

Redruth School

Tolgus Vean, Redruth, Cornwall, TR15 1TA

Inspection dates 1–2 October 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Achievement requires improvement because too few students make good progress between the ages of 11 to 16.
- Students' achievement is not improving quickly enough and those in receipt of pupil premium do not achieve as well as their classmates. Progress in mathematics has been too slow.
- Teaching is not consistently good across subjects or year groups and does not lead to students' good progress over time.
- Work is not always matched to students' needs and abilities and students are not given sufficient opportunities to improve their work.
- Leadership and management require improvement because, although teaching and achievement are improving, leaders and governors have not made sure that they are good.
- Governors have not held the school to account for the pace of improvement.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher is passionately committed to raising standards. As a result, achievement is improving.
- Leaders and managers have a clear understanding of how to improve students' achievement.
- Relationships between staff and students are strong.
- Standards of achievement are rising and the quality of teaching is improving.
- Students behave well in lessons and around the school and feel very safe.
- The sixth form is good. Students do well in their examinations and make good progress.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision is good.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 40 lessons, of which eight were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, the inspection team observed students around the school at break and lunch time.
- Inspectors also looked at examples of students' work and case studies. The quality of marking and written feedback was noted.
- Meetings were held with three groups of students, five governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and senior and middle managers.
- Inspectors took account of the 59 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), an independent survey of parents' views commissioned by the school and 83 staff questionnaire responses.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and development plan, the school's own data on students' current progress, monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

John Mallone, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Fran Ashworth	Additional Inspector
Ken Bush	Additional Inspector
Justine Hocking	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Redruth School is an average-size comprehensive school.
- Most pupils are White British. The number of pupils from a minority ethnic background is small and very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs and are supported through school action is average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, service children and for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is in line with the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress by the end of Key Stage 4.
- The school uses no alternative provision for its students.
- The school is a member of Challenge Partners, a group which provides mutual support for schools in the region.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is good or better in all subjects to ensure that all groups of students make better than the expected three levels of progress between ages 11 to 16 by:
 - making more consistent use of information from assessments to set work at the right level for all students
 - giving students clear guidance through high quality marking so they know how to improve their work and ensuring that they have the opportunity to make those improvements
 - extending the use of effective questioning in lessons.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - extending the use of existing good practice to help others to improve their teaching
 - making use of effective middle leaders to support and develop other middle leaders
 - governors effectively challenging the school's leaders to raise the achievement of students.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Students join the school in Year 7 with broadly average attainment and achieve close to average GCSE results in Year 11. The proportion of students gaining five A* to C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics has declined over the past two years.
- In 2012 the proportion of students gaining A* to C grades in mathematics fell. This was partly due to most students being entered for their examination a year early. This policy was changed and led to an improvement in results in 2013. There is evidence that more students are expected to gain an A* to C grade in mathematics this year.
- Performance varies between different subjects. The school has accurately identified subjects where achievement is weaker and has taken steps to improve students' progress and the standards the students reach. As a result, pupils in Year 11 and further down the school are now beginning to make the progress that is expected of them in most subjects, including mathematics.
- Students are not routinely entered for GCSE examinations earlier than Year 11.
- Achievement in the sixth form is good. Starting from lower than average attainment, students achieve results in line with national averages. Students show great enjoyment in their courses and learn with eagerness and enthusiasm. Most are making good progress in lessons and most are meeting, and exceeding, their challenging targets.
- The gap in attainment between students receiving pupil premium and others widened from 2011 to 2012 in mathematics and in English. In mathematics, these students were on average a grade behind their classmates in 2011. By 2012, this gap had widened to a little more than a grade. In English in 2011 the gap was about a grade. By 2012 this gap had widened to almost a grade and a quarter. There is evidence that this gap was greatly reduced in both subjects in 2013 and continues to narrow rapidly for those students in the current Year 11 and lower down the school.
- There is evidence that teaching has improved and that more students are now making good or better progress than at the same point last year.
- The Year 7 catch up funding has been well used to support weaker readers. This means that they are reading more often than they were and are now better at recognising letters and the sounds they make, and have less difficulty with some combinations of letters and in breaking down words to sound them out.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs receive extra help in lessons and in small groups. Some of these students are making accelerated progress, and the extra help and focused teaching are helping them to catch up. However, there are occasions when work is not adjusted in lessons and these students find it too difficult so they do not make as much progress as they could.
- The quality of the artwork on display around the school is high and enhances the environment. Students have opportunities to take part in after school events, such as the recent production of *Bugsy Malone*, which involved 170 students and 25 staff.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because, although it is improving, it has not consistently been good across all subjects. There are examples of good, and in some cases outstanding, practice, but not enough that has been regularly good for students to make good progress.
- In English, for example, teachers use a good deal of student talk and ask appropriate questions to check understanding, matching these to students' needs and abilities. They mark work consistently well, pointing out what students need to do to improve. In other lessons, notably in mathematics, some teachers do not check that students are working at the appropriate level and do not provide feedback on their progress. As a result, progress is slower than it should be.
- Some teachers do not plan lessons with individual students' targets and current achievement in

mind and more-able pupils, in particular, do not make enough progress.

