

Inspection of Charlotte Nursery and Infant School

Trinity Close, Ilkeston, Derbyshire DE7 8LQ

Inspection dates:	23 and 24 April 2025
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since February 2014. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy, warm and welcoming school. Pupils, staff, parents and carers talk about the 'Charlotte family'. The school works hard to establish strong bonds and relationships with families. Pupils are pleased to see visitors. Pupils enjoy telling others about their school and how much they enjoy attending. There is a real sense of community here.

The school has high expectations for pupils to achieve well. While it strives hard, these expectations are not always realised for all pupils. The school has a clear understanding of what it needs to do to improve.

The school's values – THRIVE: teamwork, helpfulness, respect, inclusivity, very hard working, and encouragement – successfully guide pupils in their behaviour and actions. Pupils understand the importance of equality and diversity. They play excitedly together on the playground. The presence of the school dog, Doris, encourages pupils to be caring and thoughtful individuals.

The school is keen to ensure that pupils have access to a wide range of experiences. For example, the 'Charlotte beach' brings a taste of the seaside to the school. Trips to places such as theatres, wildlife parks and bakeries enrich pupils' learning. Pupils enjoy coming to this school.

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

Learning to read is a priority at this school. Children begin to learn to read as soon as they join in the Reception Year. Staff apply a consistent approach to the teaching of reading. Regular checks on how well pupils are learning to read ensure that pupils keep up. Should they fall behind, additional support helps them to catch up. The school provides a wide range of high-quality texts for pupils to read. These books also enhance and enrich the wider curriculum. Pupils enjoy reading and can read fluently when they leave school in Year 2.

The school has established an ambitious curriculum. It has identified the key knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. In key stage 1, this connects and builds learning over time. The school has not ensured that the curriculums in early years and key stage 1 connect cohesively. This sometimes means that teachers are not clear on how to build on what children learn in the early years.

Teachers' subject knowledge is typically strong. In some subjects, teachers revisit previous learning. This helps pupils to remember what they have been taught. However, in some subjects, approaches to check what pupils know and remember are not well defined. This means that teachers do not always have a clear understanding of how well pupils have retained key knowledge. This makes it difficult to identify gaps and adapt teaching accordingly.

The school has ensured that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of mathematics. Teachers consider the needs of pupils, including those with special

educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders regularly check that mathematics is taught consistently. However, the school has not ensured that some subject leaders have the expertise to collate information to evaluate the effectiveness of their subjects. In some subjects there are inconsistencies in approaches to teaching.

Children settle well into the early years. Staff focus on ensuring that children develop clear routines. Children have positive attitudes to their learning. They interact well with each other. The environment is lively and productive. Children enjoy their learning. Relationships between staff and children are warm and caring. However, the early years curriculum lacks the precision and clarity necessary to ensure that children secure key foundational knowledge. Staff do not always direct children well to further develop learning.

The school identifies the needs of pupils with SEND well. The specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND provides bespoke learning pathways. This ensures that many of these pupils learn and progress well through the curriculum. Occasionally, support for some pupils with SEND in the mainstream classrooms is not as effective as it could be. At times, teachers do not adapt tasks appropriately for these pupils so that they do well over time.

Expectations for pupils to behave well are high. Pupils live up to these expectations. They move around the school calmly, holding doors open for each other. Playtimes are joyful. Pupils are polite to each other and to adults. The school's more rigorous approach to challenging low attendance has improved attendance significantly. Pupils enjoy coming to school.

The school is ambitious to promote pupils' personal development well. There are a range of clubs on offer. Pastoral support is of a high quality. Visitors, such as African drummers and visitors with a range of creatures for science, enrich the curriculum.

The school is considerate of staff's well-being. Staff feel cared for. However, turbulence associated with staffing has slowed the rate of progress. This has prevented the school from fully implementing its intended improvements.

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 subjects, the early years curriculum is not fully considered when designing subsequent learning in future year groups. This leads to gaps in some pupils' understanding. The school should ensure that curriculum progression is carefully

mapped and builds on prior learning from early years to support pupils in developing a deep and coherent understanding across all subjects.

- In a few subjects, approaches to check what pupils know and remember are not well defined. At times, teachers do not have a clear understanding of how well pupils have retained key knowledge, making it difficult to identify gaps and adapt teaching accordingly. As a result, some pupils struggle to build on prior learning. The school should ensure that approaches to check what pupils know and remember enable teachers to accurately evaluate pupils' understanding, identify misconceptions, and use this information to inform future learning and teaching.
- At times, support for some pupils with SEND is not as effective as it could be. Adaptations to teaching are sometimes not specific enough to ensure that pupils with SEND can access the curriculum. This means that some pupils with SEND do not achieve as well as they could. The school should ensure that teachers have the expertise needed to adapt teaching so that all pupils with SEND can access the curriculum successfully.
- The early years curriculum lacks the necessary precision and clarity to ensure children secure key foundational knowledge. This means children often lack the knowledge to be successful in their learning both in early years and as they move into Year 1. The school should consider the early years curriculum carefully to ensure it clearly identifies the steps in learning children make through this part of the school.
- The school has not ensured that all subject leaders have the expertise to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of their subjects. This means that some subjects are not yet fully developed and there are inconsistencies in implementation of these subjects. The school should strengthen subject leadership practices in this area and ensure greater consistency to deliver greater school-wide progress.

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	112575
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10347349
Type of school	Nursery and Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	292
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rebecca Castledine
Headteacher	Emma Pitman
Website	www.charlotte-school.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 February 2014, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection there has been a new headteacher and senior leadership team.
- There has been significant staff absence recently.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, geography, computing and physical education. For each deep dive, 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. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector met with a representative of the governing body.
- The lead inspector met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. Inspectors spoke informally with parents outside the school.
- 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.
- Inspectors considered pupils' behaviour at various times of day, including in lessons, around the school site and at lunchtime. They scrutinised the school's records for attendance and behaviour.

Inspection team

Mark Anderson, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
George Huthart	Ofsted Inspector
Amanda Greaves	Ofsted Inspector

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