

Inspection of a good school: St Mellion Church of England Primary School

Church Lane, St. Mellion, Saltash, Cornwall PL12 6RG

Inspection date: 4 May 2023

Outcome

St Mellion Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at St Mellion Primary School are vibrant and positive representatives of their school community. They talk with pride and enthusiasm about their education and their school experience. The 'Parable of the Talents' alongside the 'Bring it!' vision underpin the school ethos. Leaders want the very best for the pupils in their academic and wider development. Pupils value the dedication that adults give to this.

Pupils have a wide range of opportunities to enrich and extend their learning in the classroom. This comes through the 'adventurous curriculum' and links with other schools in the trust. These experiences strengthen pupils' learning about respect for others, independence and self-awareness. Pupils are well prepared for the next steps in their education.

Expectations of pupils are high. Pupils know and respect these. Staff model their expectations clearly. Pupils mirror these in their own conduct and actions. They behave well and they have positive attitudes to learning. Pupils show care and tolerance of each other across the age groups. They support each other in their play and in their learning. Pupils, staff, parents and carers say that the school feels like a family. 'We all nurture each other', was a comment made by one pupil and others agreed.

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

Leaders provide a rich and ambitious curriculum for pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), right from the start. It is designed to give children in Nursery and Reception a secure foundation in their knowledge and skills across all areas of learning. This prepares them well for key stage 1 and beyond. The development of the outdoor nursery is a successful addition to the offer for the youngest children in school. Leaders have been creative in their design of the Class 1 learning spaces. As a result, children grow in confidence and curiosity through the well-thought-out use of adults and space. Learning meets the needs of the range of ages and stages in

the class group. Staff build on children's use of language and vocabulary, which continues through to the older pupils in the next class.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They receive regular training on different aspects of the curriculum. This keeps them up to date in their knowledge and expertise, so they can skilfully adapt learning to meet the breadth of the national curriculum in the mixed-age classes. There are some areas in the wider curriculum where this is not as well embedded. Learning is not always as well thought out as it could be. Pupils remember facts they have learned successfully. However, they are not always able to make links across their learning, and with prior learning, to deepen their understanding.

Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND learn the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. However, this is not always as successful as it could be. Leaders have not ensured that the adaptations teachers make are as precise as they need to be. Consequently, adaptations to learning do not always overcome specific barriers that are a result of pupils' special educational need. Some targets are too broad. Parents and pupils do not have enough say in what their support and targets should be.

Leaders prioritise reading. Staff deliver the phonics programme with accuracy. Children start to learn phonics in Nursery. Pupils have regular phonics and reading lessons. This helps them to practise and secure their reading skills. Leaders ensure there is additional support for pupils who struggle to read. This helps them to become more confident and fluent readers.

The wider development of pupils is a strength of the school. Leaders ensure that enriching pupils' learning is not limited by the size of the school. There are effective links with the partner school and the wider trust. As a result, pupils get the best possible opportunities and experiences to enhance their learning. Pupils have a secure understanding of the world around them. They learn about fundamental British values and how these impact on their lives. Where necessary, the support for pupils who find managing their emotions difficult is carefully adapted. This helps them to find and develop strategies that work for them in the long term. Other pupils are accepting of this and recognise why it is needed.

Those responsible for governance understand their roles well. They check that leaders' actions have the biggest impact on pupils. Governors ensure leaders deliver school improvement priorities with sensitivity to staff well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders provide up-to-date training. This makes sure staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to keep pupils safe. Staff know pupils and their families well. However, they ensure that this does not lead them to be complacent and they remain alert to potential concerns. Leaders complete appropriate checks during recruitment for new members of staff.

Pupils learn how to keep safe as part of the curriculum. They know how to stay safe online and manage other potential risks. This helps them to feel safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders recent work to improve the wider curriculum is not as embedded and established as it is for subjects in the core curriculum. Pupils are not secure in making links across their learning, and with prior learning, to deepen their understanding. Leaders should continue to embed the ambitious curriculum and ensure it is effective, so that pupils achieve the best possible outcomes and remember more over time.
- The provision in place for some pupils with SEND is not as precise as it needs to be. As a result, pupils with SEND do not always get the support they require to learn as successfully as they could. Leaders must ensure that the systems in place are more bespoke to pupils' needs, so that all staff know what is most effective to overcome barriers to learning. Leaders also need to consider the voice of pupils and parents more in the process of establishing the support needed and reviewing the impact it has.

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 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, St Mellion Church of England VA School, to be good in July 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.

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	148696
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10287474
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	37
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Sue Morrish
Headteacher	Jon-Joe Wilson
Website	www.st-mellion.cornwall.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- St Mellion Church of England Primary School converted to become an academy school in September 2021. When its predecessor school, St Mellion CofE VA School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is part of the St Barnabas Church of England Multi-Academy Trust.
- The executive headteacher has been in post since January 2023.
- The school does have provision for three- and four-year-olds.
- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school. Pupils are organised into two mixed-age classes.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The school is a voluntary-aided Church of England school. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in December 2017.

Information about this inspection

- This was 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 executive headteacher, subject and phase leaders from the trust, the special educational needs coordinator for the trust, and members of the local governing body, including the chair. In addition, an inspector talked to the school's improvement lead and the trust's chief executive officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- An inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- Inspectors considered how well the school protects pupils and keeps them safe.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- Inspectors analysed school documentation, including leaders' evaluations and plans for improvement. The inspector scrutinised a range of policies and procedures, including those that relate to the curriculum, SEND, safeguarding and behaviour.
- An inspector listened to the views of parents at the start of the inspection. Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted online survey, Parent View, and free-text comments. They evaluated responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Leanne Thirlby, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Kerri Conday

Ofsted Inspector

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