

Inspection of Grade-Ruan C of E Primary School

Ruan Minor, Helston, Cornwall TR12 7JN

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 June 2024

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

The head of this school is Jane Talbot. 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, Vanessa Bragg, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Penny Shilston.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils achieve with increasing success at this improving, inclusive village school. They benefit from the school's values of aspiration, respect, wisdom and relationships running through their learning experiences. This helps to ensure that pupils learn to work and play together well, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities or pupils who are disadvantaged. As a result, this is a safe and welcoming place to come and learn for all pupils.

The school's recent work to improve the curriculum, supported significantly by the trust, is having a positive impact. This is particularly the case in English and mathematics. However, due to the amount that needs to improve, pupils do not learn consistently well across all subjects and in the early years. For example, pupils' learning in subjects such as history, art, music and geography remains limited.

Pupils are happy and like school. They recognise that staff care for them. They behave well and take pride in their work. Sometimes, pupils could do more because more could be expected of them. Nevertheless, parents, pupils and staff agree that the school is a safe and positive place. Pupils believe staff sort out issues well, on the rare occasions this is needed.

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

The school and trust have worked together effectively to turn around a previous decline in standards. Since the school joined the trust, both have utilised the opportunity to improve the curriculum systematically and determinedly. They have rightly started by ensuring pupils' learning in reading, writing and mathematics is secure. The impact can be seen in pupils' abilities and learning in these subjects. As a result, pupils are increasingly well prepared for their transition to secondary education.

However, other aspects of the school's curriculum are not as secure. The school and trust know there is a lot to do. They have planned carefully to ensure they improve the right things, in the right order and at the right pace. This means that, although the school now has clear, sequenced plans for all subjects, the implementation and impact remain too varied. For example, the trust has taken effective action to improve how provision in the early years is organised and the quality of resources available to support children to learn through their play. However, staff do not consistently help children learn vocabulary with precision. The resources used to support learning are not chosen carefully enough, which limits how much children learn.

Similarly, older pupils have significant gaps in their knowledge in some subjects. For example, pupils lack basic geographical knowledge and are not secure in their understanding of key historical concepts and vocabulary. As a result, gaps in pupils' knowledge from the historical weaknesses in the curriculum inhibit their ability to reach their full potential.

The use of assessment is more established in the stronger areas of the curriculum. Teachers use assessment in English and mathematics very effectively, including in the early years. However, the approach to assessment in other subjects is newer and so not as refined. This means that staff do not identify gaps in pupils' knowledge consistently. As a result, key gaps in pupils' knowledge persist.

Reading has the highest priority. The reading curriculum ensures pupils learn and enjoy reading. From the moment they start in the Reception Year, children begin to learn phonics sounds. This is built on effectively as they move into Key Stage 1 and beyond. Staff assess pupils' understanding regularly and robustly to ensure pupils stay on track. Support is given to those at risk of falling behind. Books taken home match precisely with the sounds pupils know. Staff share key texts and read regularly with pupils. Consequently, pupils make very strong progress in reading and learn to love stories, books and plays.

Pupils' wider development is promoted well. The school's distinctive ethos runs through all aspects of school life. The school has ensured that the curriculum extends well beyond the academic and that all pupils have equal access to what is on offer. For example, pupils participate in trips, visits and clubs and are encouraged to do so. Pupils are supported to be mentally and physically healthy in a range of ways. They enjoy the opportunity to learn to sail, for example. They understand why water safety is particularly relevant to help them to stay safe. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and know how to look after themselves.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Although curriculum planning is now secure, the teaching of the curriculum is inconsistent. This means that the quality of pupils' learning in different subjects varies, so they do not reach their full potential. The trust and school should build on and strengthen the implementation of the curriculum so that gaps in pupils' learning are closed and their outcomes continue to improve in all subjects.
- Provision in the early years needs refinement. The implementation of the early years curriculum is not considered carefully enough. This means that opportunities to learn through play or when working with adults are not used consistently to support children's progress. The school and trust should strengthen the organisation of learning in the early years to ensure children are better prepared for key stage 1.

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	140632
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10322280
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	69
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Penny Shilston
CEO of the trust	Vanessa Bragg
Headteacher	Jane Talbot
Website	www.graderuan.org
Date of previous inspection	21 February 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school is designated as having a religious character. Its last inspection under the Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools was in 2023 when it was judged good overall.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors 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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with leaders, including the executive headteacher, senior teacher and the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors spoke to a representative from the trust. They also met with the chair of trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors met 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 a sample of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at curriculum planning and listened to some pupils read.
- 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 took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including questionnaire and free-text responses. They also considered responses to the staff survey.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including those relating to governance, leaders' evaluations, plans for school improvement and information about the school's curriculum.

Inspection team

Matthew Barnes, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sarah Tustain

Ofsted Inspector

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