

Inspection of Dobwalls Community Primary School

Duloe Road, Dobwalls, Liskeard, Cornwall PL14 4LU

Inspection dates: 5 to 6 December 2023

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	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Kathryn Pipe. This school is part of South East Cornwall Multi Academy Regional Trust (SMART), which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Dan Buckley, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Lee Hallam.

What is it like to attend this school?

Dobwalls Community Primary School is a friendly and welcoming place. Pupils are happy and enjoy attending the school. They appreciate how the school encourages them to develop learning habits, known as 'S.E.C.R.E.T. skills'. Pupils say this helps them to be creative, resilient and to work well in a team.

Pupils feel safe. The school's 'diamond rules' underpin the respectful culture that has been created. These rules encourage pupils to behave well and to treat one other kindly. This starts in the early years, where children settle into new routines and behave well.

The school has high expectations for what all pupils can achieve. Pupils know what staff expect of them. In lessons, pupils concentrate well. They are confident and enjoy sharing their views. Pupils welcome the opportunities they have to develop their interests, for example, by learning to play musical instruments or being members of the eco-council.

The school provides opportunities for pupils to experience being leaders. These include librarians and serving on the school council. Pupils also represent the school on the trust student council. These roles help pupils feel valued and give them the chance to be positive role models in the school.

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

The school has high expectations of all pupils. With the support of the trust, the curriculum has been strengthened. A broad and ambitious curriculum is now in place which makes clear the important knowledge pupils need to know and remember from Reception through to Year 6.

Reading is a priority for the school. Pupils enjoy their visits to the school library and being buddy readers. From their start in Reception, pupils enjoy listening to stories and rhymes. Pupils learn and remember new sounds well. Regular checks on their learning mean that most pupils build accuracy and confidence with their reading. Pupils who struggle receive support to help them catch up quickly. The school has supported staff to deliver the phonics programme. Despite this, not all staff check carefully enough that pupils sound out words accurately. The results in some pupils struggling to become fluent readers. These pupils do not progress as well through the phonics curriculum.

The school's mathematics curriculum is designed and sequenced well. This starts in the early years where children learn to use mathematical vocabulary accurately. Pupils regularly recall content, concepts and ideas that they have learned previously. For example, in Year 6 pupils use prior knowledge to solve problems involving common denominators. As a result, typically, pupils connect knowledge together, which helps them to know more and remember more.

In most subjects, pupils build their knowledge well. In geography for example, teachers routinely check what pupils know and remember. As a result, pupils confidently recall what they have learned previously. However, in some subjects, pupils' knowledge is less secure. They struggle to recall past learning. This is because teachers do not use assessment effectively to check on pupils' understanding in these subjects. As a result, gaps in pupils' knowledge are not identified. This means that pupils do not build their understanding of the subject securely.

The school supports pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. The school identifies the needs of these pupils with precision. This identification starts when children join the school in Reception. Pupils with SEND have effective support in place to help them to learn the same curriculum as their peers. As a result, these pupils progress well through the curriculum.

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. In the early years, children play well together. Staff address any low-level disruption quickly so that it does not interrupt learning. The school's focus on making sure that pupils attend school regularly is effective. It checks attendance carefully and works closely with parents to reduce absence. As a result, pupils attend school regularly.

Pupils' broader personal development is well considered and designed. The curriculum helps pupils to learn about different cultures, faiths and relationships well. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe and healthy, both physically, emotionally, and when online. The school enriches the curriculum through activities, trips and residential visits. This helps pupils to build their understanding of the wider world.

Those responsible for governance have an accurate view of the school's strengths and priorities for continued improvement. They provide appropriate support and challenge to school leaders. They ask the right questions to check on the quality of pupils' education. Staff value the 'open door' policy that exists within the school and appreciate how their views are considered and acted upon.

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 is not used effectively to check pupils have remembered what they have been taught. As a result, pupils struggle to recall their learning and do not build their knowledge well over time. The trust needs to ensure that teachers use assessment effectively in all subjects so that pupils build their knowledge and understanding securely.

- There are variations in the quality of delivery of the school's phonics scheme. Not all staff check that pupils sound out words accurately. As a result, some pupils do not learn to read as well as they could. The trust should ensure that all staff teach the agreed phonics scheme with precision to enable all pupils to read confidently and fluently.

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	144290
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10298055
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	185
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Lee Hallam
CEO of trust	Dan Buckley
Headteacher	Kathryn Pipe
Website	www.dobwalls.cornwall.sch.uk
Date(s) of previous inspection	28 to 29 January 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in February 2021.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider.

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, representatives from the local governing body and the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in following subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography and art. 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

Ashley Leeson

Ofsted Inspector

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