

Inspection of Mount Hawke Academy

Rodda's Road, Mount Hawke, Truro, Cornwall TR4 8BA

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 October 2024

The quality of education **Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes **Outstanding**

Personal development **Outstanding**

Leadership and management **Outstanding**

Early years provision **Outstanding**

Previous inspection grade Outstanding

The headteacher of this school is Catherine Biddick. This school is part of Aspire 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, Rachel Warwick, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Penny Shilston.

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since June 2013.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at this school flourish. The school meticulously considers the education pupils receive to ensure it is the best it can be. Nothing is left to chance. Highly skilled staff ensure that these ambitious intentions become reality.

The school has the highest expectations of its pupils in all areas of school life. Pupils rise to these. They have a love for learning. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve highly academically. Consequently, they are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education.

From the moment children start in the early years, staff demonstrate high levels of warmth and care. Staff ensure that pupils with SEND play a full part in the life of the school, including participation in extra-curricular activities. Staff make precise adaptations to support pupils with SEND. This helps them to learn well and thrive.

The 'Mount Hawke child can...' ethos develops pupils' character in exemplary fashion. The school supports pupils to achieve their 'personal best'. As a result, pupils have a thirst for learning. In lessons, they are self-motivated and learn well independently. Their excellent behaviour continues at social times. Pupils learn to help each other. Some take on the role of mental health ambassadors who sensitively and empathetically help those who need some emotional support.

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

The school relentlessly continues its pursuit for excellence, evaluating its work to check that no limits are put on what pupils can achieve. This can be seen in the quality of the curriculum. It is highly ambitious and detailed. The school regularly reviews and makes changes to the curriculum to ensure consistently high-quality content that is relevant to pupils. It has used pupil voice as part of this process. For example, the school changed the physical education curriculum to broaden pupils' experiences of different sports. This develops a sense of a shared vision.

The school's single- and mixed-age class structure has changed as the school roll has fallen. This has presented challenges for the order in which pupils learn new content. However, the school has mitigated these through carefully planned changes to the curriculum. As a result, pupils' learning builds upon what they already know.

Pupils' recall of what they have learned in the long-term across the curriculum is exceptional. They connect what they have learned in the past to current topics. The trust and school ensure staff have the expertise to implement the curriculum well. They continuously check what pupils already know and can remember. This helps to quickly address any gaps in pupils' knowledge. Staff comprehensively review the targets of pupils with SEND. This ensures they get the right support.

Teachers set pupils tasks that match the high ambition of the curriculum. They develop pupils' thinking through 'Digging Deeper' questions so that pupils build deep and

sophisticated knowledge. As pupils move through the school, they are able to articulate their thinking and produce high-quality pieces of writing.

The school places a high priority on reading. It has a well-established and systematic approach to the teaching of early reading. Pupils display confidence in their ability to decode and blend unknown words. The school's success in this area is reflected in its outcomes. Results in the phonics screening check are significantly above national averages. Staff quickly spot those pupils who fall behind. They give precise support to help them catch up and keep up. In the early years, children learn a rich range of stories, rhymes and songs. This helps to develop a love of reading.

Pupils have a wealth of roles to develop their leadership skills. For example, pupils create and run their own clubs, such as cheerleading, rugby and coding. Through personal, social and health education lessons, pupils learn about moral issues. They display great maturity when discussing these. For example, pupils can talk about the dangers of drugs and alcohol. Pupils learn about other faiths and cultures through the curriculum and themed events. Consequently, they are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils contribute to the wider community through events, such as choir singing.

Pupils reflect their enjoyment of school in their high attendance. The school keeps a close eye on absence rates. It swiftly works with families where there are concerns.

The trust knows the school well. However, it has not been complacent. It has drawn upon external support in addition to its own checks. Any weaknesses are addressed promptly. As a result, it has an accurate view of the school's performance.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They praise how pupils are cared for and how well they learn.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	136597
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10334694
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	262
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Penny Shilston
CEO of the trust	Rachel Warwick
Headteacher	Catherine Biddick
Website	www.mounthawke.org
Dates of previous inspection	5 and 6 June 2013

Information about this school

- The school is part of Aspire Academy Trust.
- The head of school took up her post in 2019.
- The school has recently reduced its planned admission number to 30 per year.
- The school runs its own breakfast and after-school provision.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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.
- The inspector met with the head of school and other senior leaders, groups of staff, groups of pupils, the chair of the trust and a trust executive leader.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science and music. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also looked at samples of work and spoke to pupils about their learning in other curriculum areas.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- 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.
- An inspector spoke to some parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments, and Ofsted's surveys for pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Jason Edge, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Anna Mills

Ofsted Inspector

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Ofsted Inspector

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