

# Inspection of Buckfastleigh Primary School

Bossell Road, Buckfastleigh, Devon TQ11 0DD

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Inspection dates: 6 and 7 February 2024

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

The headteacher of this school is Laurie Archer. This school is part of Westcountry Schools Trust, which means other people in the trust have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Rob Haring, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Iain Grafton MBE.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Buckfastleigh Primary is an inclusive school. Pupils are proud to belong to this caring and welcoming community. Pupils are happy. They enjoy warm relationships with staff from the moment they start in the Reception Year. Pupils fully understand the school's vision and values: 'feel a sense of belonging, be ambitious and resilient'. As a result, pupils feel safe, respected and cared for.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They work hard and have positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils speak confidently about equalities. They believe everyone is treated fairly. Pupils accept each other's differences and are supportive of each other during lessons and social times. In the early years, children rapidly learn the routines and expectations of the classroom. Across the day, pupils rise to the high expectations of behaviour set by the school.

Pupils relish extra responsibilities the school offers, which include roles as playleaders or school councillors. In addition, pupils participate in fundraising, for example to support local food banks and children's charities. These responsibilities develop confidence, resilience and pupils' social and leadership skills.

The school is working successfully to eradicate the legacy of underachievement, as seen in some published outcomes, to ensure all pupils succeed.

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

The school's work to address weaknesses identified at the previous inspection has been quick and highly effective. The school is improving swiftly as a result of the impact of the new headteacher and the joint efforts of leaders, staff and the trust.

The curriculum is ambitious and exciting for pupils. The key knowledge the school wants pupils to know and remember is clearly identified and well sequenced. However, the school recognises that in some subjects, the curriculum is not implemented as effectively as in the more developed subjects. Therefore, pupils do not always gain the knowledge and skills they need in all subjects they study.

The school is ambitious that every pupil will become a fluent reader. Children begin their reading journey from the start of the Reception Year. School staff are highly skilled in the teaching of reading. This means they are quick to identify pupils who are falling behind. Staff provide support to help them catch up and keep up. Pupils benefit from highly effective phonics teaching in the early years and across the school. Staff carefully choose books to ensure they precisely match pupils' phonic knowledge. Pupils hear stories daily. They enjoy these times and are eager to participate. This promotes a love of reading.

The early years is exceptional. Staff form strong relationships with the children, which enables them to settle quickly. Staff rapidly identify what children can and cannot do through robust assessment. They analyse this information precisely to

ensure the curriculum meets children's needs. For example, staff skilfully support children to develop excellent communication and language skills. This enables children to learn access the curriculum and achieve significant success. Children are extremely well prepared as they move into Year 1.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are at the forefront of the school's work. Staff identify pupils' barriers to learning accurately and efficiently. Adaptations are made to ensure pupils are supported throughout the curriculum. This helps pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum as their peers and achieve well.

The curriculum for personal, social and health education is planned and sequenced with care. Pupils build knowledge and understand the importance of being healthy and leading safe, active lives. They understand and respect different cultures, faiths, types of families and relationships. The mental health of pupils is a priority. The school has a mental health advocate who supports pupils facing challenges. Pupils appreciate this work and spoke about how the gardening club helps them to regulate and reduce their anxious behaviours.

Enrichment opportunities are carefully considered. Residential visits, such as the Year 6 trip to Brixham, are purposefully designed to enrich and inform pupils' understanding of the wider world.

The school is relentless in its promotion of good attendance. They work closely with parents by providing support and guidance through early help and newsletters. As a result, pupils attend well. Where there are concerns, the school takes decisive action to ensure the attendance of pupils improves.

Many parents are extremely positive about the work of the school. They comment how the school go 'above and beyond to support their children.' They are confident their children receive a good education.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In some subjects, the curriculum is not implemented as effectively as in the more developed subjects. As a result, pupils do not gain the knowledge they need to achieve well in these subjects. The trust needs to ensure that the school curriculum is implemented effectively in all subjects.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136562
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	10297979
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	128
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Iain Grafton MBE
<b>CEO of trust</b>	Rob Haring
<b>Headteacher</b>	Laurie Archer
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.buckfastleigh.devon.sch.uk">www.buckfastleigh.devon.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	14–15 September 2021, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The headteacher has been in post since 1 September 2023.
- The school does not use any 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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued 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 assistant headteachers and staff.

- The lead inspector met with the director of education for West Country Schools Trust and other trust leaders, including the chair of the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the 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.
- Inspectors sampled pupils' work in science, geography and English.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Year 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult. The lead inspector visited story time in Reception and Years 1 and 2. Pupils in Year 6 were also heard read.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered key documentation, including school development plans and governors' and trustees' minutes.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. The inspectors met with school leaders to discuss and scrutinise how they respond to behaviour incidents and pupils' attendance.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the staff survey, Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including free-text replies. Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the day.

## **Inspection team**

Jen Southall, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Julie Barton

Ofsted Inspector

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