

Inspection of a good school: St Minver School

Rock Road, St Minver, Wadebridge, Cornwall PL27 6QD

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 December 2022

Outcome

St Minver School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Minver is like one big, happy family. Pupils say it is a friendly place to learn. Everyone looks out for each other. Pupils are a credit to their families, themselves and the school. Pupils are proud of the school values to 'Be Brave, Be Kind, Belong'. They recognise how these values have helped them to take responsibility for what they do and how they treat others.

Nearly all pupils say bullying doesn't happen. On the very rare occasions when friends fall out, pupils say staff sort it out quickly. This helps pupils to feel happy and safe.

Pupils respond very well to the high expectations of staff. They show particularly positive attitudes to their learning. Staff know pupils' individual needs. They plan for and adapt lessons to meet the needs of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils rightly say lessons are interesting and fun. They enjoy the strong relationships promoted and secured by staff. Consequently, pupils of all abilities learn well and make a very positive contribution to their school community.

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

Leaders hold an accurate view of the school. They are ambitious for all pupils and ensure the curriculum is continually improved. For example, leaders have supported teachers to use new ways of delivering the curriculum. These are proving effective. Staff have time to embed new initiatives fully before new ideas are introduced. Leaders prioritise the well-being of staff appropriately.

Leaders prioritised the teaching of reading. As soon as children start Reception, they begin to learn sounds. Leaders provide appropriate training and have purchased books to support the approach to teaching reading. Staff know how to teach pupils new sounds and in what order. Consequently, pupils learn to read successfully and love being able to read independently from a very young age.

Provision in the early years is effective. Children make a flying start to their education. Staff use assessment well to promote independence and adapt indoor and outdoor learning areas. Staff support children to make good use of every moment to learn. From the very start, children enjoy the chance to learn rhymes and stories. This gives them a great platform to succeed as they move up the school.

Some parts of the curriculum are well established. For example, the curriculum design in mathematics is well considered and important knowledge sequenced carefully. The trust provides useful training and networking opportunities for staff. These strengthen the leadership in this subject. Leaders use strong subject knowledge to ensure that staff deliver the curriculum confidently. For example, the introduction of well-chosen questions help teachers develop pupils' reasoning skills effectively. As a result, pupils are confident mathematicians and show increasing confidence when solving problems.

Leaders have improved learning in subjects, such as history, geography and the arts. This has helped ensure that the curriculum is sequenced effectively and covers the scope of the national curriculum. Pupils enjoy their learning and find out about the past and where places are in the world. However, sometimes the focus on engagement, as opposed to learning important curricular content, means pupils do not develop the depth of knowledge intended. For example, in history, pupils speak confidently about things that have happened in the past. However, they are less secure at knowing how to be better historians and how to use different sources of evidence to write about the past.

Pupils' wider development is promoted exceptionally well. Leaders ensure that this is taught explicitly and constantly reinforced. For example, trips and visits are used to support and enhance the curriculum and to increase pupils' understanding of different cultures. Pupils learn about diversity, different types of family and the importance of democracy and the rule of law in many different ways. As a result, they are prepared well for life in modern Britain.

Parents recognise the impact this family-oriented school has on their children. Nearly all comment positively on the impact of teachers on their children's learning and development. However, some parents of children with SEND say that provision for their children is not as effective as it could be. They feel communication with them is not always clear. Leaders recognise it has been a difficult time since the COVID-19 pandemic. However, they are working to strengthen many aspects. Consequently, this is starting to have a positive impact on how well all pupils are included and provided for through the school's curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The safeguarding team meet regularly to discuss pupil welfare and any concerns that staff have reported. All staff know pupils and families well. This means that they can effectively identify any pupils or families in need of extra support. Staff are kept up to date with relevant information to ensure they remain vigilant. When necessary, safeguarding leaders work well with external professionals to secure any help that is needed.

Safer recruitment processes are robust. Safeguarding leaders are supported well by the trust to ensure that appropriate checks are made for adults who work at the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, there is not enough focus on ensuring pupils remember important curriculum content over time. As a result, pupils do not develop a deep understanding of the subject. Leaders need to ensure that they support teachers to be confident and develop the expertise required to deliver the curriculum successfully.

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, also named St Minver School, to be good in November 2011.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	141283
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10240832
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	152
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Penny Shilston
Head of School	Jo Rodwell
Website	www.stminver.org
Date of previous inspection	16 May 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- St Minver is smaller than the average primary school. The school has recently been restructured, so that there are now six classes instead of seven.
- Since the last inspection, a new head of school has been appointed. The school has registered to extend their early years to make provision for younger children from two years old.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection of the school since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector met with senior and subject leaders, the strategic partner from the trust and the special educational needs coordinator. The inspector also met with the hub councillor, who provides local governance oversight on behalf of trustees. The inspector discussed leaders' evaluations, priorities for improvement and the curriculum.
- The inspector did deep dives into three subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. As part of these deep dives, the inspector met with senior and subject leaders,

teachers and pupils. The inspector also visited lessons, scrutinised pupils' work and talked to pupils. The inspector listened to some pupils read.

- The inspector analysed 53 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online parents' survey and the free-text responses from those parents. He also analysed 15 responses to the staff survey and 54 responses from pupils to the pupil survey.
- The inspector analysed school documentation, including leaders' evaluations, paperwork relating to the work of trustees and the hub councillor. He scrutinised a range of policies and procedures, including those that relate to the curriculum.
- The inspector reviewed safeguarding arrangements by meeting with the designated safeguarding lead, reviewing safer recruitment processes and speaking to staff and pupils. School policies, governance arrangements, records of concern and links to other agencies were scrutinised.

Inspection team

Matthew Barnes, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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