

North Cornwall Alternative Provision Academy

Campus XXI, The Gaia Building, Delabole, PL33 9DA

Inspection dates 29–30 April 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- This school has been on a journey of improvement over the past year following the appointment of a new leadership team by the academy leaders.
- Regular checking of teaching along with high quality support and training has ensured that teaching is at least good. This has enabled students to make at least good progress in English and mathematics.
- There has been rapid improvement in students' achievements from their starting points in the past year.
- The governing body has an accurate view of the school's performance. Governors provide effective challenge to leaders about students' progress.
- Governors make good use of additional funding to ensure that eligible students achieve as well as their classmates in English and mathematics.
- Parents who spoke to the inspector are extremely pleased with the school and are very positive about their children's behaviour and progress.
- Subjects and topics match students' abilities. Strong provision to improve students' personal development ensures that they develop good independence by regularly preparing and cooking lunch for the whole school.
- Through their regular attendance and positive behaviour students earn weekly trips into the community. They regularly raise funds for charity. These activities contribute well to their strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Students' behaviour improves once they start at the school. Students are willing to talk about their school and are pleased with their own achievements.
- Students are safe at the school. Evidence shows that almost all students improve their attendance once they start.
- Teaching in English and mathematics is always good, and some is outstanding. Marking is accurate and helps students to improve their work.
- Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the leadership and management of the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Students' progress in science is limited by the lack of facilities and resources.
- The school does not provide independent counselling for students, many of whom who say they need it.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed students' learning in seven lessons and listened to a few students reading aloud in class.
- The inspector spoke to several different groups of students about their experiences at the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body, the Principal of the academy and some parents.
- The inspector observed the work of the school and looked at a range of documents. These included the school's own information about students' progress, planning and monitoring documents, safeguarding information and students' literacy and numeracy books.
- The inspector took account of the school's own parent questionnaires because there were too few responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View. The inspector also took account of nine responses to the staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Denise Morris, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school became an alternative provision converter academy on June 1st 2013. It is part of the Acorn Multi-Academy Trust, which includes six other short stay schools across Cornwall. These are, Glynn House Short Stay School, Nine Maidens Academy, Restormel Academy, Penwith Academy, Cornwall Hospital Service and Caradon Academy. When the predecessor school, North Cornwall Short Stay School, was inspected in 2011 it was judged to be satisfactory.
- Most students come from North Cornwall but a few are from further afield, including from neighbouring counties. Students have either been excluded from their mainstream schools or are in danger of permanent exclusion because of their behaviour or social and emotional difficulties.
- A minority of students have a statement of educational needs for their learning difficulties. A few have a diagnosis of attention deficit hyperactivity disorders or autism spectrum conditions.
- Many students have been out of school for long periods before they start at the school.
- Almost all students are White British.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium is well above average. This is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after.
- Early entry to GCSE is available to students in Year 10.
- Vocational opportunities are provided for students in Key Stage 4 at nearby Cornwall College.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve students' progress in science so that it matches that in English and mathematics by ensuring that resources and facilities for practical aspects of the subject are in place.
- Provide access to counselling for those students who would benefit from it.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, staff and governors, is ambitious for the school and has provided effective training for staff. He has high expectations for students and ensures that they achieve well in English and mathematics. He has introduced many new practices and procedures which are having a positive impact on students' progress, well-being and behaviour.
- The headteacher places a strong emphasis on giving students a second chance. He ensures mutual respect by enabling students to say what they expect from the school. As a result they are challenged to think about their behaviour, their attitudes and their expectations for their futures.
- Staff are very supportive of leaders. They value the regular checks by leaders which ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Middle leaders are having a positive impact on improving provision for literacy and numeracy so that students make good progress in these subjects.
- Leaders set targets for teachers which are linked to the progress that their students make. Increases in teachers' salaries are provided if the targets are met.
- Relationships between staff and students are strong and most students say that they are able to talk to staff about their problems. A few students say that they would like an independent counsellor to be available to help them solve some of their difficulties.
- Leaders provide a good range of activities for students, both at school and in the community. These support students' personal development well and prepare them for their futures.
- Students' preparation for life in modern Britain is promoted well through assemblies. For example, students were observed discussing the forthcoming election. They talked about democracy and how this helped them to achieve their rights. Students joined in a robust discussion about the impact of proposed cuts in welfare and the impact this might have on them.
- Students develop British values through fundraising activities such as for the Nepal earthquake. A video of the aftermath of the earthquake had a strong impact and many showed empathy as they watched the scenes. All of these activities help to promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Leaders regularly check students' achievements. They check them against other schools in the academy to ensure accuracy. Staff are working closely with the academy leaders to develop their approach to assessment. This is so that the school is ready for the change to assessment, which will no longer be based on National Curriculum levels.
- Leaders regularly check the achievement, behaviour and attendance of students taking part in off-site visits and college to ensure these are good.
- The achievements of disadvantaged students are as good as their classmates'. They make good progress in English and mathematics. This is because of the effective additional support that they receive through the pupil premium funding.
- The inspector spoke to several parents who praised leaders for their support and for the good quality education that their children receive. One parent commented that 'the school has done an amazing job with my child,' while another commented, 'My child likes school so much he even sets his alarm now.'
- The school ensures equality of opportunity for students through the rich curriculum. Students learn about other faiths and cultures in modern Britain, ensuring that there is no discrimination.
- Helpful careers guidance enables students to make choices about their futures and enables them to be well prepared for college.
- The academy leaders are supportive of the school and provide regular help as well as challenge to school leaders.
- Links with feeder schools are good and the school is well thought of in the community.
- Regular checks ensure leaders know that achievement in science is not as good as it is in English and mathematics. This is because facilities and resources for the provision of science are poor.
- Safeguarding procedures meet requirements and are effective. Staff have received training so that they know how to identify any student at risk of harm. Good procedures are in place to ensure that students are safe, including effective risk assessments for external visits.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is good. Members have received training to ensure that they have the correct skills to support the school. Good-quality training has ensured that governors understand the school's performance data and can hold leaders to account for pupils' achievements. They know how well the

