

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Biscovey Nursery and Infants' Academy

Lamellyn Road, Par, Cornwall PL24 2DB

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 December 2024

Outcome

Biscovey Nursery and Infants' Academy has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The head of school is Katie Bullock. 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 (CEO), Rachel Warwick, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Penny Shilston.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at this school. Its vision of 'with strong roots we learn and grow together' fully comes to life. The school's expectations of pupils are high. Pupils rise to these. Staff care for pupils well. This helps them to feel happy and secure. In the Reception Year, staff establish routines quickly. As a result, children settle into school life well.

Pupils' behaviour is of a very high standard. The school ensures that staff know how to manage behaviour. Low-level disruption is rare. In lessons, pupils listen carefully and are highly engaged. They answer adults' questions eagerly. Pupils trust staff to sort out any difficulties or friendship issues that they may have.

Pupils benefit from a range of clubs in which to pursue their talents and interests. These include choir, computing and sewing. The school ensures that disadvantaged pupils participate fully in these. It works hard to promote pupils' aspirations. Pupils consider their 'future me' by learning about potential careers.

The school works closely with its parents and carers. It involves them in school events wherever possible. Parents appreciate this. They feel that pupils are well cared for, and staff address any concerns that they may have.

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

Together with the trust, the school checks the effectiveness of its curriculum. Consequently, they have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. The school makes improvements as necessary. For example, it has strengthened its systems for special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). It has placed an emphasis on identifying children's needs in the early years. This helps them to get the right support swiftly. In addition, the school identified that children's speaking and listening skills on entry were low. In the Nursery, children now receive dedicated input to develop these each day. This is helping children to become more confident, articulate individuals.

The school has a broad and ambitious curriculum. This starts in the Nursery Year. In recent times, the school has made alterations to the curriculum to realign with the changing class structures. This has ensured that pupils continue to build on their knowledge in a logical order. Despite the changes, staff's workload has been protected. They feel listened to and say that leaders support them well.

Staff receive ongoing training from the school and trust. This helps them to implement the curriculum effectively. For example, staff in the Nursery have received additional support on child development. They provide tasks that are well matched to children's starting points. Across the school, teachers introduce new subject specific vocabulary clearly. They expect pupils to understand and use this. Pupils with SEND have careful adaptations made, such as using additional equipment. This helps them to learn well. In lessons, teachers explain concepts clearly. As a result, pupils understand what is expected of them. They waste no time in starting their work.

The school has made improvements to its writing curriculum. This has helped to improve pupils' punctuation and grammar. However, on some occasions pupils make errors with their letter formation which go unaddressed. Furthermore, while teachers make checks on what pupils can do from their recent learning, further work is needed to ensure that this is effective. Teachers do not check precisely enough what pupils have learned over the longer term. As a result, pupils sometimes find it difficult to recall their longer-term learning and their gaps are not addressed.

The school's work on reading is something that it is proud of. Reading is prioritised from the moment children arrive at school. Pupils develop a love of reading through the books staff share with them. The school ensures that staff are well-trained. They spot quickly any gaps in pupils' knowledge. Staff help them to catch up swiftly. As a result, pupils become confident and fluent readers. Pupils' outcomes in the 2024 phonics screening check were significantly above the national average.

At social times, pupils exhibit the same positive behaviour as they do in the classroom. They enjoy playing with one another. The school is proactive in addressing any concerns related to absence. This has contributed to a notable improvement in pupils' attendance.

Pupils take on roles such as the 'Biscovey ACEs' and the school council. This gives them a sense of pride and responsibility. Pupils learn to be part of a team through inter-school sporting events. They know about 'stranger danger' and how to keep themselves healthy. Pupils learn to think about others through raising money for charities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- On some occasions, teachers do not use assessment with enough precision to check what pupils know and can do. As a result, some pupils do not remember important learning over time and misconceptions in letter formation are not addressed quickly enough. The trust should ensure that assessment is used effectively to understand what pupils know and can do and that staff address errors in letter formation swiftly.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged Biscovey Nursery and Infant Community School to be good for overall effectiveness in March 2013.

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	143176
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10344750
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	146
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Penny Shilston
CEO of the trust	Rachel Warwick
Headteacher	Katie Bullock
Website	www.biscoveyinfants.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 May 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Aspire Academy Trust.
- The head of school took up her post in 2022.
- The school runs its own breakfast and after-school provision.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the head of school, groups of staff, groups of pupils, the chair of the trust, the CEO and a trust executive leader.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Additionally, the inspector spoke to pupils to discuss their views about the school.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments, and Ofsted's survey for staff.

Inspection team

Jason Edge, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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