

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Kennall Vale School

Park Crescent, Ponsanooth, Truro, Cornwall TR3 7HY

Inspection date:

7 January 2025

Outcome

Kennall Vale School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Tamsin Cocks. 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 (CEO), Dr Jennifer Blunden, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Anita Firth.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Kennall Vale School enjoy coming to school. They get on well with each other and with the adults who support them. Pupils are friendly and polite. Their parents appreciate the caring environment and staff's commitment to ensuring that their children thrive.

The school's values, presented as 'Kennall Vale Cares', are central to pupils' experiences. Community, aspiration, respect, excellence and success underpin the work of the school. For example, being active in the local and wider community is a priority for the school. Pupils visit a local stroke club and also raise funds to help refugees in Europe.

The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils respond well to these expectations. They work hard in lessons and achieve well across the curriculum.

Pupils value the importance of kind behaviour. The youngest children settle quickly, learn to share and listen to others. Older pupils act as excellent role models. Pupils behave very well. Staff quickly deal with any rare issues of unkindness.

Pupils feel safe and valued here. They know adults care about them. In return, pupils trust and listen to their teachers. They understand this helps to keep them safe.

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

Pupils access a well-planned curriculum across a broad range of subjects. The school works closely with teachers to ensure that they are confident to teach each subject. Teachers select well-chosen activities that enthuse and engage pupils in their learning. Staff frequently revisit prior learning to check pupils' long-term recall of key knowledge. Teachers explore any misconceptions to help pupils with their understanding. They ask careful questions and give pupils the opportunity to practise what they have learned. Pupils develop a thorough understanding of the topics that they study and how these subjects interrelate. This supports pupils, including pupils with SEND, to achieve well.

The school has an ambitious approach to teaching writing. This supports pupils to learn the skills needed to become confident writers. However, on occasion, the school's high expectations of the quality of pupils' writing are not applied consistently across the curriculum. There is not a sufficient focus on the accurate use of grammar or precision in pupils' spelling in all subjects. This means some pupils are not reaching the high standards that they are capable of.

The school has a well-planned phonics curriculum in place. Staff are well trained to teach and assess what pupils know and can do. They ensure that all pupils, including children in the early years, keep up with the school's high expectations. Children in the Reception Year quickly learn how to listen to and follow instructions. Pupils read from carefully chosen books that match the sounds they are learning. Older pupils learn to read with fluency and confidence and discuss books maturely. Initiatives such as 'reading with Rhubarb' create excitement about reading. This involves pupils taking home a book to read with a hot chocolate and a cuddly toy representing Rhubarb, the school dog.

The school quickly identifies the needs of pupils with SEND. It seeks advice from external specialists when needed. Staff give pupils with SEND all the help that they need to follow the same curriculum as their peers. These pupils participate in everything that the school provides. Teachers adapt lessons so that all pupils access the curriculum well. The school provides additional resources for pupils who need them. Staff are adept at supporting pupils with SEND, which helps them to grow in confidence and independence. Pupils with SEND thrive at this school.

Pupils' attendance is high. When leaders identify pupils and their families in need of extra support to improve their attendance, they provide effective resources, advice and help. The school is doing everything possible to maintain good attendance and punctuality.

The school has a well-thought-through personal development programme. Pupils talk with understanding about issues such as equality, racism and prejudice. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils develop leadership skills, for example through involvement in decisions about spending funds or by being members of the school council.

Leaders at all levels have established a clear and ambitious vision for the school. Trustees and members of the local management committee know the school well. The school

supports staff with an appropriate range of training. Staff appreciate the good links they have with other staff across the trust. This supports them to develop their practice, helps them manage their workload and increases their confidence in the work that they do.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's high expectations of the quality of pupils' writing are not consistently implemented across all subjects. Consequently, some pupils are not reaching the standards they are capable of. The trust should ensure that teaching enables pupils to write well, with accuracy and precision, across the curriculum.

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 the predecessor school, Kennall Vale School, to be good for overall effectiveness in January 2012.

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	143873
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10344794
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	130
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Anita Firth
CEO of the trust	Dr Jennifer Blunden
Headteacher	Tamsin Cocks
Website	www.kennall-vale.cornwall.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 December 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Truro and Penwith Academy Trust.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2023.
- The school does not make use of 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. 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, trust leaders, the chair of the trust and members of the local monitoring committee.

- Inspectors 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, 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 their safety.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. They also took account of responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Mark Burgess, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jonathan Gower

Ofsted Inspector

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