school is doing and they check performance data with other similar schools to ensure the school's effectiveness. Governors know about the quality of teaching because they regularly visit classes and so understand the reports they receive. Governors manage finances well. Members check that additional funding is used well to ensure that eligible students benefit from it. As a result, these students achieve as well as their classmates. Governors know about setting targets for teachers and how these are used to ensure that the best teachers are rewarded. They know what leaders are doing to tackle any underperformance.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. The vast majority have positive attitudes. They respond well to staff for the most part, and low-level disruptions are rare.
- Parents are extremely pleased with the improvements in their children's behaviour, both at school and at home. One commented, 'We were in despair about his behaviour until he came here. He is like a different child now.'
- Leaders track students' behaviour thoroughly. Information shows that each student's behaviour improves at the school. Temporary exclusions have reduced this year and there have been no permanent exclusions.
- Behaviour in lessons is usually calm and the majority of students get on well with each other. Behaviour incidents are well managed because staff have received appropriate training to meet the behaviour needs of students.
- Most students arrive at lessons punctually. They show that they enjoy school by attending well. There are marked improvements in students' behaviour and attendance.
- Students say that there is no real bullying at the school. They have good understanding of the many different forms of bullying but say that 'students get on because we are all the same'. They regularly take part in fundraising for local and national charities.
- School staff are positive about the improvements in students' behaviour. One student told the inspector about his journey to this school. He described his behaviour as 'dreadful' in his previous school. He said, 'Staff here are so helpful; you want to do well for them. My behaviour has really changed now.'
- Students know about drugs and the dangers they present. They say the school has a low tolerance of drugs and will send students home if they know drugs have been used. Students said that they would value some counselling about this.
- Students say that staff are always available for them to talk to. However, a few said that they would like to be able to talk to someone other than school staff who could help them sort out their problems.
- Students benefit from good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through assemblies as well as through the curriculum. They show empathy for those less fortunate than themselves, sitting quietly and watching the video of the recent Nepal earthquake with awe.
- Students accept the school's approach to the Christian religion, which is balanced with the study of other world faiths. Assemblies help them to learn about these. They also benefit from receiving rewards for good achievement or behaviour. These help to raise students' confidence and their self-esteem.
- This school gives students a fresh start. It prepares those in Years 7 to 9 well for re-integration, and those in Years 10 and 11 for college, because of students' good achievement and behaviour.
- The behaviour and attitudes of students while on alternative provision, such as college placements, are good.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students say they feel safe at the school.
- Good procedures, including the school's policies, ensure safety for all students. Good-quality information is provided for students to enable them to keep themselves safe in the community and on the internet. Students have good knowledge of e-safety.
- Good-quality risk assessments are in place, including for trips and visits, ensuring that students are safe and secure.
- The safety of students while on alternative provision, such as on trips or at college, is good.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good. As a result, students achieve well from their individual starting points in English and mathematics. This is because the tasks set for students usually link well to their individual abilities and skills. As a result, they work hard and complete their tasks.
- Teaching is not outstanding because it is limited at times by the lack of facilities and resources needed to engage students in learning. For example, in science, teaching is limited by the lack of facilities for practical aspects of the subject, and by the lack of resources to undertake practical experiments and investigations. As a result, students make less progress in science than they do in mathematics and English.
- Strong teaching in art and photography ensures that students across the school achieve well in these areas. Some high-quality examples of students' work on the walls illustrate their good achievements.
- Leaders monitor teaching and learning regularly and have an accurate view of what is working well and what needs improving. Good-quality training for all staff has ensured that provision is at least good in the majority of sessions. As a result, students achieve well.
