

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Probus Primary School

Ladock Road, Probus, Truro, Cornwall TR2 4LE

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 February 2025

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that aspects of the school's work may not be as strong as at the time of the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The head of school is Angela Praed. 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 (CEO), Rachel Warwick, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Penny Shilston.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school. They are happy and proud to be part of the Probus community. The school has high expectations of what pupils can achieve in English and mathematics. This is reflected in pupils' published outcomes. However, this is in stark contrast to parts of the wider curriculum. In some subjects, the school does not expect enough of pupils. Consequently, pupils do not learn well across some of the curriculum.

Typically, pupils behave positively. In lessons, they are engaged and enthusiastic about their learning. They listen well to each other when discussing their ideas. If bullying occurs, the school deals with this promptly. However, sometimes the school does not communicate effectively enough with its parents and carers about how bullying and other issues are resolved.

Mostly, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their need identified accurately. Sometimes, though, support is less well-considered. Where this is the case, pupils, including those with SEND, do not get the precise help they need to help improve their behaviour.

The school helps to break down barriers for disadvantaged pupils. For example, it ensures they have representation on the school council. This gives them a voice in the school.

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

The trust has supported the school to identify the precise knowledge that pupils need to learn. This supports staff in what concepts to teach. The trust has rightly identified that the curriculum needs further work in its implementation. It knows that too many pupils do not learn well beyond English and mathematics. It has started to work alongside staff to develop their teaching to help pupils learn more. However, some of these changes are at an early stage.

In lessons, teachers explain new learning clearly. They use questions well to encourage pupils to develop their thinking further. However, in the wider curriculum, too often teachers give pupils tasks that are not of high quality or do not match the intention of the curriculum. As a result, pupils do not develop a deep knowledge of concepts and struggle to recall their learning.

Furthermore, teachers' checks on how well pupils learn in the wider curriculum are not rigorous enough. Teachers do not use checks on learning effectively to make changes to future learning. The school is not clear how well pupils learn the wider curriculum or where they have gaps in their learning. As a result, pupils are not building their knowledge in some subjects securely.

Reading is central to the school's work. Typically, pupils learn to read well. Staff benefit from regular training to help them implement the reading curriculum effectively. They spot pupils who fall behind and help them catch up quickly to become confident, fluent readers. As pupils move to key stage 2, staff's strong subject knowledge supports pupils to read and interpret more challenging texts.

In mathematics, pupils learn new knowledge well. In the Nursery, children learn songs to help them identify numbers. In the Reception Year, children make 'potions' to understand capacity. Teachers ensure that pupils learn how to apply their knowledge successfully to reasoning problems.

The school ensures that children in the early years with SEND are identified swiftly. However, it does not have strong enough oversight for some of its SEND provision. While the school puts support for pupils in place, it does not check the effectiveness or appropriateness of this carefully enough. For example, it does not closely analyse the support in place to help those pupils who struggle with their behaviour. Consequently, the school is not clear if further adjustments for pupils are needed so that their needs are well met.

The school has a strong personal development offer in place. This considers the school's context. For example, the curriculum promotes diversity throughout. This helps to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. Pupils pursue their interests through a range of clubs. Some of these are led by pupils themselves. This develops their leadership skills. Pupils benefit from residential trips to broaden their horizons.

Pupils behave well at social times. Staff help pupils to resolve any fallings out. The school recognises pupils' achievements in assemblies. This helps motivate pupils to do their best. The school uses suspensions appropriately and proportionately.

Staff are proud to work at the school and want the very best for pupils. However, some staff feel they are not well supported. They, along with some parents and carers, feel that their concerns are not addressed properly. This is affecting some stakeholders' confidence in the school.

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 wider subjects, teachers give tasks to pupils that does not support them to learn the intended curriculum well. As a result, pupils do not secure a deep understanding of concepts, and they are unable to recall their prior learning well. The trust needs to ensure that teachers give meaningful, high-quality work to pupils that supports them to achieve the knowledge and skills outlined in the school's curriculum.
- In the wider subjects, teachers do not use assessment effectively. They do not check for gaps in knowledge or make adjustments to future learning well enough. The trust needs to ensure that teachers use assessment precisely to check pupils' knowledge and adapt learning so that pupils build on what they know, and any gaps are addressed.
- The school does not have a strong oversight for some of its provision to help pupils with SEND. It does not carefully check the impact of its support for pupils and make further adaptations accordingly. The trust needs to ensure that it checks the impact of its provision for all pupils with SEND so that these pupils have the appropriate support to help them succeed.
- Some staff and parents have mixed views about how their concerns are addressed. As a result, some relationships in the school are not positive and some concerns remain unresolved. The school and trust should ensure that the school addresses legitimate concerns and promotes positive relationships between stakeholders.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in May 2019.

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	143171
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10344748
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	215
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Penny Shilston
CEO of the trust	Rachel Warwick
Headteacher	Angela Praed
Website	www.probusschool.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	21 and 22 May 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Aspire Academy Trust.
- The school runs its own breakfast and after-school provision.
- The school has a nursery provision which admits children from two years old.
- The head of school took up her post in 2020.
- The school does not currently use any 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.

- The inspector met with the head of school, groups of staff, groups of pupils, the chair of the trust, the CEO and trust executive leaders.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.
- The inspector considered the responses to the online survey for parents and carers, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. The inspector also considered responses to the staff survey and responses to the survey for pupils.

Inspection team

Jason Edge, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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