Inspection of Culverstone Green Primary School

Wrotham Road, Meopham, Gravesend, Kent DA13 0RF

Inspection dates:	24 and 25 June 2025
The quality of education	**Requires improvement**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Requires improvement**
Early years provision	**Good**
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is James Bernard. This school is part of the Golden Thread Alliance 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), Garry Ratcliffe, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Philip Vander Gucht.

What is it like to attend this school?

Culverstone is a happy and vibrant school community. Pupils enjoy attending this caring and kind school. They feel supported and listened to by staff. Pupils are confident that staff will act swiftly on any worries or concerns that they may have. Pupils are highly positive about each other and the staff who support them.

The school has high ambition for pupils' achievement. Pupils are motivated to learn and behave well. However, across a range of subjects, pupils do not achieve as well as they should. This includes pupils who are disadvantaged, such as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils love the opportunities provided in school to take on responsibilities. Roles such as membership of the school council, house captains and play leaders are deeply valued by pupils. Pupils see these roles having a meaningful impact in the school.

The school offers a range of experiences to explore other faiths and perspectives. Pupils appreciate these and are open-minded, and they welcome learning about different cultures. They are particularly proud of their roles in welcoming pupils into the school community. Pupils relish the broad range of clubs that provide opportunities to nurture and explore their talents and interests.

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

Children benefit from a strong start in the Reception class. The school has designed a well-sequenced curriculum for the early years. Staff deliver the curriculum effectively and children achieve well. They also develop warm and caring relationships with adults and each other. They understand the importance of kindness and sharing, which they show through their conversations and play. Consequently, children leave the Reception class ready for their next stage of education.

The school has established a broad and ambitious curriculum. Across subjects, they have set out what pupils should learn from the Reception class to Year 6. The school has effective approaches in place that identify the needs of pupils with SEND. However, some pupils with SEND do not receive effective support. This hinders how well they access and progress through the curriculum.

In some subjects, teachers design learning activities that cover the key curriculum content and build on what pupils know. In these subjects, teachers revisit earlier learning, which helps pupils to retain important knowledge over time However, in too many other areas the school has not ensured that teachers are equipped with the expertise to adapt learning activities that sufficiently secure pupils' knowledge. As a result, pupils do not learn as well as they could in a number of subjects. This limits how well prepared pupils, especially those with SEND, are for their next stage of education.

Reading is a school priority. Most pupils read books that are carefully matched to their phonics knowledge. Staff receive the guidance they need to teach phonics effectively.

Pupils that need extra reading support have help in a prompt and effective way. This means they close gaps with peers swiftly and achieve well. Pupils love reading and have access to a broad range of books. These books introduce them to stories, characters and authors from a diverse range of cultures. Consequently, pupils read widely and often and have a broad appreciation of the power of reading.

The school promotes consistently good behaviour. From the Reception class onwards, pupils are taught to use their language skills. They resolve disagreements and express their emotions using these skills. Pupils' attitudes towards school are highly positive. They interact respectfully, leading to a welcoming learning environment. Though attendance has improved, some pupils who are disadvantaged miss too much learning. The school is working with families to improve this, but there has not been sufficient progress.

The school promotes pupils' personal development well. Pupils are encouraged to be inclusive and thoughtful modern citizens. The school prioritises teaching pupils about physical and mental health to help them grow in confidence. They learn about social justice through reflective assemblies. Pupils have a broad understanding of the world around them. This is because of carefully planned opportunities throughout their school life. Pupils are supported with a comprehensive range of residentials, trips and workshops that build a strong sense of community and understanding.

Leaders at all levels are focused on improving the quality of education that pupils receive. Staff turbulence has slowed the progress made with this. Governors and the trust actively support and hold the school to account. They have a detailed understanding of the progress being made to improve pupils' learning. Staff feel well supported by leaders, and many value being consulted prior to changes being made.

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 ensured that staff have sufficient guidance and knowledge to adapt learning effectively for pupils with SEND. As a result, these pupils are not supported to access the curriculum as well as they should. The school should ensure that teachers are equipped with the information, knowledge and expertise to be able to make effective adaptations to learning so that pupils with SEND achieve well.
- In a number of subjects, some of the learning activities that pupils experience do not build up their understanding of the key knowledge set out in the curriculum. As a result, some pupils' knowledge is insecure, and they do not learn as well as they should. The school should ensure that teachers are equipped to design learning activities that sufficiently cover the curriculum key content, so that pupils achieve well in these subjects.

- Pupils who are disadvantaged do not attend school often enough. This means that they miss key learning and do not achieve as well as they should. The school should establish effective systems that ensure disadvantaged pupils attend school regularly so that all pupils are fully prepared for their next stages of education.

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	142346
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10379895
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	204
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Philip Vander Gucht
CEO of the trust	Garry Ratcliffe
Headteacher	James Bernard
Website	www.cgps.kent.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	27 and 28 February 2024, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up post in September 2024.
- The school currently uses one unregistered alternative provision.
- The school is part of the Golden Thread Alliance. The school joined the trust in January 2023.

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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection team met with the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers and pupils. The lead inspector met with the members of the governing body, including the chair of governors and representatives of the trust, including representatives of the trustees and the CEO.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education and religious education. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in history, modern foreign languages, art and design and science.
- For each deep dive, inspectors 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 pupils' work. Inspectors also reviewed pupils' work from a range of other subjects.
- 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 observed behaviour in lessons, at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils as well as talking to pupils in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the school day. They considered the views expressed in Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of staff and considered the responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Toby Martlew, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Paul Bateman	Ofsted Inspector

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