- Teachers have high expectations and challenge students so that they improve their skills and work at a fast pace. This was evident in mathematics in Year 11 where students were preparing for their GCSE examinations. They were involved in transforming shapes, which some found difficult. Because of clear explanations and good-quality presentation, students succeeded in their tasks, achieving well.
- The teaching of reading helps students to improve quickly once they start at the school. This is due to regular reading in class and good-quality, appropriate books linked to students' ages and abilities. As a result, students catch up with their reading.
- A strong focus is placed on the teaching of spelling and punctuation to all age groups. Checks on students' books show that this has had a positive effect on students' writing.
- Teachers make effective use of teaching assistants, who play a significant part in supporting disadvantaged students. The support that they provide for students who receive additional funding, those with additional special needs, those with attention deficit disorder and those with autism spectrum conditions is of a high standard. This results in these students' good progress so that they achieve as well as their classmates in English and mathematics, and sometimes better than this.
- Assessment is regular and accurate. Teachers constantly check how well students achieve so that they can help them to improve. Marking of students' work is effective, enabling students to improve further. Students value the feedback that they receive.
- Lessons are rarely disrupted because students want to please their teachers. Teachers manage behaviour well and make effective use of the behaviour tracking system to monitor improvements.
- The most able students are regularly challenged by the work set so that they make at least good progress in their lessons. For example, one student was observed taking on additional challenges by searching the internet for information about a particular topic she was studying.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Prior to coming to this school, many students have had a very difficult time. Some have been out of school for long periods because of their behaviour or social and emotional difficulties. Others have suffered traumas that have disrupted their education. For the vast majority, attendance at school in the past has been poor.
- The school's own data now shows that by Years 10 and 11 students make at least the progress expected of them in English and mathematics. About a quarter of all students make better-than-expected progress in these subjects. Students now attend school regularly. As a result, the rate of progress and the range of qualifications are improving.
- In 2014 students acquired GCSE in a wide range of subjects at Grades B to G. Many students also acquired some Functional Skills qualifications, preparing them well for college.
- Students achieve well in reading and many have the confidence to read aloud in class. As a result, their skills are improving rapidly. They read a wide range of texts. Students in Year 10 offered their views about the book *Of Mice and Men* which they were studying for their exams. They said they were enjoying it because 'it is a good story'.
- In writing the strong focus on developing students' spelling and punctuation skills has enabled students to write with confidence, improving their self-esteem.
- Achievement in mathematics is good because students enjoy the challenges that are set for them. Despite having missed past work, the vast majority complete their tasks and achieve well.

- All groups of students make good progress in English and mathematics, including those with additional needs, those who are disadvantaged and those who receive additional funding. Boys and girls all make similarly good progress. This is because of the effective range of curriculum tasks that engage their interests well.
- Students in Year 10 have the opportunity to take GCSE early. This is because leaders take every opportunity to ensure each student has a chance of acquiring some qualifications while at the school.
- Checks on students' books show that literacy and numeracy skills are used well in a wide range of other subjects.
- Achievement in science is less effective than it is in English and mathematics because tasks set do not challenge students to find things out for themselves. This is mainly due to the lack of appropriate resources and facilities.
- The most able students make particularly good progress in English and mathematics because tasks challenge them well.
- Students achieve well on their alternative provision placements, including at college.
- Students enjoy a range of sports activities despite having no gym and receiving no additional sports grants. Staff work hard to ensure that students receive exercise by joining them in games of football or other ball games in the large hall. This has an important impact on their physical 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	139759
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	449924

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

Type of school	Pupil Referral Unit
School category	Academy alternative provision converter
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	32
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dawn Grove-White
Headteacher	Richard Triggs
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01840 213968
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