

Inspection of Shortlanesend School

Northey Close, Shortlanesend, Truro, Cornwall TR4 9DA

Inspection dates:	17 and 18 June and 8 July 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The head of school of this school is Lisa McGinty. 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 attending Shortlanesend School. They appreciate the work that has been done to improve their experience at the school. Pupils are happy and are confident to talk to trusted adults in school if they have a concern. This helps them to feel safe. They behave sensibly in lessons and around the school. Pupils demonstrate respect for one another and are sympathetic to each other's needs.

The school is ambitious for pupils' achievement. Pupils are given the support that they need to learn well. Pupils currently achieve well in school as a result of the improving quality of education that they experience. However, in the early years, the school does not ensure that children are prepared sufficiently well for their progression into key stage 1.

Pupils benefit from a wide array of clubs, such as archery and chess. These are well attended and develop pupils' interests and teamwork skills. Pupils enjoy visits and residential, including a week-long trip to the Isles of Scilly. The school helps pupils to learn about themselves, their physical development and healthy relationships. Staff provide effective support to help pupils with their mental health and well-being.

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

The trust and leaders have worked hard to improve all aspects of the school. In 2024, pupil achievements in external tests were well below those seen nationally. Leaders have strengthened the school's teaching of English and mathematics and refined curriculums in many other subjects. This means that current pupils are learning well. Curriculums are well thought through and sharply identify what the school wants pupils to learn and in what order. The school has put Cornwall at the heart of its curriculum, which helps to develop pupils' knowledge and pride of the local area.

The trust provides high-quality training to help staff support pupils' learning. Staff have secure subject knowledge. In lessons, they revisit previous content to help pupils to make links with new knowledge. The teaching of vocabulary is prioritised to support pupils to broaden their language. Staff design tasks that focus on the most important knowledge and skills they want pupils to learn. This helps pupils to usually achieve well. For example, in mathematics, pupils apply concepts and methods to solve problems with confidence and accuracy. The school's checks of pupils' understanding are usually effective. Sometimes, information from these checks does not inform teaching and so learning is not moved on swiftly enough. This means that new content is not introduced in a timely manner.

The teaching of reading is a strength of the school. Staff provide pupils who struggle with phonics the extra help that they need, which means pupils keep up with their learning. The school's focus on improving pupils' fluency in reading is paying off. As pupils move through the school, they become increasingly fluent and accurate readers.

In the early years, the teaching of phonics is effective, but other aspects are less so. The improvements seen in the rest of the school are not yet seen in Nursery and Reception

classes. Changes in staffing have slowed the school's work to build on what children already know and can do. Sometimes, the school does not ensure that the delivery of its early years curriculum focuses sufficiently on the knowledge and skills that children need to secure. This means that the school does not challenge and prepare some children well enough to move into their next year group.

The trust has strengthened the school's work for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school has refined its processes to identify pupils with SEND. Staff adapt the teaching of the curriculum appropriately to meet the needs of pupils. They provide strategies such as visual prompts, physical resources and careful reshaping of tasks, which support pupils with SEND to usually achieve well.

The school promotes pupils' personal development effectively. The school has a well-established pupil parliament and several pupil councils, including an eco-council. Pupils are proud of these leadership roles and fulfil their roles dutifully. Pupils develop a deep understanding of the importance of democracy and the law. They are respectful about different religions and cultures.

Overall, pupils behave well. When pupils need extra help, the school provides nurturing support. Staff typically have high expectations and pupils respond positively to meet them. Pupils' attendance is usually positive. The school works effectively with parents and carers to ensure that barriers to attendance are removed.

Leaders care deeply about the school and its staff. Staff appreciate how leaders consider their workload and well-being when introducing changes. The trust has a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. It makes thoughtful decisions that bring about rapid improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Occasionally, the school does not move pupils' learning on swiftly enough. This means that some pupils' knowledge and skills are not as well developed as they could be. The school should accurately check pupils' understanding and use this information to inform teaching, so that new content is introduced in a timely manner to help pupils achieve consistently well across the curriculum.
- Expectations of children in the early years are not as high as in other parts of the school and the curriculum is inconsistently implemented. As a result, children are not prepared sufficiently well to move on to the next stage in their learning. The trust and the school should equip staff with the expertise to realise the planned curriculum and

promote children's language and communication skills to support them to deepen their understanding across all areas of learning.

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	142303
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10344694
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	153
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Penny Shilston
CEO of the trust	Rachel Warwick
Headteacher	Lisa McGinty
Website	www.shortlanesend.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	1 and 2 November 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Aspire Academy Trust, a group of 37 primary schools.
- The head of school started in her role in November 2024.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school has a before- and an after-school club for pupils who attend the school.
- The school operates a nursery provision on the school site. Currently only children aged three- and four-years old attend.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form

provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Through no fault of the school, one inspector returned to the school for further inspection activities on 8 July 2024.
- 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 school leaders, teaching staff and trust leaders.
- An inspector met with the CEO of the multi-academy trust and the chair of the trust board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and music. Inspectors spoke to subject leaders, staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum and looked at samples of pupils' work across several other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the school 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 reviewed a range of documentation, including school policies and information about governance.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in classes and around the school. Inspectors considered the views of pupils provided through an Ofsted survey. They spoke to pupils about their views and experiences.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, and the views of staff expressed in Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Laurie Anderson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Iain Freeland

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