

Biscovey Academy

Lamellyn Road, Par, PL24 2DB

Inspection dates 27–28 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Outstanding 1
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 are well above average.
- The headteacher, with the support of his senior leaders and staff, is determined to make the lives of his pupils richer as a result of their time at the academy. Excellent organisation of learning makes a very significant contribution to developing pupils' highly positive attitudes.
- The governing body provides highly effective support. Governors know their academy very well and they have an extremely clear vision of how it should develop to become even better in the future.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They are always positive and keen to learn in class. At other times, they treat one another with respect and tolerance. They say that behaviour is always good and that there is no bullying at the academy.
- Teaching is outstanding. Teachers know their pupils well and ensure that their planning is tightly focused on how to help each one make even better progress.
- Pupils achieve very well and have made rapid progress since the academy opened.
- Disadvantaged pupils make particularly strong progress. Those who have special educational needs make outstanding gains from their low starting points.
- The determination of leaders and governors has brought rapid improvements in the relatively short time the academy has been open.
- The arrangements to keep pupils safe and secure are exemplary and pupils feel very safe as a result.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all year groups across a wide range of subjects. On three occasions, they were joined by a member of the school’s leadership team. Inspectors met pupils at break and lunchtime to hear their views about the school.
- Meetings were held with governors, members of staff and pupils. A representative of the multi-academy Trust, which the school will join very soon, met with an inspector to provide its view of the school’s impact in its community.
- Inspectors took into account the views of the 45 parents and carers who completed the online Parent View survey, as well as of the 34 members of staff who returned their questionnaires.
- Inspectors scrutinised school documents, including its own analysis of the quality of teaching and of pupils’ progress and achievement. Governors’ minutes were reviewed as well as important policies such as those which show how the school keeps pupils safe.
- Inspectors heard pupils read and looked at their workbooks in different subjects.

Inspection team

Bob Pugh, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Richard Johnson	Additional Inspector
Caroline Bond	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Biscovey Academy is a junior school which has a similar number of pupils as in the average-sized primary school.
- Biscovey Academy became an academy school in January 2012. When its predecessor school, Biscovey Junior, was inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is close to the national average.
- The number of pupils who are known to be eligible to receive the pupil premium is above average. This is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds, with a very few of other European heritage. For almost everyone, English is the first language spoken at home.
- The headteacher is a Local Leader of Education.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment even further by providing pupils with more opportunities to improve their spelling.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher leads with determination and energy. Other leaders and staff share his view that only the best is good enough for pupils. The headteacher of another local school was full of praise for the support he has received.
- Leaders' systems for checking the academy's work provide them with precise information, very clearly presented, about how well everyone is doing. Members of the governing body and all staff know what needs to improve.
- Leaders, staff and governors are not complacent. Pupils' achievements in mathematics, reading and writing have improved since the academy opened because of the successful actions taken by academy leaders to improve teaching. They ensure pupils typically behave extremely well.
- As a result of highly effective training programmes and the setting of precise targets, academy leaders and teachers have driven up the standard of teaching so that it is typically outstanding. They have worked extremely hard in recent terms to ensure that changes to the curriculum make learning even more exciting and relevant for pupils.
- Middle leaders ensure that the themes around which the excellent teaching is organised provide pupils with exceptional opportunities for learning about modern British values as well as the lifestyles of people in other cultures and countries. They weave rich opportunities for learning about Cornish and other history into the themes. Opportunities are promoted for developing reading and writing effectively in all subjects. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very well met, for example, when they are taught about the art and craft of other countries.
- Academy leaders make sure that pupils understand that excellent behaviour is required if they are to learn really well by rewarding pupils with responsibilities when they are well behaved. Pupils understand the red, yellow and black card system which is used when their behaviour is not so good.
- Additional funding made available by the pupil premium has been used very well by academy leaders to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils, and to make sure that they can participate in out-of-school clubs and residential trips.
- Funding to promote pupils' physical development and sporting activities is used very successfully to extend the range of sports taught as well as to enable everyone to take part in competitions.
- The local authority provides suitably light touch support for this academy, especially through the provision of educational psychology and to help leaders monitor its safeguarding procedures.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is outstanding. Governors know their academy very well because they visit frequently, question the headteacher and staff about pupils' learning and achievements and provide conspicuously successful support for promoting high standards. Governors have ensured that arrangements for keeping pupils safe meet national requirements, including their own and staff training in child protection. They ask challenging questions about the deployment of resources. This means that they can be absolutely sure that their actions result in every pupil having an equal opportunity to gain as much as possible from their time at the academy.
 - Governors make sure that appropriate arrangements are in place for monitoring the performance of the headteacher and staff. They have undertaken training which enables them to interpret the information which academy leaders provide about pupils' progress. Governors know about the quality of teaching and the link between teachers' performance and salary progression. They have suitable arrangements to reward successful teachers.
 - They review all expenditure closely, including the additional funding for closing the gap for disadvantaged pupils.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. In class and around the academy site they are remarkably polite, courteous and tolerant of each other. They settle extremely quickly to work and participate keenly. For example, in a physical education lesson, pupils listened to their teacher very carefully to ensure they knew what to do and to keep safe. They kept up a very high rate of physical activity, stretching or jogging when it was not their turn to perform the main activity.
- Disruptive behaviour hardly ever occurs. On those very few occasions when it happens, teachers act

swiftly to ensure that it is dealt with effectively so that interruptions to learning are kept to a bare minimum.

