

Redruth School

Tolgus Vean, Redruth, TR15 1TA

Inspection dates 25–26 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Sixth form provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Since the last inspection students across the school are making better progress and as a result examination results improved significantly in 2014.
- There have been improvements in students' progress in all subjects including English and mathematics. In 2014, GCSE results in English and mathematics compared well to national averages.
- The proportion of students gaining GCSE A* and A is below the national average, though improving.
- There has been a relentless focus on improving the quality of teaching by senior and middle leaders.
- Students throughout the school have challenging targets and are responding positively. This is helping to increase their confidence and improving rates of progress.
- The school is very well led by the headteacher, who is very strongly supported by other leaders.
- Members of the governing body now play a more effective role in ensuring good progress by all students.
- The behaviour of students throughout the school is good, creating a calm and purposeful learning environment.
- The school's work in keeping students safe is outstanding. Students are confident that they are safe, and they know how to keep themselves safe.
- Close monitoring of the quality of teaching alongside improved additional training for teachers is promoting continuous improvement.
- The sixth form provides a good range of learning opportunities for students who successfully progress to the next stage of their development.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced and provides students with a sound base for adult life.
- The promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptional. There are very strong relationships throughout the school and with the local community.
- The school facilitates a wide range of opportunities for further development in sport, musical and other cultural activities. Through community service and fundraising for charities, students make an active contribution to their school and wider community.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Students do not yet show a thirst for knowledge and understanding, and a love of learning which would allow them to make outstanding progress.
- There are still gaps in the progress made by disadvantaged students and others.
- There is still more to be done to fully exploit the talents of all the most able students and so ensure that a greater proportion reach the very highest grades.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed students' learning in 40 lessons. Senior staff accompanied inspectors on most visits to lessons. In addition, inspectors made short visits to tutor time and an assembly and looked at the school's provision for disabled students and those who have special educational needs. One inspector listened to individual students reading aloud and talked to students about their reading. An inspector also made a brief visit to a presentation being given to younger students by visitors to the school.
- Meetings were held with four members of the governing body, senior and middle leaders, teachers and three representative groups of students. Informal conversations were held with students around the school between lesson times. An inspector had a discussion with a senior officer from the local authority focused on reviewing the progress made since the last inspection. There was a meeting with headteachers from three local primary schools.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, and examined samples of students' work to look at the rate of progress and the quality of the assessment and marking processes. They also looked at progress data, documents about the school's development and evaluation, safeguarding information and records about attendance and behaviour. The records showing the impact of professional development for staff were also examined.
- Inspectors took into account the views of 44 parents who completed the online questionnaire (Parent View) and a small number of other communications. All members of staff were invited to contribute their views in a questionnaire and 40 responses were received and taken into consideration.

