

Inspection of a good school: Sennen Community Primary Academy

Sennen, Penzance, Cornwall TR19 7AW

Inspection date: 12 January 2022

Outcome

Sennen Community Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love to attend this happy school. They thrive in the caring environment. Staff know pupils well. Pupils always try their best as they know this is what is expected of them. The school is at the centre of the local community. One pupil told inspectors, 'School is like part of my family.'

Pupils, parents and staff agree that pupils behave well. Learning is rarely disturbed. Pupils are kind, thoughtful and have respect for others. Leaders understand the challenges that some pupils face. They put in place individualised approaches to enable all pupils to succeed. Pupils struggle to remember an occasion when bullying happened. They are confident that adults would help them if it did happen. Parents appreciate the warm welcome they receive from leaders each morning on the playground.

All staff are passionate about pupils being the best they can be, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have planned the curriculum to ensure that pupils build knowledge in a logical order. Pupils have opportunities to apply and extend their learning through regular work on the beach and in the woods.

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

Leaders have considered what they want pupils to know and remember in the curriculum. They ensure that knowledge builds in a way that makes sense to pupils. Pupils find lessons interesting. Teachers are passionate about their subjects, inspired by leaders.

Some middle leaders are at the early stages of understanding their roles. They are not yet sure of the quality of the curriculum in their subject area. Leaders are aware that they will need support to develop into confident and competent subject leaders. Some teachers do not use assessment effectively across the wider curriculum.

Leaders place a high value on books. They use them as prizes as part of the behaviour system. Pupils enjoy reading. They often bring in books from home to share with

teachers. Children in the early years foundation stage get off to a flying start. They learn phonics from their first day.

Staff leading phonics sessions quickly identify pupils who need more support. This enables these pupils to receive help to catch up. Pupils improve because their books contain letters and sounds that they are familiar with. Teachers read regularly to pupils. Teachers have identified appropriate texts that link to the curriculum well. Leaders have delivered parent workshops so that parents understand how the school teaches early reading.

Pupils with SEND achieve well. Their individual needs are identified at the earliest opportunity. Teachers receive helpful information from leaders of SEND, which enables them to make appropriate adaptations to pupils' learning. Parents feel well supported in helping their children to be successful.

Leaders place a high priority on developing pupils' independence, resilience and communication skills. Pupils have a wealth of opportunities to apply these skills in real-life contexts through the forest and beach sessions. Pupils take part in a range of trips to the local area and beyond. Leaders are keen to ensure that pupils have high aspirations for their future. They aim for pupils to understand the world beyond their homes. Pupils develop musical interests well through guitar and piano tuition. They know about the importance of valuing others, regardless of their background. Mutual respect is a strong feature of the school.

Staff praise leaders for being considerate of their well-being. Staff feel lucky to be part of a school where leaders value them as individuals. 'A small school with a big heart' is a typical view from staff. Leaders' evaluation of the school is accurate. Governors have accessed a range of helpful training and have the required skills to know what the school needs to do to improve further. Leaders are appreciative of the support provided by the trust.

Parents are proud to send their children to Sennen Primary. They appreciate the balance of nurture and high expectations. One parent, whose view represented the views of many, commented, 'I can't imagine a better place to send my child to school.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils feel safe. All staff understand the process for reporting concerns. Staff carefully monitor pupils who they know to be at risk. Referrals are completed in a timely manner. Pupils receive support from external agencies where needed.

Leaders ensure that accurate records are kept about people who work in the school. Governors have the required skills to check that safeguarding procedures are working well.

There are opportunities planned into the curriculum for pupils to learn about risks in their local area, for example knowing how to keep safe on the beach.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some middle leaders do not monitor the quality of the implementation of the curriculum in their area of responsibility well enough. As a result, they are unclear what the next steps should be to improve the subject further. Leaders need to ensure that all subjects are equally well led and managed so that pupils get the very best education across the whole curriculum.
- Assessment strategies have not been refined as part of the wider curriculum. As a result, teachers are unclear about what knowledge pupils have remembered over time. Leaders need to ensure that there are processes for teachers to check that knowledge has been transferred into pupils' long-term memory.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Sennen School, to be good in October 2013.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	144894
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10212136
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	87
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Dan Shannon
Headteacher	Nichola Smith
Website	www.sennen.cornwall.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy and joined the Truro and Penwith Academy Trust in September 2017.
- The school is organised into mixed-aged classes, apart from the Reception class.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision for pupils.

Information about this inspection

- This is 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 met with the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, members of the staff team, parents, and representatives from the trust and governing body.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors checked the procedures for keeping pupils safe.
- The 23 survey responses from parents were considered.
- Inspectors met with pupils and staff to gather their views and find out what is it like to be part of the school.
- Inspectors looked at the school's plans for improvement, minutes of governors' meetings, monitoring documents and reports from the trust.

Inspection team

Jane Dennis, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Mark Burgess

Ofsted Inspector

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