- Pupils show immense pride in their academy by taking on responsibilities as prefects. They help new pupils to make friends. Before it opened, pupils were very keen to play a full role in designing the academy's uniform.
- Academy leaders maintain accurate records about incidents of challenging behaviour including references to how parents or carers have been fully informed.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Governors and staff know what signs to look for to keep pupils safe because they attend high-quality training regularly. Robust risk assessments ensure that pupils are as safe as possible when on visits or residential trips.
- Pupils say that they feel extremely safe at the academy and parents, carers and staff agree with this view. Pupils have no concerns about bullying of any kind. They know who will help them if they are worried.
- Highly effective teaching helps them to learn well about staying safe online, and information about this learning is shared with parents and families. They understand about common dangers in the local community such as busy roads and the railway line.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- The quality of teaching has improved since the academy opened. Outstanding teaching has enabled pupils to make swift progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers know their pupils extremely well and set challenging tasks which help each one to make strong gains.
- Teachers help pupils to build new skills by expecting more-able pupils to complete work which stretches them as much as possible. For example, in writing an account of how they had prepared a snack, the teacher expected more-able younger pupils to insert commas and full stops into their work.
- Pupils work well with their 'learning buddies' to think about how the things they learned in previous lessons can help them today. Teachers ensure that those who are struggling understand each part of the learning by offering well-pitched support and advice.
- Teachers ask questions which give them very good information about how well everyone is doing. Teaching assistants provide very effective support by helping groups and individuals to concentrate and work hard.
- Teachers make sure that there are many opportunities to read. The librarian provides particularly effective support in helping to improve pupils' reading. The precise records she maintains of books pupils have borrowed means that teachers can check how widely they are reading and suggest how they might enjoy stories by different authors.
- Excellent guidance for pupils is provided during lessons and when teachers mark pupils' books. Pupils' efforts to correct their mistakes can be seen through the additional work they carry out when teachers have spotted an error. However, sometimes pupils are not always aware of the spelling errors they make, which means that learning is not as strong in this area.
- Teachers demonstrate deep subject knowledge as well as a real enthusiasm for their work. For example, when younger pupils were learning to ask, 'How old are you?' in French, the teacher helped them to remember the words using a variety of different approaches. The impact of this could be seen when pupils moved around the classroom to question each other. They showed just how well they had understood because they spoke the words accurately making the correct sounds.
- Very good advice is offered to parents and carers about the importance of homework, so that they can help their children achieve as much as possible.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Pupils of all abilities have made rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their starting points when the academy opened. As a result, levels of attainment are well above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils are very well prepared for the next steps for learning and living. Pupils make particularly strong progress in reading and writing, but not such rapid progress in spelling.
- More-able pupils, especially in Year 6, make excellent gains in their learning in mathematics, reading and

writing. The employment of an additional teacher for this year group has helped pupils to achieve very well. As a result, the proportions who reach the higher Levels 5 and 6 in writing and mathematics are higher than the national average.

- The impact of very effective teaching is that the gap is closing between disadvantaged pupils and all others. Since the academy opened, disadvantaged pupils have made particularly strong progress in mathematics, reading and writing. A higher proportion reach Levels 4 and 5 in comparison with similar pupils
- The latest information on the achievement of disadvantaged pupils shows that there is no difference between their attainment levels in reading, writing and mathematics, and those of other pupils at the school in these subjects. There is no difference between their attainment and other pupils nationally. They have made rapid progress over time.
- Pupils who have special educational needs make outstanding progress from their low starting points. This is because their teachers track their progress rigorously and plan in detail to help them make the next steps.
- Pupils have many opportunities for improving literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects. For example, younger pupils wrote about their accounts of a visit to a nearby theatre. They provided colourful accounts of what they had enjoyed on their day out, recalling numerous interesting facts about the play they had seen.
- Because the physical education and sports funding is so well targeted, pupils' achievements in a range of activities are outstanding. For example, regular opportunities for cross-country running allow each to work towards, and then exceed, a 'personal best'. Many pupils participate eagerly in competitive games, such as tag rugby.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	137785
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	448624

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	284
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jan Williams
Headteacher	Roger Green
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01726 812949
Fax number	01726 812850
Email address	secretary@biscoveyacademy.cornwall.sch.uk

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