Inspection team

Ann Cox, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jenny Cartwright	Additional Inspector
Matthew Hewitt	Additional Inspector
Cliff Mainey	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school has students in the age range 11 to 18; it is an average size secondary school, though the sixth form is relatively small.
- At the time of the inspection, students in Year 11 and Year 13 were not attending lessons; they had completed their courses and examinations.
- Almost all students are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of students who are supported by the pupil premium funding is slightly above the national average. This is additional funding to support students eligible for free school meals and children looked after by the local authority.
- In Years 7 and 8, a fifth of students benefit from additional help in mathematics and English, funded by the government's catch-up programme.
- The proportion of disabled students or those with special educational needs is slightly above average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- A very small number of students are educated off site, either at Nine Maidens APA, Redruth, or Glynn House APA, Truro.
- The governing body has also received support from the local authority and from the School's Improvement Partner, who conducted an external evaluation and has given further training since the last inspection.
- The school is a member of Challenge Partners which is a national group of schools working collaboratively to aid school development. Redruth School also collaborates locally with other schools including, for example, Falmouth School.
- In October 2013 the school was awarded the Specialism Quality Mark in Physical Education, the school actively encourages use of its facilities by all members of the local community.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Secure the improvement of teaching from good to outstanding so that all students make exceptionally good progress by:
 - expanding the skills of students to learn to the very best of their ability in all situations
 - accelerating the progress made by the most able students so that an even greater proportion gain the highest grades.
- Build on the successful strategies of providing help to students who are entitled to the pupil premium support, to further reduce the gaps in progress between different groups of students.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The school is very well led by the headteacher who is totally focused on securing the best possible learning and outcomes for all students.
- Since the last inspection there have been numerous changes in the staffing of the school. The headteacher is now extremely well supported by senior leaders and middle leaders who share the vision of high ambition for the whole school community.
- The school's leadership has focused unrelentingly on improving the quality of teaching. The targets for students' progress have been set at a higher level, the monitoring of the quality of teaching is systematic and rigorous, and support is given to teachers who need further training to reach the required level of competence. Inspectors found that there is a very strong culture of accountability for students' progress at all levels among the school's staff. These measures have ensured an improvement in the quality of teaching.
- Middle leaders have a clearly defined role in ensuring that the quality of teaching is good and improving. They work collaboratively with their colleagues, helping to share ideas about the most effective teaching. Leaders are aware that the school needs to sustain the rate of improvements to secure even better progress in learning.
- The school has a detailed self-evaluation. Action plans are based on the identified needs and monitoring at all levels ensures that effective improvements are being made. Inspectors agreed with the current self-evaluation and fully endorsed the school's judgements.
- Leaders have ensured that the school gives good attention to developing students' literacy skills; dedicated reading time and the use of reading quizzes help to encourage students to read widely. Close attention is given to the use of correct technical language in all subjects. An inspector listened to younger students read aloud; there was evidence that students can use a range of strategies to make sense of unfamiliar words.
- The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum to students, preparing them well for the next stage of their education or training. The curriculum includes options such as a triple GCSE science award, and vocational courses for students who have an interest in practical work. The sports facilities of the school encourage participation in a wide range of activities, for example an inspector visited Year 7 students having a water polo lesson in the school's pool. A wide range of opportunities offer chances to develop interests in sport and music, for example.
- Students are given access to unbiased advice about their future education and careers. They are made aware of the range of options open to them, and their aspirations are raised by building self-confidence.
- The school strives to ensure that there is equality of opportunity, good relations are promoted, and there is no discrimination. A comprehensive programme of lessons, assemblies, visits and other events ensure that students are very well prepared for life in modern Britain. Examples include one 'enrichment day' being devoted to the study of major religions. There is an annual visit to Auschwitz, and local police officers attend the school to help students learn about civil and criminal law, and the risks of radicalisation and extremism.
- Leaders look carefully at the impact of the actions taken to support students entitled to the pupil premium and catch-up funding. A wide range of strategies are used, including personalised help for pupils and additional staffing for small groups. By examining the impact of this additional help, leaders have been able to develop the most effective strategies and as a result the gaps between groups of students are now narrowing. The school is aware that there is still more to be done to close these gaps.
- The school develops all aspects of students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development very well. The school has a comprehensive action plan to ensure that students are given many opportunities to develop in these areas, promoting their development as responsible members of society. These learning chances are sometimes special events, but are also woven into many learning activities. Celebrating Cornish events such as St Piran's Day helps them to understand their own cultural heritage and local influences. Moral awareness is raised when staff ensure that students who have broken conduct rules understand why their actions are unacceptable. Social awareness is raised through active fund raising for charities which are chosen democratically by students.
- The local authority has worked effectively with the school to help it improve. The school's leaders are very open to collaborative work with other establishments, both locally and further afield. The partnership with Falmouth School is an example of shared improvement work.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding students meet all statutory requirements and are highly effective. The school checks that students are safe while on site, and also ensures students have a

thorough understanding of the risks they face, and how to minimise these risks in a reasonable manner.

