

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: St Catherine's CofE Primary School

Moorland Road, Launceston, Cornwall PL15 7HX

Inspection dates:

15 and 16 October 2024

Outcome

St Catherine's CofE Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The executive headteacher of this school is Louise Hussey. This school is part of An Daras Multi 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, William Hermon, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Stephen Tavener. The executive headteacher is responsible for this school and one other.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Catherine's is a highly supportive, nurturing and aspirational school. Pupils experience a broad curriculum that stretches beyond learning in the classroom. Right from the early years, pupils are happy, inquisitive learners. Pupils understand how the 'learning powers', such as 'resilience' and 'resourcefulness', help them to solve problems and overcome challenges.

The school wants all pupils to experience success. The high ambition the school has for its pupils reflects this. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils are well catered for at the school. Pupils meet the school's high expectations.

Pupils get on well together. Playtimes are happy and pupils cooperate with one another in lessons. There are kind, caring relationships between pupils and staff. As a result, pupils trust staff to help them when needed.

Pupils embrace the range of leadership opportunities that the school provides for them. These include being on the school council and representing the school on the town's youth council. The school provides pupils with a range of clubs that help them to develop their talents and interests. These activities include sport, music and mindfulness clubs.

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

The school is united in its ambition to do the very best for every pupil. This ambition starts with reading. Staff expertly deliver the phonics programme, beginning in the early years. They identify pupils who start to fall behind and provide appropriate support for them to catch up. Teachers select reading books that match pupils' stage of development. Pupils read fluently and develop into confident readers. Pupils talk enthusiastically about reading.

The school has designed an ambitious and broad curriculum. This runs from the very start of the early years through to Year 6. It has identified the key knowledge and vocabulary that pupils should learn in each subject. Teachers deliver learning in a well-ordered manner. They use their knowledge of the subjects they teach well and explain new concepts with clarity. Teachers check pupils' learning effectively. They use this information to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. For example, in mathematics, if pupils do not fully understand a topic, teachers revisit previous learning to address pupils' misconceptions quickly. This enables pupils to build their confidence and understanding. Beyond mathematics, there are times when pupils already have a secure grasp of a concept but staff do not move pupils on to their next steps soon enough. This holds some pupils back.

The school quickly identifies the needs of pupils with SEND. It seeks advice from external specialists when needed. Staff give pupils with SEND all the help that they need to follow the same curriculum as their peers. These pupils participate in everything that the school provides. Teachers adapt lessons so that pupils receive the help they need to access the curriculum. The school provides additional resources for pupils who need them. This helps pupils with SEND grow in confidence and independence. Pupils with SEND thrive at this school.

Pupils' behaviour is calm and positive around the school. They want to learn. Staff care about pupils and help them to succeed. Pupils attend school well. The school works tirelessly to remove any barriers to attendance. The school ensures families have external support to help them improve attendance if required. Pupils demonstrate the school's values of respect, care and kindness throughout the school day.

Pupils' personal development is at the heart of the school's work. The school applies its deeply embedded values to ensuring that every child develops the personal characteristics needed to become active, responsible members of society. The school places a strong emphasis on broadening pupils' understanding of the modern world. Resources in school, visits away from the school and visitors to the school provide a wealth of experiences for pupils. As a result, they demonstrate mature attitudes towards equality and diversity.

Pupils aspire to take on one of the many roles available to help out at school. These range from helping at lunchtime to caring for the school's bee colony by becoming beekeepers. The school places a high value on supporting pupils' mental health and well-being. It works with mental health professionals to build pupils' confidence and self-esteem.

Staff are happy and proud to work at this school. They appreciate how leaders consider their workload and well-being. Trustees and governors support the school well. They provide effective support and challenge. Everyone works well together to maintain standards at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Assessment is not used with enough precision to identify what pupils already know. As a result, pupils are not always taught new concepts as soon as they are ready. Therefore, some pupils do not build their knowledge as well or as quickly as they could. The trust needs to refine the approach to assessment so that learning is adapted, when necessary, to enable all pupils to learn well across the curriculum.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in April 2019.

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	142804
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10344718
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	220
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Stephen Taverner
CEO of the trust	William Hermon
Headteacher	Louise Hussey (Executive Headteacher) Pippa Warner (Head of School)
Website	www.stcatherinescofe.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	25 and 26 April 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a Church of England school, within the Diocese of Truro. The last section 48 inspection of the school's religious character took place in May 2022. The next inspection will take place within five years.
- The headteacher is also headteacher of Lew Trenchard CofE Primary School.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.
- There is a before- and after-school club managed by the school.
- The school has provision for two-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the head of school, the special educational needs coordinator, trust leaders, trustees and a representative from the diocese.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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 inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at social times. He spoke with different groups of pupils to discuss their views of the school, their learning, and their behaviour and safety.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. He also took into consideration the responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Mark Burgess, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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