

Inspection of Coverack Primary School

School Hill, Coverack, Helston, Cornwall TR12 6SA

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 May 2024

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

The head of this school is Jane Talbot. This school is part of Aspire 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, Vanessa Bragg, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Penny Shilston.

What is it like to attend this school?

Coverack is a happy and friendly place. In the words of one pupil, 'We are a small school but a big family.' Staff know pupils and their families well. Parents and carers value the school's caring ethos.

Since the last inspection, the trust has supported the school heavily to make many positive changes. Its actions have been timely and wide ranging. For example, younger pupils now learn in a stimulating and engaging environment designed to enhance their learning. However, it is too soon to see the full impact of the curriculum changes on pupils' knowledge in the long term.

The school has improved pupils' behaviour in recent times. This is because it has raised expectations of how pupils should behave in lessons. In addition, learning is now mostly well matched to pupils' needs. Their attitudes to learning are highly positive. Pupils play well together on the playground and the field. Bullying is rare.

Pupils enjoy many positive experiences beyond the classroom. They pursue their interests through clubs. The school ensures that cost is not a barrier to these. Pupils learn to be part of a team through representing Coverack in sports tournaments.

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

After a long period of decline, the school has started to improve the quality of education. With the exception of early reading, the trust identified that the curriculum was not fit for purpose and needed a complete rebuild from early years to Year 6. It has done so through partnerships with other schools as well as using the expertise of its leadership team. Actions have been briskly paced but with due consideration of workload so as not to overwhelm the small teaching team.

There has been significant training for staff. They have been trained in methods of effective teaching. The trust has helped to ensure that staff have the appropriate subject knowledge and understand the new curriculum plans. This has resulted in a higher ambition for what pupils can achieve.

Staff have embraced the trust's support. They have worked hard to implement the new curriculum as leaders intend. Teachers provide work closely matched to the curriculum's aims. They take into account the different needs within the mixed age classes. The impact can be seen in pupils' recall of their most recent learning. For example, pupils talk in detail about why the Vikings invaded Britain.

Nevertheless, due to the historic weaknesses, pupils still have significant gaps in their knowledge in the wider curriculum. They have difficulty connecting new learning to previous content. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). On some occasions teachers do not address misconceptions that pupils have. Consequently, gaps in knowledge persist.

Furthermore, the school does not know how well pupils are learning across the curriculum, for example in religious education. Therefore, it is not able to make changes to plans or approaches so that pupils learn consistently well across all subjects.

Reading has continued to be a strength. From the moment they start school, children learn to read well. Staff have the expertise to quickly identify any pupils who fall behind. They precisely identify the gaps in knowledge and give extra support and practise in these areas. Consequently, pupils catch up and keep up.

Provision for pupils with SEND has improved. There are now more effective systems for the early identification of pupils. This means they swiftly receive the adaptations they need to learn alongside their peers. The impact of this work is not yet evident over the long term.

Pupils develop their character through residential. They learn about beach safety through visitors to the school. However, while the school has an emphasis on diversity throughout its curriculum, its impact is limited. Pupils' knowledge of faiths and cultures different to their own is not secure.

The trust, including the local hub council, has an accurate view on the quality of education. They make regular checks on the schools to ascertain its progress.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In the wider curriculum subjects, pupils have significant gaps in their knowledge and understanding due to the historically weak curriculum. As a result, they are not always able to build effectively on what they already know and make connections to their learning. The trust needs to ensure that staff adapt their teaching to address the gaps in knowledge or misconceptions so that pupils know more and remember more.
- In many subjects, the curriculum is too new to see its impact. The school is not sure how well pupils are learning in these subjects. The trust needs to ensure they monitor how well pupils are learning in these subjects so that they can be sure of its impact and make changes accordingly.
- The personal development curriculum does not promote pupils' understanding of different cultures and faiths well enough. This means that they are not fully prepared for life in modern Britain. The trust should ensure that the curriculum enables pupils to develop a secure understanding of the diverse nature of modern Britain.

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	140630
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10322279
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	28
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Penny Shilston
CEO of the trust	Vanessa Bragg
Headteacher	Jane Talbot
Website	www.coverackschool.org
Date of previous inspection	18 July 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Aspire Academy Trust.
- The head of school took up her post in September 2023.
- The school is made of up of two classes.
- The school does not use any 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 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.

- Inspectors met with trust executive leaders, the head of school and other senior leaders, groups of staff, groups of pupils, the chair of the trust and members of the hub council.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics 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 spoke to staff and looked at samples of work in other curriculum areas.
- 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 observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- An inspector spoke to parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, staff survey and pupil survey.
- There were too few children at the time of inspection to award a separate grade for the early years provision.

Inspection team

Jason Edge, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Marcus West

Ofsted Inspector

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