Inspection of a good school: Mithian School

Buckshead, St Agnes, Cornwall TR5 0XW

Inspection dates: 27 March 2024

Outcome

Mithian School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Linda Garbett. This school is part of Truro and Penwith 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, Dr Jennifer Blunden, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Anita Firth.

What is it like to attend this school?

Mithian School is friendly and inclusive. Pupils travel from many different villages to attend. The school have created their own vibrant community. Staff, parents, and pupils describe a 'family feel.' The school's ethos of 'EMERGE', which includes showing grit and enthusiasm, can be seen across all areas of school life. Pupils learn about the school's values in assemblies and through their learning in different subjects.

Staff have high expectations and manage pupils' behaviour in a well-established way. Pupils' very positive conduct means that staff rarely have to remind them about their expectations. Lessons are calm and purposeful. Pupils feel safe and secure. If they have any concerns, they speak to an adult or use the 'worry box' to share their thoughts.

Pupils take on a wide range of leadership roles. These include belonging to the school council, being a play leader, running the library and being the helper of the day in Reception Year. Such roles help pupils learn how to manage responsibility and become positive role models. Pupils talk proudly about the trust that is placed in them by staff. Pupils also enjoy the trips the school provides. For example, older pupils visit London and a local fire station, while the whole school enjoy a Christmas pantomime at the theatre.

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

The school's ambition is for pupils to leave as confident, lifelong learners. They achieve this by delivering a broad, well-planned curriculum. As a result, pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. The school have adapted quickly to support an increasing number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school and trust ensure that staff receive training on how to meet pupils' needs. They

welcome advice and support from external agencies. Pupils, including those with SEND, are well prepared for their next steps into secondary education.

The school have placed reading at the centre of the curriculum. As soon as children join in Reception Year, they start to follow the school's chosen phonics programme. They learn new sounds quickly and progress to become confident readers. When pupils find reading difficult, the school puts precise support in place. This allows them to catch up rapidly with their peers. Pupils read throughout the school day. They frequently listen to stories and explore different types of texts. This starts in Reception Year where children learn rhymes and re-read interesting books. Younger pupils also enjoy visiting the local library.

Staff have thought carefully about the order in which pupils learn the curriculum and how and when they revisit their prior learning. For example, in mathematics, 'Friday Fives' supports pupils to consolidate what they have learned before. In the core subjects, teachers regularly check what pupils know and remember. However, where there have been changes made to the wider curriculum, the way in which teachers check what pupils understand is not precise enough. Therefore, pupils have some gaps in their knowledge which are not identified and remedied.

Pupils enjoy learning. They ask questions to extend their understanding. Pupils know the relevance of what they learn. For example, in mathematics, pupils know the importance of estimating. Most children in Reception Year show sustained concentration on tasks. For example, they show resilience and focus while solving subtraction problems.

Subject leadership is a strength of the school. Teachers are well supported by leaders, including the trust, to lead on several subjects. They receive the training they need to do this well. Staff say this enables them to manage their workload effectively.

Mithian school is a happy and harmonious environment. Pupils show kindness to each other and share equipment at social times. Older pupils show maturity and self-regulation when playing tag rugby together, for example. Children in Reception Year take turns and say 'please' and 'thank you.' Any incidents of unkindness are rare.

The school ensures that pupils attend school regularly. Staff know the individual needs of pupils and their families. They work together to support pupils to maintain good levels of attendance.

The personal development curriculum helps pupils to understand and remember the protected characteristics and what the fundamental British Values are. Pupils learn why these are important. The school organises a range of interesting visitors to come into school. This allows pupils to learn about different career paths and know how to keep themselves safe in the community. For example, pupils are knowledgeable about beach safety.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In the wider curriculum, the assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding is at the early stages of development. This means that teachers do not know precisely what pupils know and remember in different subjects. The school should ensure there is a consistent and effective approach to how assessment is used in all subjects.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 the predecessor school, Mithian School, to be good in July 2014.

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	142304
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10322298
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	92
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Anita Firth
CEO of the trust	Dr Jennifer Blunden
Headteacher	Linda Garbett
Website	www.mithian.cornwall.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Truro and Penwith Academy Trust.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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 held discussions with the headteacher, the special educational needs and/or disabilities co-ordinator, subject leaders, members of the local governing body and representatives from the trust.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, 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.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 considered responses to the online survey for parents and carers, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors also considered responses to the staff survey and responses to the survey for pupils.

Inspection team

Kelly Olive, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Jason Edge	His Majesty's Inspector

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