- When teachers' questions are less probing and not targeted at individuals' needs, progress is slower, especially for more-able students.
- Where teaching is good or better, teachers move learning forward at a steady pace and use a variety of activities to engage pupils' interest and plan work that matches individuals' needs and abilities. Teachers' strong subject knowledge helps to create lessons which pupils enjoy, and their calm approach to behaviour management means that pupils remain on task.
- Relationships between teachers and students are strong. This establishes a good climate for learning. In the best lessons there is a strong focus on students learning through talk.
- In many lessons, teachers use questioning effectively to check students' understanding.
- The quality of teaching in the sixth form is good. The small group sizes enable teachers to match, more accurately, work to individuals' needs and abilities. The support and guidance students receive are good and many go on to study at university.
- The quality of marking varies between subjects and teachers. Where it is good, for example, in English and in art, students are given clear guidance about how to improve their work. Where it is weaker, for example in mathematics, students receive little or no guidance and, as a consequence, make slower progress. Across many subjects, there is little evidence that students are given the opportunity to respond to comments about how to improve.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The majority of students have positive attitudes towards their learning. They are eager and enthusiastic in lessons and respond well to the effective systems the school uses to manage behaviour.
- Students listen carefully to teachers and willingly carry out instructions. They collaborate well with one another, especially in pair and small group work. Where lessons are unengaging, students can be passive and drift off task.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Students are courteous to one another and to adults. Staff-student relationships are strong.
- More vulnerable students, disabled students and those who have special educational needs are well supported. They socialise and study with other students. The Oasis Room provides a calm, nurturing environment for students experiencing particular difficulties in lessons.
- Bullying is uncommon, incidents of racist and homophobic bullying are very rare and the school deals with these effectively.
- Students feel safe, know how to identify bullying and where to turn for support when it occurs. The school has worked to protect students when they are online and to give them ways of dealing with cyber bullying.
- Attendance is good and above national averages. Persistence absence rose in 2013 and is higher for students in receipt of the pupil premium than for their classmates.
- The number of exclusions is much lower than the national average and has been falling.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement as teaching and achievement are not yet good. There is too much difference in how well students do in some subjects and best practice is not shared effectively across the school so students do as well in all subjects.
- Although leaders check the quality of teaching regularly and have introduced training to address the weaknesses identified, this has not yet brought about sufficient improvement so that teaching is consistently good in all subjects.
- The school's use of performance management has made use of the potential link between performance and pay.
- Senior leaders have an accurate understanding of many of the school's strengths and weaknesses

and have clear plans to address areas of concern. They are committed to raising standards and work closely with department leaders to bring this about. They have introduced rigorous systems for the monitoring and tracking of students' progress. As a result, the school has been able to provide extra support for those falling behind.

- Some middle leaders have not checked the quality of marking well enough to ensure that it meets the highest standards. In particular there is little evidence that teachers are giving students opportunities to respond to marking in line with school policy. Although all teachers have received training in marking, some, especially in mathematics, have not improved marking enough to help students progress as fast as they should.
- Although there are effective middle leaders in the school, senior leaders have not made enough use of their expertise to help raise the effectiveness of others who are less successful.
- The Improving Teacher Programme and the Outstanding Teacher programme have brought about significant improvements in classroom practice.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. In Key Stage 3, all students follow the National Curriculum. In Key Stage 4 there are three choices: purely academic subjects examined at GCSE; a mix of the academic and vocational; and strongly vocational courses, including applied GCSEs. In the sixth form, most students follow academic courses, with a minority opting for applied qualifications and more vocational courses.
- The leadership of the sixth form is good. There are robust systems of monitoring and support which ensure that students achieve their potential.
- The school is strongly committed to equality of opportunity. It has very low rates of exclusion, and large numbers stay on into the sixth form. There are high participation rates in extra-curricular activities because of the support provided to vulnerable students.
- The social, moral, spiritual and cultural provision is of high quality. There is a strong sense of service to the community, both within the school and beyond. This is fostered through assemblies and the school council and the wide range of extra-curricular opportunities.
- The school sits at the heart of the community, organising cultural events for the whole town and working jointly with local primary schools, for example in a recent musical performance of *Rockquiem*.
- The school has worked hard to promote healthy life-styles in the school and the community. As a result it has recently been granted specialist status as a sports college.
- The school encourages students to take on responsibilities, for example through the school council which has representatives on the local town council working directly with the mayor and others to help shape developments in the community.
- The school's international work is a strength. There are links with mining communities in Mexico and the USA, and a sporting link with a school in Russia. There are regular exchange trips to several European countries and last year a sixth form group visited Japan.
- The school has used the pupil premium to support students in English and mathematics by providing one-to-one sessions with specialist teachers, extra revision and the subsidy of activities in which they would otherwise be unable to take part. There are good systems for monitoring students' progress, so that interventions have now begun to improve achievement rapidly.
- The local authority has worked with the school to raise achievement.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding students meet all current regulatory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors take a keen interest in, and have a good understanding of, the way the school works. They work closely with the senior and department leaders and meet with them regularly so that they know about the quality of teaching. Governors know how well students are achieving, including those in receipt of the pupil premium, and consistently challenge senior leaders to improve the rate of progress. However, this challenge has been slow to bring about the necessary improvement. Governors have a good understanding of the new system for managing teachers' performance and teachers' pay. They closely monitor the school's budget, including the spending of money from the pupil premium, and are active in seeking ways to solve problems. All governors receive regular training.

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	426787

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
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	958
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	129
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Cade
Headteacher	Craig Martin
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2012
Telephone number	01209 203700
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