

Mousehole School

Address: Foxes Lane, Mousehole, Penzance, Cornwall, TR19 6QQ

Unique reference number (URN): 143442

Inspection report: 30 June 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Leaders ensure that pupils build the foundations they need in reading, writing and mathematics. This helps them to make excellent progress through the wider curriculum. By the end of key stage 2, pupils typically achieve more highly than other pupils nationally in end of key stage 2 tests, including those who are disadvantaged. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make secure progress from their starting points.

Pupils' work is of a consistently high quality across all subjects. They benefit from many opportunities to practise and refine their knowledge and skills. For example, pupils learn correct pencil grip from the start so their handwriting becomes fluent, joined and neat over time. The supportive learning environment allows pupils to take part in regular review and reflection. Because of this, they remember what they have been taught and apply it successfully when faced with new challenges. Therefore, pupils achieve well and are ready for their next stages of education.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Leaders hold ambitious expectations for pupils to come to school every day. They carefully check whether this is the case so they can act swiftly if concerns arise. As a result, attendance continues to improve, including for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Disadvantaged pupils' attendance is higher than other disadvantaged pupils nationally. Leaders work closely with families to promote positive attendance. They offer well-considered support, including a friendly start to the day in breakfast club. This helps more pupils to arrive on time.

Leaders set high standards of behaviour. They establish a calm, nurturing ethos, where learning is a priority. The school's 'golden rules' of confidence, respect and a love of learning run through everything they do. This means pupils behave impeccably. They are polite, courteous and respectful. Older pupils are positive role models for younger pupils and lead by example. They demonstrate the school's rules through their actions. Leaders keep a close eye on pupils' behaviour so they can respond to any changes in circumstance. They make sure that support for each pupil is right for them and help them learn how to regulate their emotions. Bullying is rare. If incidents occur, staff quickly help to sort them out.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

The curriculum is broad and aspirational. Leaders ensure that staff know what should be taught and when. They take great care to map out the most important knowledge, skills and language that pupils need to learn from the start of their education. Leaders place community at its heart and weave links to local people, places and events throughout. This is the 'golden thread' that pulls pupils' learning together, enriching their experience of the wider curriculum.

Staff are knowledgeable and choose the best vocabulary to explain learning to pupils. They ask probing questions to check pupils' understanding and provide them with careful

feedback. This helps them to swiftly identify and remedy any gaps in pupils' knowledge. Teachers enhance pupils' understanding across all subjects through well-designed tasks and resources. Therefore, pupils build on what they have previously learned with confidence. For example, older pupils accurately explain the water cycle and show a deep understanding of evaporation and cloud formation. This reflects the meaningful and complex connections that pupils make between different aspects of their learning. Leaders are determined for teaching to be as good as it can be. They continue to strengthen how well the curriculum is taught with support from leaders and experts across the trust.

Early years

Strong standard ●

Children make an excellent start to school life. As soon as they join Mousehole Mice Pre-school and Reception, children gain confidence from familiar routines and warm relationships. This helps them feel safe and nurtured. Children's wellbeing is paramount. Staff work alongside parents and carers to ensure any special educational needs and/or disabilities are accurately identified and met.

Leaders are very knowledgeable about the early years. They thoroughly plan the curriculum so that children build the foundations they need for future learning. Staff organise the early years environment with great care. They provide exciting activities that promote children's independence, purposeful play and concentration. Through this, children become curious, eager to explore and confident to try new experiences.

Staff effectively teach the curriculum and prioritise children's communication and language skills. These develop successfully because children regularly revisit new words through songs, stories and staff-led conversations. Phonics is delivered with precision, and children quickly learn to read. Staff make detailed checks on what children know and what they need to know next. They use this information to make changes to the curriculum so it reflects children's needs as they grow and change. In turn, children, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve well and are fully prepared for Year 1.

