

Inspection of Gulworthy Primary Academy

Gulworthy, Tavistock, Devon PL19 8JA

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| Inspection dates: | 7 and 8 May 2025 |
| The quality of education | Good |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
| Personal development | Good |
| Leadership and management | Good |
| Early years provision | Outstanding |
| Previous inspection grade | Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

The headteacher of this school is Melody Sterry. The school is part of Learning Academy Partnership multi-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), Tracey Cleverly, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Joanne Tisdall.

What is it like to attend this school?

This small rural school has high aspirations for what pupils can achieve. Pupils respond positively to the school's expectations. As a result, they achieve well and are prepared for the next stage of their education.

Pupils feel safe in school. They trust adults will listen and provide support when needed. Relationships are respectful, and pupils consistently demonstrate kindness towards one another. They have a secure understanding of fundamental British values. Pupils show tolerance and respect for people whose lives or beliefs may differ from their own. They are knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe both online and in the wider community.

Pupils speak with pride about their school. They value the opportunities it provides such as growing rhubarb in the school garden and using it to make crumble. Pupils take part in a broad range of enrichment activities, including competitive sporting events with other schools. There are also a variety of after-school clubs such as eco-club, film club and netball. These experiences support and promote pupils' talents and interests.

The curriculum is thoughtfully crafted with trips to locations such as botanical gardens to enhance pupils' scientific understanding. Visits to Anglo-Saxon villages bring history to life and deepen pupils' knowledge of the past.

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

The school has developed a well-structured and ambitious curriculum that enables pupils to build their knowledge and skills progressively over time. This ensures that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well across most areas of the curriculum.

Reading is a priority across the school. From the moment children start in the early years, they learn to read through a rigorous phonics programme which is delivered effectively by highly skilled staff. Adults have high expectations of what pupils can achieve in phonics lessons. They check pupils' understanding regularly. This helps to ensure that pupils are secure in the phonics knowledge they need before moving on to more complex learning. Any pupils who need extra help are identified quickly and receive timely support. As a result, pupils develop a strong foundation in reading and begin to develop a lifelong love of books.

The school has carefully considered the knowledge and vocabulary it wants pupils to retain across the wider curriculum. In subjects such as art, pupils articulate their understanding and discuss a range of artists and the meanings behind the work of different artists. However, in some subjects, the checks on pupils' understanding are not effective enough. This means that, sometimes, teaching is not adapted well enough to meet the needs of all pupils. As a result, some pupils complete work that is not ambitious enough, while other pupils do not develop a secure foundation of knowledge.

The school benefits from working closely with the trust to support pupils with SEND. The needs of pupils with SEND are identified early, and where required, suitable support is put in place. Despite this, the inconsistency in the checks of pupils' understanding means that in some subjects, pupils with SEND do not achieve as well as they could.

Children in the early years make a strong start. The environment is thoughtfully designed to build on children's interests and promote their natural curiosity. For example, children develop early scientific enquiry skills as they carefully unearth fossils using brushes, imagining themselves as palaeontologists. A clear focus on developing children's communication and language skills underpins all aspects of the provision. Children learn to take turns, develop independence and interact confidently with one another.

Behaviour across the school is positive. Pupils are respectful and courteous. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and supportive. Lessons are calm, and pupils work well with their peers. The school takes swift action to support any pupil who finds attendance challenging. As a result, attendance is high.

The provision for pupils' personal development is a strength. A wide range of enrichment opportunities enable pupils to broaden their horizons. For instance, pupils benefit from visits to theatres, universities and cultural landmarks. This helps pupils build their cultural capital. Leadership opportunities such as eco-councillors who care for the school garden develop pupils' sense of responsibility and increase their awareness of environmental issues, including sustainability.

Most parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They value the strong relationships staff build with pupils and appreciate the personalised care their children receive. Staff feel well supported and enjoy working at the school. Governance is effective. Trustees and members of the ethos and advisory committee provide appropriate challenge and support to school leaders, ensuring the school continues to improve.

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 subjects, assessment is not used effectively to identify how well pupils have secured the skills and knowledge they need. As a result, some pupils develop key gaps in their knowledge while other pupils are given work that is not demanding enough. The trust should ensure that teachers have the knowledge to use assessment effectively to inform curriculum implementation so pupils complete work that reflects what they are able to do and that gaps in pupils' knowledge reduce.

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

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| Unique reference number | 149729 |
| Local authority | Devon |
| Inspection number | 10379006 |
| 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 | 75 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Joanne Tisdall |
| CEO of the trust | Tracey Cleverley |
| Headteacher | Melody Sterry |
| Website | www.gulworthy-lap.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Learning Academy Partnership multi-academy trust.
- The school does not currently make use of alternative provision.

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

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and design and technology. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with teachers, 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 met with the headteacher, members of the school's senior leadership team, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, the trust CEO, trustees and members of the ethos and advisory committee.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- The inspectors gathered parents' views by considering the responses to Ofsted Parent View and by talking to parents. The inspectors also reviewed responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

James Gentile, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Matthew Shirley

Ofsted Inspector

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