

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

Five Lanes, Altarnun, Launceston, Cornwall PL15 7RZ

Inspection date:

17 June 2025

Outcome

Altarnun Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Lynsey Slater. This school is part of Athena Learning 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), Benjamin Parnell, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Elaine Marshall.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are friendly, well-mannered and respectful. They speak about their school with happiness and immense pride. They embody the school's values in the care that they show for each other. Pupils know that there is someone they can talk to if they are worried. They attend school regularly and feel safe. The school builds supportive relationships with parents and carers. One parent reflected the views of many, with the comment, 'All the staff are friendly and knowledgeable. I really can't praise the school enough.'

The school develops pupils' knowledge through a broad, ambitious curriculum. Staff have high expectations for pupils' learning. These expectations are realised. The school's vision for all pupils to 'Learn Together, Achieve Forever' is woven through the school curriculum. It is particularly effective for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Learning is supported by effective relationships with the local community and a range of specialist partners. Pupils leave Altarnun well prepared for the future.

Pupils enjoy a range of rich and varied experiences to enhance their learning, such as educational day trips and a residential visit to London. They particularly enjoy sports competitions and after-school clubs that foster their talents and interests, such as dance.

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

The school has designed a curriculum where the knowledge that pupils need to learn has been carefully selected and organised. For example, in key stage 2, pupils learn about the Roman Empire and the Gupta Empire. They use this knowledge to make connections to related physical geography, such as continents, climates and settlements.

In mathematics, the school has ensured that important knowledge is identified and is taught explicitly and deliberately. Pupils use mathematical knowledge confidently when solving complex problems. Pupils with SEND are supported through clear structured teaching that helps them succeed. However, the learning environment in the early years is not carefully considered to support the taught curriculum. For example, there are few opportunities for children to experience and grapple with mathematics in a real or practical sense.

The school places a high priority on early reading. Children learn to read as soon as they start school. Staff use consistent strategies to help pupils to learn new sounds quickly. If pupils fall behind, they are supported to catch up quickly and they do. Books that pupils read are matched correctly to their reading ability so that pupils learn to read with fluency and expression. The school expects pupils to read widely and often. In return, the school pledges that the youngest children will experience at least five reading opportunities each day. Consequently, they enjoy hearing many stories, songs and rhymes. Pupils choose books to read with interest and curiosity.

Pupils learn to organise their thoughts and structure their writing appropriately. However, other parts of the writing curriculum require further strengthening. For example, the school does not consistently identify and correct pupils' errors and misconceptions in spelling, punctuation and grammar. So, pupils continue to repeat the same mistakes year-on-year. This impacts on the quality of their extended pieces of writing over time.

The needs of pupils with SEND are identified swiftly and accurately. Staff make suitable adaptations to meet these needs, when required. Pupils learn the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. The school works well with the trust, external agencies and families to provide the best support for pupils with SEND.

Pupils attending school regularly is a priority. The school's successful approach includes regular checks and effective communication with parents. Pupils' conduct and behaviour are managed effectively. Staff reinforce the school rules with consistency. Pupils understand the school routines and trust staff to manage the rare incidents of poor behaviour fairly and swiftly. Parents appreciate the way that the school includes them in celebrating pupils' achievements.

The school ensures that pupils are suitably prepared for the world beyond the school gate. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and maintain healthy relationships. They understand how to stay safe online, at the beach and near traffic. They speak with conviction about the school values.

Staff well-being is central for leaders. Staff appreciate the support that the school offers. They feel valued and respected. The trust makes appropriate checks on the school's performance. Trust leaders encourage the school to search beyond what is available locally and nationally for fresh ideas and resources. Consequently, staff are ambitious and thirsty for new knowledge to enhance pupils' learning experiences.

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 approach to reviewing pupils' writing is not precise enough. As a result, some pupils repeat errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. The school should ensure that staff check pupils' writing and respond to any errors or misconceptions swiftly so that pupils improve the accuracy of their writing over time.
- The school has not ensured that the learning environment is used effectively to fully support and extend the learning of the children in the early years. Consequently, children do not learn as well as they could. The trust should ensure that staff receive appropriate training and guidance to promote purposeful play and independent learning for children in the early years.

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 March 2020.

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	140839
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10378948
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	52
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Elaine Marshall
CEO of the trust	Benjamin Parnell
Headteacher	Lynsey Slater
Website	www.altarnunprimary.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	4 and 5 March 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school provides a breakfast club.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's educational 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 spoke with school leaders, staff, parents, those responsible for governance, including the chair of the trust, the chair of the local governing body and the CEO.
- The 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, 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.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Additionally, the inspectors spoke to pupils to discuss their views about the school.
- The inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, and spoke to some parents at the start of the inspection. Inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Sue Costello, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lizzie Lethbridge

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025