Inclusion

Strong standard ●

Leaders uphold high expectations for pupils and establish an inclusive culture, where they thrive. They show tenacity and determination to get the right support in place for pupils. Leaders work in partnership with parents and carers to understand any barriers to pupils' learning. They collaborate with external agencies and arrange specialist help for pupils who need it. Leaders review pupils' progress regularly. This helps them to carefully alter the support pupils receive. Pupils benefit from this approach and follow the curriculum with success. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are set precise targets which, when met, give them a sense of pride and achievement.

Leaders match staff training to pupils' needs. As such, staff know how to adjust teaching so that pupils understand new learning. They know pupils well and are skilled at using a range of individual adaptations. For example, they use visual prompts, short movement breaks, and resources that improve pupils' focus. These help pupils to take part in lessons and grow in confidence and independence. Leaders use the funding they receive to support disadvantaged pupils effectively. They provide opportunities and technology that enhance

disadvantaged pupils' learning and wellbeing. Because of this, all pupils feel included and know that they belong.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Leaders act in the best interests of pupils and aspire to the highest standards for all. They place pupils at the heart of every decision, not least disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders gather a wealth of information about how well pupils learn. They use this information to shape future priorities. They give focus, time and resources to the areas that need it most. Their actions make a positive difference to pupils.

Leaders' open and supportive approach fosters effective relationships with parents and carers. Leaders ensure they have an active voice through regular communication and surveys. Many parents express highly positive views of the school. They describe staff as caring and appreciate the wide range of opportunities on offer for their children. Leaders prioritise staff's workload, wellbeing and professional development. Staff feel extremely well supported and enjoy working at the school. The school benefits from the trust's guidance and expertise. Staff appreciate time to work together and share their experience with other schools in their trust. This has helped to develop a culture of professional learning.

Leaders and those involved with governance maintain effective oversight of the school and fulfil their statutory duties. They ask the right questions, so they know the context, priorities and strengths with depth. They use this knowledge to balance support for the school with appropriate challenge. Leaders and governors are committed to improving outcomes and wellbeing for all pupils. They provide clear direction and work together to achieve this.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Leaders have created an impressive personal development programme, which promotes and celebrates pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural growth. High-quality pastoral care underpins the school's ethos. Staff are alert to when pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, need extra support for their wellbeing. Staff provide pupils with necessary guidance and review the impact of this. This helps staff to adjust and personalise their approach. Because of this, pupils are well prepared to take part in the wide variety of experiences on offer.

The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum includes age-appropriate relationships education. Pupils learn about healthy relationships, online safety and how to manage risk. This equips pupils with essential life skills. Leaders make thoughtful adaptations to the PSHE curriculum to keep important aspects of local history alive. For example, the school recently received an award recognising its work in teaching pupils the Cornish language. Pupils attend a wide range of activities in their locality, including harbour skills, surfing and Mazey Day celebrations. In turn, pupils grow a rich knowledge of their community and heritage.

Pupils enjoy many opportunities that broaden their horizons, such as a trip to London to visit the Houses of Parliament. They watch professional musicians perform and grow an appreciation of music. They are keen to trial musical instruments and many pupils continue

to take up lessons. Pupils meet inspirational visitors, who widen their aspirations for the future. This has a positive effect on their sense of belonging and place in the world. Pupils gain a deep understanding of tolerance, diversity and the values important to life in modern Britain. Leaders strengthen pupils' learning through a carefully considered cycle of assemblies. Pupils learn how to be moral citizens and show respect for different world views. This helps them to develop empathy and an understanding of the world around them.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Mousehole School is vibrant and welcoming. Caring relationships and friendships enrich pupils' time at school. They thrive because of dedicated staff, who know them as individuals and want the very best for them. Pupils enjoy learning and take pride in their work. They pay attention during lessons because staff make them fun and engaging. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities quickly receive the support they need and are fully included in every aspect of school life. As such, all pupils flourish and achieve well.

