

Inspection of St Ives Infant School

Trenwith Burrows, St Ives, Cornwall TR26 1DH

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 February 2024

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

The headteacher of this school is Richard Wigham. This school is part of The Rainbow 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, Samantha Jones, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Dr Pat McGovern.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Ives Infant School is a happy place where pupils are well cared for. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They feel safe and talk positively about the way in which staff help them to learn and have fun.

Pupils are polite and considerate. They behave very well. The school has high expectations for pupils. In lessons, they engage enthusiastically with their learning and are keen to do their best. Pupils work hard on tasks and are rightly proud of their accomplishments. In each class, the 'stars of the day' wear their cloaks with pride.

The school develops pupils' character well. It encourages pupils to try a range of new experiences, known as the 'Big 25'. Pupils enjoy the challenge of learning to play a musical instrument or raising money for a local charity. Together with a range of clubs, such as football, choir, arts and crafts, this helps pupils develop their talents and interests and become eager to help others.

The school builds strong partnerships with parents. For example, staff make sure that parents know about phonics and the importance of reading. Parents who responded to the Ofsted survey, Ofsted Parent View, or spoke to inspectors, were overwhelmingly positive about the school.

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

The school's curriculum is ambitious and designed to take advantage of the learning opportunities provided by the local area. In most subjects, the order in which pupils learn the content has been carefully considered. In addition, pupils systematically revisit what they have learned before. In these subjects, the school checks carefully how well pupils learn the curriculum. Teachers know which pupils are doing well and who needs further help. However, in a small number of subjects, the curriculum does not make clear enough the important information pupils need to know and remember. In these subjects, pupils struggle to recall their prior learning. Consequently, they do not build their knowledge securely over time.

The school prioritises pupils' early reading. A love of reading is evident across the school. Pupils enjoy their daily story times. Children begin learning phonics as soon as they start school. Staff have the expertise to deliver the phonics programme effectively. If pupils fall behind, they are quickly identified. They receive the support they need to catch up. As a result, most pupils read with growing accuracy and confidence. However, occasionally, the books pupils use to practise the sounds they are learning do not accurately match their stage in the phonics programme. This slows the fluency with which a small number of pupils read.

The school is ambitious for what pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) can achieve. From the start of the Nursery Year, staff work swiftly and accurately to identify children's needs. The school seeks advice from specialists

to develop precise plans for children with SEND. This continues throughout the school. Learning is adapted effectively. This supports pupils' communication and language development. As a result, pupils with SEND progress well through the curriculum.

Children in the early years get off to a good start. They benefit from the opportunities they have to learn to speak clearly and listen to others. Staff show children how to form letters correctly. They help children to organise their ideas into sentences. Early mathematics is also developed well. Staff choose the right activities to help children practise what they are learning about numbers. Consequently, children are well prepared for Year 1.

The school promotes pupils' personal development effectively. The curriculum is well designed to ensure that pupils have a strong understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy, and how to maintain positive relationships. The school enriches learning through trips to the local area.

Pupils, including the very youngest, behave well. From the early years, children understand the importance of being patient and taking turns. In lessons, pupils want to learn. They move around the school calmly. Pupils are polite and friendly. The school has an atmosphere that supports and values learning. The school prioritises pupils' attendance. It tracks absence closely and intervenes early to stop pupils having too much time off.

The trust provides effective support to the school. Following a period of turbulence, the school now has stable leadership. School leaders seek advice from trustees and governors and welcome their challenge and support. Staff say that they feel valued as members of the school community. They know that leaders care about their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The books provided for some pupils to practise their phonics are not closely matched to the sounds they have learned. When this happens, pupils do not build fluency as securely as they need to. The trust should ensure that books are consistently matched to the sounds pupils know.
- In some subjects, leaders have not defined the essential knowledge they want pupils to learn and remember. As a result, pupils do not build their knowledge securely. The trust needs to ensure that all subjects identify the knowledge that pupils must learn, and when.

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	137468
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10297998
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	157
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Dr Pat McGovern
CEO of the trust	Samantha Jones
Headteacher	Richard Wigham
Website	www.st-ives-inf.cornwall.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school joined The Rainbow Multi Academy Trust in January 2021.
- The headteacher was appointed in January 2023.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

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, subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, staff, pupils, the chair of the local governing body and representatives of the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in following subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and art. 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.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1 and 2 read to an adult.
- 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, and 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 and pupil survey.

Inspection team

Mark Burgess, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Claire Baillie

Ofsted Inspector

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