- The school works very closely with alternative providers to ensure that students are making good progress on courses which are appropriate for their needs.
- Close working with local primary schools ensures a smooth transition from primary to secondary school; students told inspectors that this helped them to make a confident move. For older students, the school's work with trainers and other educational establishments ensures that students are well informed about the range of choices available to them; they transfer and progress very successfully with extremely rare exceptions.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Since the last inspection there have been several changes in the membership of the governing body which has also reorganised the way it operates. The effective work of the governing body has helped to drive up standards across the school.
 - Governors have been given further training and they are now confident to closely examine information about the progress of students. They hold the school's leaders to account; participating in planning for improvement and also reviewing the progress against targets. Governors are very well informed about the work of the school; for example they receive regular reports and invite middle leaders to their meetings in order to discuss the school's progress in detail. Governors make regular visits to the school and endeavour to make themselves accessible to parents, for example by attending school functions.
 - Governors have an overview about the impact of teachers on their students' learning; they ensure that salary progression is linked to progress against targets for students' outcomes.
 - Governors and senior leaders have worked diligently to reduce the school's deficit budget. They monitor the effectiveness of spending, including the pupil premium funding, to ensure that there is a positive impact in closing gaps between groups of students. They meet all their current statutory duties, including arrangements for the safeguarding of students.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good.
- Students have a positive attitude to learning. They want to learn and be successful and this helps to ensure that they are making good progress across all subjects.
- The school acknowledges that further work is needed to equip students with the skills to develop their learning strategies to the highest level and secure outstanding progress. In some cases, for example, the pace of learning drops off if students perceive that a task has become too challenging, or if they lose interest.
- Students display enthusiasm in all types of learning environment; they work productively in small groups, in practical work and physical education as well as in the classroom.
- In learning activities students co-operate readily and follow the instructions of adults quickly. Inspectors did not see any instances of low-level disruption; students confirmed that this is typical. On occasions some pupils lose focus on what they are doing, but they quickly resume their learning activities after a prompt from their teachers.
- Students are very proud of their school environment and look after the physical resources extremely well. They wear their uniform smartly, and representatives of the school council told an inspector that students actively support the school uniform rules, and they have high expectations of their peers.
- Students arrive at lessons promptly and with the equipment needed; they settle quickly to their learning activities.
- The attendance of students is good. It is monitored carefully and when necessary, action is taken to follow up absences. Good attendance has been maintained over time but not yet improved to outstanding.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding.
- Students have very good awareness about different forms of bullying including prejudice-based bullying and cyber bullying. They are given thorough practical advice in various ways and they know about risks and how to keep themselves safe. Students themselves run a scheme known as "helping hands" to offer peer support to students who have a minor problem. Students were clear that if a more serious problem is reported to the school it is dealt with rapidly and effectively; bullying in any form is not tolerated. All members of staff who communicated with inspectors endorsed this opinion. Almost all parents agreed with

this view; there were no well-founded concerns expressed by parents.

- Students are mindful of the need to behave in a safe manner at all times, for example when carrying out practical work. When moving around the school they act maturely and overcome obstacles such as narrow corridors without the need for close supervision.
- Students are respectful to each other, staff and visitors to the school. Inspectors did not witness any use of derogatory or aggressive language, for example, and evidence from the school's records confirms that instances of such behaviour are extremely rare.
- The attendance and behaviour of students attending alternative provision is monitored carefully; there is highly effective liaison between the schools and the members of staff responsible for checking all aspects of students' attendance and safety.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Since the last inspection there has been an unrelenting drive throughout the school to secure improvements in the quality of teaching. Across the school standards of teaching are consistently good and sometimes better; this is helping to ensure that nearly all students are making good progress.
- Expectations are high throughout the school. Students have challenging targets. A student remarked to an inspector 'Teachers expect the best from us, and we expect the best from them.'
- While senior leaders initiated changes, now the middle leaders are being much more effective in driving up standards. Middle leaders lead a weekly presentation to teachers; this is a popular event which teachers value for the positive impact it has.
- There is a systematic programme to monitor the effectiveness of teaching. Good practice is shared, and where any deficiencies are found, teachers are given good support to help them to improve. The programme of further training for all teachers has been a driving force; all teachers accept that they are responsible for the progress of their students. Joint observations between inspectors and the school's leaders showed very close agreement about standards.
- Teachers plan lessons for students so that they have interesting activities to help them learn. Usually students are given tasks which are appropriate for their ability, though sometimes the most able students are not sufficiently challenged and so they do not sustain rapid progress. The best learning takes place when teachers change the activities and approach if there is any sign that rapid progress is not being maintained.
- More effective teaching has resulted in a greater proportion of students gaining the highest GCSE grades, particularly in English, but the school's results do not yet match the national proportions. The school's tracking data indicate improvements; these are yet to be confirmed in examination results.
- Throughout the school students' work is marked regularly. The school has developed a marking policy which is highly beneficial. Feedback from teachers includes advice for improvements; students are required to respond to this in the 'blue is best' scheme to demonstrate that they have acted upon this advice. Students told inspectors that they find this approach helpful to their learning.
- The school has formalised its assessment processes so that the progress of all students is monitored carefully and regularly. Teachers cross-check their marking with colleagues so that there is consistency. The results of assessments are tracked centrally so that if any student is in danger of falling behind they can be given help quickly; this enables them to catch up.
- Younger students have been engaged in a curriculum project designed to promote deeper engagement and understanding, for example they made a visit to the Eden Project to make chocolate from raw materials. They are soon to publish a book to which all members of Year 7 have contributed. The school is very encouraged with the progress being made by these students, and students confirmed that they enjoy this work.
- Other adults are used effectively to help students who need more support. All members of staff give good attention to the specific needs of students so that all groups can learn well.
- The development of literacy skills focuses on giving students the skills to cope well with the terms used in all subject areas.
- The attention devoted to reading includes teaching strategies to deal with unfamiliar words effectively so that students can confidently tackle new words or phrases.
- The teaching of mathematics has been strengthened; students are now making better progress and show confidence when using numeracy techniques in a range of subject areas.

