

Inspection of Bere Alston Primary Academy

Station Road, Bere Alston, Yelverton, Devon PL20 7AU

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 March 2024

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 Gareth Bemister. This school is part of First Federation Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Paul Walker, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Alex Walmsley.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending Bere Alston Primary Academy. They say that the school's values, promoted through 'give me 5', help the school to be a happy, safe place to learn.

Pupils respond positively to the school's high expectations. Children in the early years settle into school life well. Staff support them to learn the school rules and routines quickly. This prepares them well for key stage 1. Throughout the school, pupils are polite and well-mannered. They are enthusiastic about learning. Pupils listen attentively in lessons.

Staff take time to build warm, secure relationships with pupils and their families. This helps pupils to learn well in a nurturing environment. Pupils feel safe.

Pupils enjoy the wide range of enrichment activities that the school provides for them beyond the academic curriculum. For example, taking part in activities such as coding club or arts and crafts. Pupils also enjoy representing the school in sporting activities. They have opportunities to develop leadership roles. For example, pupils in key stage 2 organise lunchtime activities for younger pupils. Pupils can also represent their class on the school council. These experiences enable pupils to develop new interests and find undiscovered talents.

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

The school is ambitious for all pupils. Following a period of time during which there were significant changes in leadership and staffing, with support from the trust, the school is now in a stable position. It has designed an ambitious curriculum. This begins in the early years where children learn to communicate effectively and develop positive attitudes to learning.

The school has made reading a priority. All staff have the expertise they need to help pupils to learn to read well. In the early years, children start to learn phonics and begin to read simple words. Pupils read books that match the sounds they know. This supports pupils to develop their fluency in reading. When pupils struggle to read, adults provide effective support to help them to catch up. Staff have selected a range of high-quality books for pupils to enjoy. These cover a range of genres and promote pupils' understanding of different cultures. Pupils value reading and take pleasure in sharing their favourite books.

Teachers use their knowledge of the subjects they teach well. They explain new concepts with clarity. In most subjects, teachers use assessment effectively. They use this information to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. For example, in mathematics, if pupils do not fully understand a topic teachers revisit previous learning to address pupils' misconceptions quickly. This enables pupils to build their confidence and understanding.

However, in some subjects, the school is still developing assessment systems. In these subjects, assessment information is not yet used well enough to check on what pupils know. For example, in history pupils can recall what they have learned about Victorians but are not confident about Mayans. In these subjects, teachers do not identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. As a result, the curriculum is not adapted to make learning as successful as possible. In these subjects, pupils do not build their knowledge securely.

The school accurately identifies the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This process starts as soon as children join the school. Individual pupil plans are precise. Staff follow them closely. As a result, pupils with SEND learn the curriculum as well as their peers. They are fully included in all aspects of school life.

Pupils take pride in their work. In the early years, children learn to take turns and share resources. Pupils of all ages play well together during social times. The school is a calm environment where pupils behave well and show respect for each other and adults.

The school has high expectations of pupils' attendance. There is a robust system in place to monitor this. If attendance starts to fall, the school takes swift action to address it.

The school supports pupils' personal development well. Pupils learn about the diverse world beyond their local community. Pupils know why fundamental British values such as democracy and tolerance are important in day-to-day life. They understand why it is important to treat everyone equally.

Trustees know the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They hold leaders to account for their actions. The school and trust prioritise developing staff expertise. Staff value the support they receive which helps them to strengthen their teaching.

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, assessment processes are still being developed. In these subjects, the school is not using assessment information as effectively as it could to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. This means that pupils do not build their knowledge well enough over time. The trust needs to ensure that teachers use assessment effectively across all subjects to inform future learning.

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	147639
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10315632
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	124
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Alex Walmsley
CEO of the trust	Paul Walker
Headteacher	Gareth Bemister
Website	www.berealston.devon.sch.uk
Date(s) of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Bere Alston Primary Academy converted to become an academy in December 2019. When its predecessor school, Bere Alston Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- The current headteacher was appointed in September 2022.
- The school has provision for two-year-old children.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) 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, and representatives from the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in following subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. 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, 2 and 3 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, their behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. They also took into consideration the responses to the staff survey and pupil survey.

Inspection team

Mark Burgess, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Matthew Shirley	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
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