shazia Azhar	Ofsted Inspector
Judy Shaw	Ofsted Inspector

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