

Camborne Science and International Academy

Inspection report

Unique reference number	136524
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	382064
Inspection dates	22–23 February 2012
Lead inspector	Jonathan Palk HMI

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

Type of school	Academy convertor
School category	Community
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	1312
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roger Penwarden
Headteacher	Ian Kenworthy
Date of previous school inspection	3–4 December 2008
School address	Cranberry Road Camborne TR14 7PP
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Age group	11–18
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Introduction

Inspection team

Jonathan Palk	Her Majesty's Inspector
Judith O'Hara	Additional inspector
Simon Rowe	Additional inspector
Carl Winch	Additional inspector
Kevin Wright	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 46 lessons, taught by 44 teachers across the full range of subjects. Six lessons were observed jointly with senior staff, and inspectors also visited sessions to evaluate the additional provision for disabled students and those who have special educational needs. Inspectors met with five groups of students to listen to them read and to discuss their reading progress, to evaluate the quality of their work in lessons, to explore their views about behaviour and safety and to discuss learning with those who have special educational needs. Inspectors observed the academy's work and looked at a range of documentation underpinning self evaluation. They considered the responses of members of staff students and those of 953 parents and carers who completed the Ofsted questionnaires.

Information about the school

Camborne is a larger-than-average community college that converted to an academy in April 2011. There is a high level of social deprivation in the area, although the proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is above average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs is similar to the national context; these students have visual impairment, moderate learning difficulties, speech and language difficulties or social, emotional and behavioural needs. A few students have alternative provision at the nearby Cornwall College. The academy meets the government floor standard. There has been significant staff mobility at a senior management level since the last inspection. The academy sits on the steering committee of the International Student Science Fair, and attends the event annually.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good academy that has consolidated its many strengths. The sixth form is good and success rates into university have increased over time. Parents continue to be overwhelmingly positive about their children’s experiences at Camborne and the vast majority returning the Ofsted questionnaire would recommend the academy to others. The academy is good rather than outstanding because there is still work to be done so that all lessons maintain boys’ interests, reduce the occasional low level disruption and ensure the more able students meet the higher expectations asked of them.
- The majority of students make good progress. Students who are behind with their reading and numeracy skills catch up quickly to where they should be. Almost all students go on into education, employment or training at 16.
- Teaching and learning are good across the academy. There is a consistent approach to lesson planning, and clear expectations of what is to be learnt and how. Information on students’ progress is shared effectively with the students and teachers, which helps accelerate learning in lessons. There are still some lessons where learning is only satisfactory because teachers overly direct the learning, questions are not challenging enough and there are insufficient prompts for developing writing skills.
- The students enjoy being in the academy and their views are respected and valued. They are safe and well looked after because discipline is firm and fair. They behave well. Attendance is good and there is very little exclusion.
- The principal is supported by a strong team of leaders and managers. Tough decisions have been taken by the governing body to address weak teaching, and poor subject leadership. The team works well together and has the expertise required to ensure that all teaching becomes at least good, and more is outstanding.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of lessons that are outstanding by January 2014, by:
 - improving the pace of all lessons so that students get down to learning quickly
 - providing more support for literacy to those who still struggle with their writing
 - helping higher attaining students build their ideas and challenge their thinking through challenging questioning and appropriate extension activities.

- Improve boys' attention in lessons so that all boys remain on task and can learn well, by reducing the proportion of time teachers spend directing the learning and give more time for boys to take charge of their own learning.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

The majority of students starting at Camborne Academy have below average prior attainment. Inspection evidence supports the views of the overwhelming majority of parents and carers that students' achievements are good. The resilience and growing confidence of students are strengths among all ability ranges in all the lessons seen. As a result of the good analysis of progress data and an understanding of their needs, those students who are lagging behind others and those with special educational needs are well supported with modifications to the curriculum. The additional reading sessions and use of technological aids for students in Years 7 and 8 are used well to encourage boys in the reading habit, and has helped to rapidly improve these students' achievement. The library and displays around the academy promote and encourage good literacy and communication skills.

The evidence from past test and examination results shows that the majority of students go on to reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 11. There is an improving trend both in proportions gaining 5A* to C, including English and mathematics, and A- and AS-level performances in the sixth form. Interventions, courses well matched to students' abilities and a practical approach to learning skills contributes to good progress in most subjects. All lessons incorporate time for students to read and learn new vocabulary and this is helping remove the barriers to them gaining higher levels.

At the last inspection progress in mathematics was judged good, but this declined and too few students made the progress expected from their starting points to reach average standards. This decline was successfully reversed last year. Inspection found that teachers' expectations are now higher for average and lower attaining students and the lessons are taught well to meet these. Planning for what is taught in

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subjects has been revised to ensure that teachers teach to address the gaps in students' skills and knowledge, before moving on to more demanding work. Students' confidence has improved dramatically and by the end of Year 9, and for the current Year 11, progress is significantly better than expected. More students are taking mathematics and sciences in the sixth form, because they are confident about the teaching.

Higher attaining students make satisfactory progress. In the lessons observed, girls motivate each other to 'go the extra mile', even when aspirational targets have not been set. However, girls overall are still out-performing boys. Evidence from lessons shows that boys are not always given opportunity to stretch themselves as well as they could.