The achievement of pupils is good

- In 2014 there was a marked improvement in the proportion of students who gained at least five good GCSE grades including English and mathematics; the school's results were better than the national average in 2014. Attainment of students in 2014 was broadly average, across most subjects.
- In most year groups students enter the school with skills and knowledge which are below the national average. Data about the progress of students from these starting points show that they made better than average progress in nearly all subject areas 2014. This represents a significant improvement over previous years.
- The progress of current students in lessons was observed to be good by inspectors; this was confirmed by the progress shown in samples of their work and the school's tracking data. This indicates sustained improvements in progress data for all age groups.
- Disadvantaged students are given help to catch up with their peers and the school's data show that the school has developed strategies which are now showing success in reducing the gaps. In 2014, there was a gap in English of nearly one GCSE grade for disadvantaged students compared to the school's other students. In the same year, there was a bigger gap of over one grade in mathematics.
- The gaps between the school's disadvantaged students, and other students nationally, were about half a GCSE grade in English, and over one grade in mathematics. However, scrutiny of progress data shows that from their starting points, disadvantaged students made significantly better progress in mathematics compared to other students nationally, and good progress compared to other students nationally in English.
- The school's monitoring data indicate that for current students the within-school gaps are now closing even though all groups of students are making more rapid progress overall.
- The proportion of students who gain the highest grades at GCSE English and mathematics is below the national average.
- The progress of the most able students showed improvement in 2014. In English, the most able students made progress which compared very well with the national progress data, while the progress of the most able in mathematics was in line with national averages. The school is ambitious to further accelerate the progress of this group of students.
- Students who are disabled or have special educational needs are supported in a variety of ways which enable them to make good progress. The school ensures that their individual needs are met so that they make progress which is in line with their peers.
- The school does not enter any students early for GCSE qualifications.
- Students who attend alternative provision make good progress from their starting points. They gain qualifications which allow them to progress to further training and employment.

The sixth form provision is good

- The quality of teaching in the sixth form is good. Across a range of subjects and qualifications all groups of students make good progress from their various starting points. Students securely gain knowledge and understanding and develop useful skills. The level of qualifications achieved is in line with national expectations and meets expected standards, given the starting points of these students.
- The sixth form leaders ensure that students access courses which are appropriate for their abilities and interests. Students are also given effective advice about how they can progress to further training, education or employment. This is highly successful and so in recent years no student has failed to make a successful transition to the next stage.
- Provision includes appropriate courses in mathematics and English for students who did not achieve at least GCSE grade C previously. The school's tracking data indicate that current students are making better progress in these areas than in previous cohorts.
- Sixth form students are helped to develop their study skills to prepare them for the next stage of their education or training, including progression to university.
- The school ensures that students access information about how to keep themselves safe and make appropriate choices as they enter the adult phase.
- Sixth form students fully participate in the school community; there is an expectation that they will spend at least one hour each week offering a service to the community in various ways. This helps them to develop as effective citizens as they cultivate their organisation and leadership skills. In a variety of ways they gain personal, social and employability skills.

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	112054
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	462526

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation Trust
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	950
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	109
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ross Williams
Headteacher	Craig Martin
Date of previous school inspection	1–2 October 2013
Telephone number	0120 9203700
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