

Inspection of Saltash Community School

Wearde Road, Saltash, Cornwall PL12 4AY

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 December 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Sixth-form provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Saltash is a welcoming school where staff and pupils have a strong team spirit. The school bases its values of tenacity, empathy, aspiration and motivation around this team approach. Pupils enjoy coming to school and feel safe. They study a broad range of subjects. However, leaders have not acted quickly enough to improve the quality of education that pupils receive. Teaching of the curriculum has weaknesses. As a result, not all pupils are well prepared for the next steps in their education.

Staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour in lessons. Consequently, most pupils show a positive attitude to their learning. Bullying is rare. If it happens, leaders act swiftly and effectively.

Pupils enjoy the extra-curricular life of the school. They participate in activities that include cookery, playing board games and watching French films. These activities introduce pupils to new interests and develop their confidence. Students in the sixth form get involved in the wider life of the school. For example, students lead 'Active Breaks', a programme which encourages healthy lifestyles.

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

Since the previous inspection, leaders have developed an effective curriculum for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). A broad and well-sequenced curriculum now runs from Year 7 to Year 13. The range of courses for students in the sixth form is appropriate.

The work that teachers give to pupils and how they present it does not always reflect the aims of the curriculum. As a result, some pupils do not learn as well as they could.

Teachers have appropriate subject knowledge. They use the outcomes of assessments to plan what pupils learn next. However, in some subjects, pupils' understanding of new content is not routinely checked. As a result, pupils have gaps in their knowledge and develop persistent misconceptions.

Teachers understand the needs of pupils with SEND. They adapt what they do to help pupils learn effectively. The area resource base for pupils with complex learning needs enables pupils to follow an appropriate curriculum. Where possible, pupils also attend lessons in the main part of the school. This enables them to experience a greater range of subject teaching and feel part of the wider school community.

Leaders provide help for pupils who are at the early stages of learning to read. However, leaders do not always organise this support with enough rigour. As part of the school's wider approach to reading, staff read a rich and diverse range of texts to pupils. This develops pupils' understanding of important issues in society. Students in the sixth form also read to younger pupils.

Leaders have acted effectively to improve pupils' behaviour. Pupils understand and respect the school's approach to rewards and sanctions. Pupils want to meet the high expectations of staff. As a result, low level disruption in lessons is rare. While some poorer behaviour occurs outside of lessons, on corridors or during social times, this has begun to reduce.

The curriculum to support pupils' wider development is detailed and age appropriate. It emphasises the importance of speaking respectfully to others. Pupils challenge inappropriate comments and report them to a trusted adult. Pupils learn about protected characteristics. The school is inclusive and celebrates diversity. Students in the sixth form value the continued focus on their personal development.

The careers programme is effective. Pupils complete work experience in Year 10 and Year 12. The school support pupils who struggle to secure placements. A post-16 pathways evening supports pupils in considering their next steps. The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause.

Staff are proud to work at this school. Leaders consider staff well-being and workload when introducing new initiatives.

Since the previous inspection, leadership, including governance, has strengthened. Governors now better understand their responsibilities and the school's priorities. Governors support and challenge leaders. However, governors and leaders have not acted swiftly enough to deal with areas of weak practice. As a result, improvements to pupils' education have been slow.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Systems for reporting and recording safeguarding concerns are thorough. Staff build strong relationships with pupils. As a result, pupils say they feel safe and would report any concerns to them. There is a positive culture of safeguarding.

Leaders quickly identify pupils who may be at risk of harm. They work effectively with external services. They ensure that pupils and their families receive timely support.

All staff and governors receive regular and appropriate safeguarding training. Leaders carefully monitor patterns in safeguarding incidents.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The work that teachers give to pupils, and how they present it, does not always meet the aims of the curriculum. Therefore, some pupils are not able to build successfully on what they already know. This hinders their progress through the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that all pupils receive appropriate work that is clearly explained so they are best able to learn.
- In some subjects, checks on pupils' understanding are not frequent or careful enough. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge or develop misconceptions which persist. Leaders should ensure that assessment of what pupils know is effective across all subjects.
- Leaders, including governors, have not acted quickly enough to improve the school. As a result, weaker practice has continued to have a negative impact on pupils' education. Leaders and governors should act regularly and effectively to improve the quality of education across the school.

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](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	136575
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10247341
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1215
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	163
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Richard Newton Chance
Headteacher	Kate Littleddyke
Website	www.saltash.net/
Date of previous inspection	14 and 15 May 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses two registered and three unregistered alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, the special educational needs coordinator, curriculum leaders, the chief executive officer of the trust, the chair of trustees and a group of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, geography, modern foreign languages, and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, looked at curriculum planning, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised the single central record of adults working in the school. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader to consider how well the school identifies pupils who are at risk and engages with external services. Inspectors also spoke with a range of pupils and staff about safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents and carers, Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors also considered responses to the staff survey and responses to the survey for pupils.

Inspection team

Kelly Olive, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
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Helen Coulson	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Watson	Ofsted Inspector
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