The wider curriculum supports pupils to become active citizens in modern Britain. They play an important part in their school community through the many leadership roles they undertake. These include head pupil, school councillor, librarian and sports captain. Staff listen and act on pupils' suggestions. For example, they requested a Latin club, when their interest was sparked during history lessons. Pupils benefit from the school's focus on their wellbeing and mental health. Older pupils receive training to become mental health champions. They gain the skills to help their peers manage their emotions. Pupils know they have many people to support them if they have any worries. As such, pupils meet new experiences with enthusiasm and are ready to take their next steps.

Pupils take part in and lead a wide range of clubs, which develop their interests and talents, for instance, sports, reading and games. They delight in residential visits that build resilience and a sense of togetherness. Pupils behave exceptionally well. They happily socialise during breaktimes and say they do not have to worry about bullying. They feel confident that staff deal with any issues quickly and fairly. As such, pupils want to come to school. They attend regularly because they feel valued, important and part of a community that cares.

Next steps

- Leaders should continue to strengthen the teaching of the curriculum so that all pupils are exceptionally well prepared for future learning.

About this inspection

This school is part of Truro and Penwith 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, Dr. Jennifer Blunden, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Anita Firth.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMIs) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher and other school leaders, members of the trust board, members of the governing body and trust leaders.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school currently uses no alternative provision.

Headteacher: Sarah Trow

Lead inspector:

Lizzie Lethbridge, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspector:

Mark Burgess, Ofsted Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

This was the data available at the time of the full inspection, taken from [different sources](#). More recent data may have been published since the full inspection took place.

 The inspector(s) used this data during the full inspection on 30 June 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

100

Well below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

129

Well below average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

27.27%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

3.00%

Close to average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

6.00%

Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational needs support at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Above average

What does this mean?

Based on the English indices of deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

All pupils' performance

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standards in a combined reading, writing and mathematics measure.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	81%	61%	Above
2024/25 (final)	92%	62%	Above
2023/24 (final)	80%	61%	Above
2022/23 (final)	73%	60%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	93%	74%	Above
2024/25 (final)	100%	75%	Above

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (final)	87%	74%	Above
2022/23 (final)	93%	73%	Above

Pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	86%	72%	Above
2024/25 (final)	92%	72%	Above
2023/24 (final)	93%	72%	Above
2022/23 (final)	73%	71%	Close to average

Pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	98%	73%	Above
2024/25 (final)	100%	74%	Above
2023/24 (final)	100%	73%	Above
2022/23 (final)	93%	73%	Above

Disadvantaged pupils' performance

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	77%	46%	Above
2024/25 (final)	S	47%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	46%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	44%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	85%	62%	Above
2024/25 (final)	S	63%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	62%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	60%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	85%	59%	Above
2024/25 (final)	S	59%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	58%	S

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2022/23 (final)	S	58%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
Latest 3 year average	92%	60%	Above
2024/25 (final)	S	61%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	59%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	59%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Disadvantaged pupils' performance gap

Disadvantaged pupils are those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years and children looked after. The school disadvantage gap is the difference between the performance of the school's disadvantaged pupils compared to the performance of all non-disadvantaged pupils nationally.

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics, including the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	77%	68%	9 pp

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
2024/25 (final)	S	69%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	67%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	66%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in reading

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in reading and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	85%	80%	5 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	80%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	78%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in teacher-assessed writing and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	85%	78%	7 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	78%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	78%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	77%	S

Disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard in mathematics

The percentage of disadvantaged pupils meeting the expected standard in mathematics and the disadvantaged gap.

Year	This school	National non-disadvantaged score	School disadvantage gap
Latest 3 year average	92%	80%	13 pp
2024/25 (final)	S	81%	S
2023/24 (final)	S	79%	S
2022/23 (final)	S	79%	S

‘S’ in the table above indicates the data has been suppressed, which is usually due to small cohorts. The suppression rules applied by the DfE when publishing the data have been mirrored and applied in the report card.

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	5.6%	5.2%	Close to average
2023/24 (3 term)	6.4%	5.5%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	6.8%	5.9%	Above

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (3 term)	14.3%	13.0%	Close to average

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2023/24 (3 term)	23.5%	14.6%	Above
2022/23 (3 term)	20.5%	16.2%	Above

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

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