

Inspection of Liskeard Hillfort Primary School

Old Road, Liskeard, Cornwall PL14 6HZ

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 September 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Dr Tim Cook. This school is part of Truro and Penwith 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, Dr Jennifer Blunden, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Anita Firth.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a welcoming and happy school. Pupils describe it as a place that treats everyone equally. Teachers help pupils to do their best. Pupils enjoy their learning and playing with their friends.

The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils respond well to the school rules and routines that are in place. They behave well in lessons and when moving around the school. As a result, their learning progresses without interruption. This starts in the early years, where children follow instructions and behave well.

Pupils value the positive relationships they have with staff. Staff and pupils treat one another with respect and kindness. Pupils feel safe and know that staff will listen to them. They particularly appreciate how the owl boxes in their classrooms help them to share any worries or concerns.

There are many wide-ranging experiences to enrich the curriculum. Pupils speak fondly of the range of trips and clubs on offer to them, such as bike club and judo. They value the opportunities they have to become play leaders and school councillors. Pupils say that these roles help them to act as role models to others.

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

The school has high expectations for what all pupils can achieve. An ambitious curriculum has been designed which carefully considers what pupils need to know and when they need to know it, from the early years to Year 6.

In subjects where published outcomes are below national expectations, the school is taking effective action to strengthen the curriculum. For example, in reading, the school has made sure that staff implement the reading curriculum effectively across the school.

Reading is at the heart of the school's work. From the entrance, along corridors and in classrooms, the environment promotes and celebrates reading. Pupils enjoy their visits to the school library. They enjoy listening to adults read stories to them. As they move through the school, pupils read a range of texts with increasing fluency and accuracy.

Children begin learning phonics as soon as they start school. They quickly develop an enjoyment of books, rhymes and songs. All staff benefit from the training they receive to teach phonics and reading effectively. Books that pupils read match the sounds they learn, which helps them gain confidence. Staff regularly check the sounds that pupils know. This means that pupils who may find reading difficult receive the help they need to catch up quickly.

Pupils learn well in most of the wider curriculum subjects. In geography, for example, pupils confidently recall what they have learned about the continents and climate change and make links to concepts such as renewable and non-renewable energy. However, the implementation of this curriculum is not as effective in some subjects as in others. Pupils do not build their knowledge well over time. This hampers the progress that some pupils make.

The school supports pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. This starts with the youngest children as they join Reception. Staff know these pupils well and identify their needs accurately. School and trust leaders work well with teachers to create plans which are precise and regularly reviewed. Pupils with SEND follow the same curriculum as their peers.

Pupils display positive attitudes to learning and are kind to one another. The environment in classrooms and around the school is calm and orderly. Children in the early years settle into new routines quickly. They take turns and play well together.

Pupils' broader personal development is well considered and designed. The curriculum helps pupils to learn about different cultures, faiths and relationships well. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe and healthy, both physically, emotionally, and when online. The school enriches the curriculum through activities, trips and residential visits. This helps pupils to build their understanding of the wider world.

Trustees and local governors are ambitious for the school. They accurately understand what the school does well and where it needs to improve. They hold the school to account. Staff, including those who are new to teaching, value the team spirit at the school. They appreciate how their workload is considered and their development supported.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- An effective curriculum is not yet fully implemented in some subjects. As a result, pupils have not yet gained the depth of knowledge that they should. The trust needs to ensure that all subjects are implemented fully and effectively so that pupils build the knowledge they need.

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	140838
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10288196
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	403
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Anita Firth
CEO of the trust	Dr Jennifer Blunden
Headteacher	Dr Tim Cook
Website	www.hillfort.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	17 and 18 October 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- There is a before- and after-school club managed by the school.

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.
- 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, computing and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum 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 also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- 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 observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at social times. They spoke with different groups of pupils to discuss their views of the school, their learning, their behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also took into consideration the responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Mark Burgess, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Laura Horne	Ofsted Inspector
Carl Thornton	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023