

Inspection of Eden Park Academy

Eden Park Academy, Forches Avenue, Barnstaple, Devon EX32 8EF

Inspection dates: 31 October and 1 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

The executive headteachers of this school are Samantha Warner and Richard Blunt. The school is part of the Tarka Learning Partnership, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Richard Light, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Graham Cockell.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is welcoming and caring. Pupils are polite and friendly to visitors. The relationships between adults and pupils are positive. Staff know the pupils well. Pupils are happy and behave well at this school. This is because they know what is expected of them.

There is an open and respectful culture throughout the school. Pupils live up to the school's high expectations. Pupils learn about equality, racism and treating everyone in a positive way. When bullying happens, the school deals with this swiftly.

However, the quality of education the pupils receive is not yet good. In some subjects, the curriculum does not enable all pupils to be successful. This means that pupils do not acquire the knowledge and skills they need over time to achieve well.

The school ensures that all pupils have equal opportunities to attend extra-curricular activities. This includes pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). All pupils have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument, which they enjoy. They regularly perform in the school choir or rock band.

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

Pupils, parents and staff are positive about the improvements made since the previous inspection. The school has made significant changes to the curriculum and is determined to continue to make more. Some of the more recent changes are beginning to show an impact, for example in early reading. Pupils' outcomes in phonics have improved. Other areas of the curriculum are still in their infancy. The school's vision for all pupils to receive a high-quality education has not been realised.

The school has identified the knowledge and skills pupils need to be successful. This has been carefully sequenced over time. However, historical gaps in the school's curriculum mean that not all pupils have learned all they need to be successful in the next stage of their education. Pupils at the end of key stage 2 attained outcomes significantly below that of their peers nationally.

The school also has high ambitions for pupils with SEND. Teaching is adapted to meet these pupils' needs, but they are not yet achieving what they could. Where these pupils need additional support, this is provided quickly. The school works well with outside agencies to get the help that is needed for these pupils.

The development of children's communication and language skills is a priority. The school encourages a love of reading from an early age. In Nursery, children enjoy listening to stories and learning rhymes. This helps them build up their knowledge of language. Children in Reception begin learning to read as soon as they start school. The school has chosen an early reading programme to meet the needs of pupils. Skilled staff deliver this programme. Pupils regularly read books that match the

sounds they know. This regular practice helps them develop their fluency and accuracy. Staff frequently check how well pupils are reading and organise additional support for pupils who need help to keep up.

The school celebrates reading in many ways. Pupils enjoy listening to their teacher read the class reading book. Pupils visit the school's well-stocked library. This helps pupils to understand how a library is organised and how to choose a book. Events like 'book and a biscuit' encourage parents into school to read with their children.

Older pupils hold positions of responsibility that help them to understand leadership. These include librarians and school council. The school council raised money for scooters that are used at lunchtime. Pupils also take part in clubs, like netball. Staff ensure that disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND attend these clubs as often as their peers. Staff are keen for pupils to experience life beyond their local area. They promote trips to Bristol and Portsmouth, as well as other places of interest.

Pupils' attendance across the school is low. In some cases, individual pupils' attendance has improved as a result of the school's support and challenge. However, the school does not analyse the information that it holds about pupils' attendance as well as it could. This hampers the school's ability to spot patterns and to tackle persistent absences more efficiently.

The trust has an ambitious vision for the school. It is committed to improving the school. Trustees carry out the statutory duties well. However, the trust and the trustees do not hold leaders to account well enough, including over the quality of education. The trust is not clear enough about how well pupils are prepared for the next stage of their education.

Staff feel valued and supported by the school and the trust. There is a strong collegiate approach, where everyone helps each other. Staff recognise that working with colleagues from their partner school has reduced their workload, as they share ideas and resources. As a result, staff enjoy working at Eden Park Academy.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Despite the significant changes to the curriculum, it is not implemented as intended. Consequently, pupils do not build on what they already know. The school must ensure that these curriculums are implemented effectively so that pupils know and remember more, and that pupils are well prepared for their next stage in education.

- The procedures for increasing attendance and reducing persistent absence are not rigorous enough. As a result, barriers that prevent some pupils from attending school as often as they could are not quickly identified. The school should ensure that its systems for monitoring and improving attendance for all groups of pupils are designed to quickly identify the barriers to attendance for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent.
- Governors and the trust do not have an accurate view of the quality of education. This hinders their ability to identify any areas of weakness and provide leaders with appropriate challenge and support. The trust and the governors' oversight of the effectiveness of the school's work needs to improve.

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	146096
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10268113
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	150
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Graham Cockell
CEO of the trust	Richard Light
Headteacher	Samantha Warner (executive co-headteacher), Richard Blunt (executive co-headteacher)
Website	www.eden-park.academy
Dates of previous inspection	7 and 8 June 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since September 2021, the school has been led by two executive co-headteachers. They also lead another school in the multi-academy trust.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and the proportion of pupils with SEND at the school are well above the national average.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has a provision for two- and three-year-olds.

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.
- The inspectors held meetings with the executive co-headteachers and deputy headteacher. They also met with the chief executive officer of the trust, the chair of the trust board and a trustee.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Other subjects were considered as part of the inspection.
- 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.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to an adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. In addition, they met with pupils informally and formally to hear their views.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. Inspectors also took into consideration responses to the staff and pupil surveys.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation provided by the school and the trust, including the school's improvement plan and self-evaluation form.

Inspection team

Gavin Summerfield, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Matthew Shirley

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