

Inspection of Blisland Primary Academy

Waterloo, Blisland, Bodmin, Cornwall PL30 4JX

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 November 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	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Andrew Smith. This school is part of Bridge Multi-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, Adrian Massey, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Maria Ashurst. There is also an area executive headteacher, Louise Gilbert, who is responsible for this school and six others.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Blisland Primary Academy as an academy school under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Blisland Primary Academy is a harmonious place to learn. Pupils respond positively to the high expectations of staff. Staff know each pupil's needs and interests well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff utilise this to promote pupils' progress and wider development effectively. As a result, pupils develop positive attitudes to learning and build strength of character.

The school has recently introduced a new behaviour policy. The policy is consistently applied. Pupils recognise it helps them be ready to learn, respect others and keeps them safe. Lessons are calm and purposeful. Bullying is not an issue. Pupils attend well. They conduct themselves positively around the school. Very occasionally, some pupils need reminding to do their best. However, this does not detract from the hard working, inclusive atmosphere at the school.

Pupils appreciate the range of ways they can follow their interests and talents. They enjoy the range of sporting clubs, trips and how the staff make learning interesting. The school promotes leadership skills for pupils in a range of ways. For example, pupils can join the school council or become sports leaders. Pupils respond by contributing positively to the local community and beyond.

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

The trust and the school work together effectively to realise their ambition for pupils. They have utilised collaborative opportunities with other trust schools to develop the effectiveness of provision at Blisland Primary Academy. Some time ago, standards had slipped. Effective support from the trust helped turn this around. This also ensured that recent changes in leadership did not slow, but increased momentum. Staff are highly committed and work diligently together to find ways to keep improving. Consequently, pupils' learning, and experiences are getting better and better.

The school is developing a highly effective curriculum. The trust utilises the skills and experiences of staff from across its schools to ensure these plans meet the needs of this small, village school. Teachers utilise this planning to promote pupils' learning across subjects effectively. They skilfully use strong subject knowledge across the curriculum. The early years provision gives children a flying start. Pupils build well on this foundation as they move through the school. As a result, pupils, including those with SEND, learn securely and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

The school knows there is more to do. They recognise that learning sequences in some subjects are overly focused on certain knowledge. This means that pupils remember parts of the National Curriculum better than others. For example, pupils remember what they have learned about the past and the order in which things

happened in history. However, they are much less clear about how to be an effective historian and use evidence to make judgements about the past.

Leaders give reading the highest priority. They have established a curriculum that ensures all pupils can learn and enjoy reading. From the moment they start in the Nursery, children experience rich opportunities to learn language, including through sharing stories, songs and nursery rhymes. They build on this effectively as they move into Reception. Staff use assessment very well to ensure pupils learn their sounds systematically and securely. Pupils get extra help if needed. This helps them to stay on track as they move through Key Stage 1. They take home books that are carefully matched to the sounds they know and promote a love of reading. Consequently, pupils make very strong progress in their reading and learn to enjoy stories, books and poems.

Opportunities in the curriculum to promote pupils' personal development are plentiful and well used by teachers. The school's ethos is built on established positive relationships, knowing each individual and pupils taking ownership of their learning. Collectively, this helps to ensure that pupils feel valued, empowered and safe. Their broader development benefits significantly. For example, pupils develop character and want to succeed for themselves.

Most parents are positive about the experiences their children have. They rightly believe their children achieve well. Most recognise that staff provide unique and targeted support for their children, including those with SEND. However, some parents with SEND do not believe their children's needs are met effectively. SEND provision is effective. However, the school has not established effective ways to design provision alongside parents in the past. This means that some parents of SEND pupils do not have the confidence in provision that they could.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some elements of curriculum planning are overly focused on specific elements of knowledge. For example, pupils learn key facts in science, geography and history, but are less secure in knowing how to be a scientist, geographer or historian. Leaders should continue to refine and strengthen the curriculum so that pupils learn more about the discipline of each subject to secure the best outcomes across all subjects.
- Some parents of pupils with SEND are not confident about how their children's needs are met. The school is inclusive and meets pupils' needs well. However, the

school has not developed ways to design provision alongside parents well enough in the past. The school should look to improve how it plans provision for pupils with SEND with them and their parents, so that everyone pulls in the same direction.

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	145519
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10288228
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	47
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Maria Ashurst
CEO of the trust	Adrian Massey
Headteacher	Andrew Smith
Website	www.blislandprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Blisland Primary converted to become an academy school in March 2018. When its predecessor school, Blisland Community Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged outstanding.
- Since the predecessor school's last inspection, there have been two changes of headteacher.
- The school does not use 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.
- 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 leaders, including the headteacher, special educational needs coordinator and the early years lead. They also spoke to some staff.
- Inspectors met with the chief executive officer, the area executive headteacher, and the lead for safeguarding from the Trust. They also met the chair of the local governing board and chair of trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and geography. 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 a sample of pupils' work. The lead inspector listened to some pupils read. Inspectors also looked at curriculum planning and pupils' work linked to other subjects across the National Curriculum.
- 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 took account of the responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire and free-text responses. They also considered responses to the staff survey.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including leaders' evaluations, the school improvement plan, documents relating to governance and information about the school's curriculum.

Inspection team

Matthew Barnes, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sarah Tustain

Ofsted Inspector

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