Quality of teaching

Lessons are well organised and make good use of assessment information, including homework, to set objectives for different abilities. A good variety of practical and engaging activities help motivate learners. Students told inspectors how much they enjoyed learning and were unanimous that teachers gave them good advice and guidance when marking their work. Inspectors scrutinising books noted good-quality feedback, with time set aside in lessons for students to revisit and attend to corrections.

There was an effective mix of explanation, questioning and group and paired work. Presentations, such as in a religious education lesson on understanding parables, were eagerly prepared for an attentive audience. These techniques, alongside good strategies for self-assessment, lead to the rapid assimilation of skills and objectives and contribute well to students' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Students consider the opportunities to evaluate each other's work 'helps them with their learning'.

Literacy skills are taught in all lessons and tackled best when the supporting vocabulary is woven into the activities, such as through a flow chart in a lesson on safety at work. However, this is not consistent. For example, despite good ideas on the impact of conflict generated in lively discussions in a lesson, learning was only satisfactory because there were not enough pointers to help formulate written responses. Learning moved forward quickly in those lessons that had all the prompts, including vocabulary, available to help students organise their ideas. Teaching assistants were particularly effective in this respect.

Teachers' subject expertise is good and questioning is regularly used to steer misconceptions into good learning. So it was that in an effective mathematics lesson questions and answers prompted students to apply their knowledge of the properties of triangles to calculate angles of regular two-dimensional shapes. In a few lessons boys do not always sustain the attention they give at the start of lesson because the teachers overly direct the expectations of how they are to learn. Typically in sixth form lessons, and in science and practical subjects, there is good extension for

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higher-ability students, but this is not always the case. This constrains the attainment for these students.

Parents and carers are very positive about the quality of teaching in the academy and many commented favourably on the quality of homework and how well teachers tackled students' insecurity around examinations through providing 'good revision techniques'.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour is well managed. The rewards and sanctions are understood by all those students spoken with. They understand the role they play so that everyone is safe in the academy and is on the look out for signs of bullying, harassment or verbal abuse. Students take their roles seriously in heading off any unwanted behaviour and are supported by a well-informed and experienced staff. Students make good use of the internet to inform the academy of any breaches to their safety. Those with behavioural difficulties who have been excluded from lessons are quick to see the error of their ways and keen to get back into lessons. Consequently, numbers who need to be removed from lessons are very small indeed and continue to reduce.

Parents, students and inspectors are in agreement that there are a few lessons where students disengage from learning when the pace of the lesson is too slow. They are then prone to immature behaviour such as whispering to each other, idle chatter and other time-wasting strategies. They respond to the teacher's request quickly as they do not want to let their class down.

Leadership and management

At the last inspection the academy was in a strong position to improve further. A number of factors impacted on this capacity and slowed the upward trend in students' achievements in all but the sixth form. These factors were tackled robustly by the academy leaders along with the governing body. Middle leaders recognise their roles in this process and communicate high ambitions to their teams. As a consequence they feel better able to play their part in raising expectations and supporting staff to provide high-quality independent learning in lessons. Subject leaders work well together to share achievement information and are prepared to adapt students' subject timetables to respond quickly to meet their individual needs. By these means students are treated equally and kept free from discrimination.

The drive to improve teaching and learning and students' achievements is shouldered by staff and students alike, and ensures the good capacity of the academy to continue to improve. The new appointments to the leadership team have brought experience in academy evaluation, analytical skills and fresh ideas that have invigorated leadership, particularly in developing teaching and learning. Continuing professional development is well structured to meet the needs of individual teachers within the priorities outlined in academy action plans.

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Safeguarding is woven throughout the academy, with all requirements fully met. Sanctions and rewards are regularly reviewed with the student councils taking a lead on this and helping evaluate their effectiveness. The good leadership of the curriculum ensures equal opportunities for students to enhance their performance and outcomes. Boys commented favourably on the progress they have made in reading, 'I don't mind having a go now,' was a typical remark in discussions. The rich and varied curriculum experiences, available to all students, help them and their families and carers plan the best routes into post-16 education. As a parent wrote, 'A very professional school with a family oriented ethos.'

There is good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and outcomes are good. Displays around the academy reflect diversity and the value placed on each student's contribution to the academy. In an area of low cultural diversity, the very strong cultural links through the international programme enrich social skills and multicultural perceptions of the academy and local community.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



24 February 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Camborne Science and International Academy, Camborne TR14 7PP

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your academy. We were impressed by your confidence and your obvious enjoyment of the academy. We found Camborne to be a good academy. Here are our main findings.

- You are making good progress in lessons because the teachers generally provide you with work that is suitable, is fun to do and encourages you to learn together and think for yourselves.
- Your behaviour and attitudes to academy are good. This is because the academy provides you with an extensive range of interesting activities and gives you plenty of responsibility that gets you all involved.
- You are kept safe. You are confident to help deal with any bullying and look out for others at all times.
- Those that lead the academy listen to what everybody at Camborne has to say. They consider suggestions and act on those that benefit your learning.
- The staff keep a good track of your academic and personal development and share this with you so you can improve and reach the standards expected.

In order to become an outstanding academy we have asked the headteacher and governors to ensure that your teachers:

- provide more time in lessons for you to take charge of your own learning
- find ways to ensure boys always stay on task
- use questions more decisively to challenge your thinking and push those that are capable that bit more.

You can certainly help your teachers by ignoring those who try and distract you in lessons.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Palk
Her Majesty's Inspector

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