

Inspection of Lydford Primary School

School Road, Lydford, Okehampton, Devon EX20 4AU

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 October 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The principal of this school is Adam Hill. This school is part of Dartmoor 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, Dan Morrow, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Tania Skeaping. There is also a primary lead principal, Phil Whittle, who is responsible for this school and thirteen others.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend Lydford Primary School. They describe it as an inspirational and happy school. Staff form caring relationships with pupils and know their families well. Pupils feel safe and know that adults are there to help them. They say that adults listen to them and support them with any worries.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. There is a calm and purposeful environment in classrooms. Pupils are keen to contribute in lessons. They treat each other with high levels of respect. Older pupils understand the importance of caring for their younger peers. They look out for them at playtime and at lunchtime.

Pupils relish opportunities to be part of the local community. They enjoy singing and reading to older village residents. Pupils contribute to the wider community as guardians of Lydford Gorge. Through this, they help look after a well-known tourist attraction by litter picking and path maintenance.

Pupils take part in a range of extra-curricular activities and visits. For instance, they take part in sporting competitions with other schools.

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

The school has high expectations for what all pupils can achieve. The school, supported well by the trust, has responded to address the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. A well-designed curriculum is now in place. It is ambitious for all pupils. The important knowledge pupils need to learn and remember has been clearly set out from Reception to Year 6.

Pupils learn to read well. From their start in Reception, children enjoy listening to stories. They quickly learn sounds that enable them to begin to read simple words. Regular checks on their learning mean that pupils build accuracy and confidence. Any pupils who struggle receive the support they need to catch up. Older pupils enjoy the texts they read and study. They appreciate the wide range of texts they can choose from, which help them to become confident readers.

The school has a well-designed and sequenced mathematics curriculum in place. Teachers use their subject knowledge to explain new concepts effectively. They check what pupils know and offer appropriate challenge to deepen their knowledge further. Pupils can make links with previous learning and understand how it helps them tackle new concepts.

In many subjects, pupils build knowledge well over time. In these subjects, teachers check how well pupils are learning the curriculum. They quickly address any gaps in pupils' knowledge and, as a result, pupils know more and remember more. However, in some wider curriculum subjects, checks on what pupils know and remember are not as effective. For example, in art, pupils could not reliably recall key information

about artists they had studied. As a result, some pupils develop gaps in their learning and do not build their knowledge as well.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff ensure that these pupils learn the full curriculum. Pupils' plans are precise and well thought out. When necessary, teachers adapt learning well to ensure that pupils reach their full potential. As a result, pupils with SEND learn the curriculum well.

Pupils enjoy school. They accept each other's differences so that everyone feels welcome at Lydford. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere around school. The school supports pupils to experience challenges and build resilience. Pupils say this helps to be self-confident. Children in the early years settle into new routines quickly. They take turns and play well together.

The school supports pupils' personal development well. It makes sure pupils understand diversity and equality. The school has chosen texts, visitors and visits that broaden pupils' understanding of life in modern Britain. Pupils understand the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships. They develop their sense of community through activities in the local village and surrounding countryside. Pupils talk confidently about fundamental British values such as democracy and tolerance. They understand why it is important to treat everyone equally.

Staff are positive about the trust's work to improve their practice. They benefit from working with colleagues from other schools and trust specialists to deepen their subject knowledge.

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 well enough to check that pupils have remembered the knowledge they have been taught. As a result, pupils do not build their knowledge well enough over time. The trust needs to ensure that teachers use assessment effectively across all subjects and use this information to inform future learning so that pupils embed and use knowledge fluently.

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 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	145332
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10268070
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	23
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Tania Skeaping
CEO of the trust	Dan Morrow
Principal	Adam Hill
Website	www.lydford-primary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 May 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is small compared to other primary schools nationally. Pupils learn in two mixed-age classes.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- There is a before-school club managed by the school.

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 the headteacher, the chair of the board of trustees, the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust and two trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum 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 samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- 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 observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at social times. They spoke with different groups of pupils to discuss their views of the school, their learning, their behaviour and safety.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View. They also took into consideration the responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Mark Burgess, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Julie Barton

Ofsted Inspector

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