

Inspection of The Trinity School

Carris Close, Colchester CO4 6ED

Inspection dates:	7 and 8 May 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Mark Orrin. This school is a member of the Alpha 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), Gillian Marshall, and is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Laurence Jones.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are very well prepared for adulthood at The Trinity School. The exemplary personal development offer provides them with a plethora of opportunities to broaden their range of interests. Pupils enhance their learning by taking part in a super-curriculum that includes topics of interest from sharks to the right to vote. Pupils attend an impressive range of clubs, including games, music and sports. Pupils develop their resilience and sense of teamwork when they participate in residential trips and inter-house activities. Pupils meet a rich variety of employers and higher and further education providers. These give pupils the knowledge, skills and confidence to make informed choices about their future careers.

The school has very high expectations of all pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils receive high-quality teaching that helps them meet these ambitions. Most pupils work hard, strive to do their best and achieve well. A minority of pupils do not have such positive attitudes to learning, and they do not always attend as well as they should.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves healthy and safe, for instance, on waterways and roads. They understand important topics such as managing their 'digital footprint' and consent.

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

The school provides all pupils with a broad, ambitious curriculum. Staff have thought carefully about what, how and when pupils need to learn important knowledge. Staff use their strong subject knowledge to introduce new content clearly and engagingly. Teachers recap on previous learning so that it sticks in pupils' memories. They usually check pupils' learning rigorously. They frequently use these checks to adjust the curriculum, closing any gaps and correcting misconceptions. Teachers know the needs of pupils well. When necessary, they make effective adaptations so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities can access the curriculum successfully. As a result, pupils usually develop a real breadth and depth of knowledge. Most pupils produce high-quality work across the curriculum.

The school understands the importance of literacy and oracy for pupils. Staff teach new vocabulary clearly so that pupils can apply it in their work. They model how to read and provide pupils with structured opportunities to talk about their learning. Pupils read widely. Staff carefully check how well pupils can read. They provide extra tailored support for pupils that may need it. This helps pupils become fluent and accurate readers.

Pupils say that this is a school where it is safe, and normal, to be different. They know that if they have any concerns, or if anyone treats them unkindly, adults will support them and address any issues robustly. Staff usually apply the school's behaviour policy well. Pupils work hard and engage positively with learning. On occasion, when the policy is not followed as consistently, a few pupils disrupt the learning of others. Some groups of pupils do not attend well enough. The school is taking effective steps to help these pupils improve their attendance, and this is beginning to have an impact. The school uses

pastoral support and alternative provision increasingly effectively to support pupils' well-being and improve their attitudes to learning.

Pupils understand the importance of looking out for each other and treating everyone equally. In English, for instance, a diverse range of texts introduces pupils to relevant social issues and the importance of diversity. Pupils contribute to the life of the school in many ways. They can be prefects, subject ambassadors and members of the 'eco-committee'. Older pupils help younger pupils improve their reading. Pupils increasingly demonstrate the school's values of 'integrity, tenacity, ambition' as they strive to be the 'graduates, leaders and entrepreneurs of tomorrow'.

The school is commendably ambitious for all pupils. Staff embrace the school's positive, inclusive ethos. They receive high-quality professional development and are very well supported with their workload. Consequently, staff greatly enjoy working here. Trustees and governors provide robust challenge to ensure that the school, as it grows, provides a high quality of education for pupils.

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 some small groups of pupils engage with learning as well as their peers. This means that a minority of pupils do not have positive attitudes to school and do not attend well enough. The school should build on the work it has started to improve the attendance and attitudes to learning of these pupils.

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	143701
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10295089
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11 to 15
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	598
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Laurence Jones
CEO of the trust	Gillian Marshall
Headteacher	Mark Orrin
Website	www.thetrinityschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected under section 5 or section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The Trinity School admitted its first pupils in September 2021. Until the end of the 2022-23 academic year, pupils were taught on The Gilbert School's site. In 2023-24, due to building works caused by the presence of reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) at The Gilbert School, Year 7 pupils from that school were also educated on this site. This academic year is the first year where solely Trinity School pupils have been educated on this site.
- The school currently educates pupils from Year 7 to Year 10. When the school is full, it will educate pupils from Year 7 to Year 11.
- The school currently uses two registered and five unregistered alternative provisions for pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

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 the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector spoke to the trust CEO, trustees and members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, geography and design technology. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, 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 and visited a range of lessons.
- 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.
- Inspectors held meetings with a range of leaders, including the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator.
- The lead inspector met with early career teachers and staff involved in the induction of new teachers.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of records relating to behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors spoke with several groups of pupils and observed their behaviour at breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors considered the responses and free-text comments received during the inspection to Ofsted Parent View. They took account of responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Steve Woodley, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Rob James	Ofsted Inspector
James Chester	Ofsted Inspector

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