

Penair School

St Clement, Truro, TR1 1TN

Inspection dates 25–26 June 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Achievement is not yet good as there is too great a gap between the achievement of students who receive pupil premium funding and the others in the school.
- Teaching is not yet good because there is too much inconsistency in the marking and feedback provided to students to enable them to improve in all subjects.
- Leaders, manager and governors have not been rigorous enough in securing teaching that is having a consistent impact in all subjects.
- The leadership and standards in science are not yet good. Too many students are not achieving as well in science as they are in other subjects.
- The leadership of the school, including governors, has been too slow to take action with regard to the poor attendance and persistent absence of students.
- Too many students are not attending school regularly. Hence, they are not achieving well in all their subjects. This is particularly true for the students who are receiving pupil premium funding.
- Governors, senior and middle leaders did not focus enough on improving students' progress in the past. They did not identify students who were underachieving quickly enough.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and some of the other newly appointed leaders have put policies and plans in place that are starting to show signs of impact, especially in areas such as English and literacy.
- Achievement, including the gap between students who receive pupil premium funding and the others in the school, has started to improve.
- Standards in mathematics remain above the national average.
- The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum which enables students to understand the fundamental British values of democracy and show respect and tolerance to those of different faiths and beliefs.
- The students behave well and show respect and courtesy to each other and to adults at all times.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 32 lessons of which seven were observed jointly with senior leaders. In addition, they visited assemblies and activities that were taking place with Year 5 students from local primaries.
- Inspectors held meetings with the senior leaders of the school, representatives of the governing body, groups of staff and students.
- The lead inspector had telephone calls with the external adviser for the school and the headteacher of the sponsored primary academy.
- The inspection team observed the work of the school and scrutinised documents such as the improvement plans, the school's evaluation of its progress and statistical information such as rates of achievement and logs for behaviour, attendance and exclusions.
- Inspectors looked at the 73 responses to the online Parent View survey and 44 responses to the staff questionnaire in addition to comments from parents and carers received during the inspection.

Inspection team

Kathy Maddocks, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David Howe	Additional Inspector
Matthew Collins	Additional Inspector
Paul Sadler	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Penair School is a larger than average sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students supported with additional government funding, known as the pupil premium, is below the national average. This funding is provided for those known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average. The great majority of students are White British.
- The school uses Acorn Academy, which provides specialist support for students whose circumstances have made them vulnerable.
- Seventeen students in Year 10 and 40 students in Year 11 attend Truro College to study catering, construction, hair and beauty, motor vehicle maintenance and public service skills. Ten students in Year 11 attend Roseland Community College to study land-based skills.
- The school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress, in 2014.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2013, after the previous inspection.
- Penair became an academy in April 2011. The school is a member of the Roseland Learning Community and is a sponsor for Tregolls Academy, a primary school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the leadership, including governors, focuses more strongly on rigorously holding all teachers to account so that standards, including those in science, improve with more urgency.
- Increase consistency in teaching to generate more rapid progress, in particular, for those supported by the pupil premium funding by:
 - providing effective feedback of students' work
 - making sure students can regularly make amendments and improvements to their work following feedback from teachers and other adults
 - ensuring that the activities planned for the students are effective and help all groups of students to make progress from their starting points.
- Ensure that the strategies for improving attendance and persistent absence for all students and, in particular, those who receive pupil premium funding, are effective and lead to attendance that is above national average and persistent absence that is below.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The leadership team, despite significant restructuring, has not secured consistently good progress in all subject areas.
- Although the rigour of the application of policies is improving, there is still too much inconsistency in practice. Improvement plans have not focussed on the understanding of data and tracking students' achievement; improvement in science has not been successful and not enough attention has been paid to making sure students attend school regularly.
- There has been some improvement in English and some improvement in the progress of students receiving pupil premium funding.
- Middle leaders, particularly in science, are not robust enough in holding teachers to account. There is too much inconsistency in the application of policies which impacts on the progress made by students.
- The school has instigated effective systems for the management of the performance of teachers which reflect the new Teacher Standards. However, the sloppiness of some of the targets has led to the lack of consistency in good quality teaching by all staff as they are not specific enough nor quantifiable.
- The students hold their school in high regard as do staff. Seventy one per cent of parents would recommend the school to others. The school evaluates parents' views of the school and its processes at every parents' evening. These returns show a positive outlook and any concerns are acted upon by the school.
- The leaders have been successful in maintaining good standards of behaviour expected from the students. The students are conscientious and polite at all times.
- The website has been improved and is more accessible to parents. The informative fortnightly newsletters are placed on the website.
- The occurrence and analysis of assessment data has improved significantly since the arrival of the new deputy headteacher in September 2014. Systems are in now place to monitor progress effectively and support students who are underachieving. Governors, staff and parents are better informed. The school uses internal and external mechanisms to standardise and moderate work to ensure that grading is accurate.
- The school has adopted its own system to measure the progress of students in Years 7, 8 and 9. The school is leading the way with local primary schools so that data at transfer times will be meaningful.
- The school has a broad and balanced curriculum which allows students to excel in a range of subjects to prepare them for the opportunities, experiences and responsibilities of future life in modern Britain. They have a successful programme on citizenship as well as a range of extra-curricular activities, such as the combined cadet force, sports leadership awards, which allow students to take on positions of responsibility. Students learn about other cultures and faiths in tutor times. All students went on to education, employment and training from the school in 2014.
- Vocational opportunities are provided through courses at Truro College and Roselands Community College. Since September, the alternative provision, at the request of the school, has offered level two courses which provide more challenge for the students. Leaders manage behaviour, attendance and the monitoring of progress well because of effective communication with the providers.
- There is a planned and effective programme to alert students to the dangers of the internet with regard to extremism and exploitation. Other aspects of their social, moral, spiritual and cultural education is planned through assemblies, tutor periods and days when the timetable is suspended to concentrate on a specific aspect. This is successful. The school does not tolerate discrimination in any form.
- There are wide ranging opportunities for students' involvement in volunteering in the local community as well as leadership through extra-curricular activities, such as the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme.
- The standards in mathematics have been sustained and are consistently above national average. The nurture group in Year 7 have made good progress in basic literacy. The new assistant headteacher in charge of English has audited the provision of reading and writing and is working with leaders to improve achievement in these areas.
- The school provides good advice and guidance on the choices to be made for optional courses at key stage four. This is an improved area as in the past it was left as an open choice for students regardless of their abilities. Students are guided about choices post 16 and 18 as well.
- The professional development programme allows staff to opt in, or be directed to, the skills training needed to do their jobs effectively.
- The school has managed all aspects of safeguarding appropriately. Eighty five per cent of parents on the

online Parent View survey said they thought their children were safe in school. Students confirmed this in discussion with inspectors.

- Leaders had not made sure that the spending of the pupil premium funding is having sufficient impact with regard to the achievement of disadvantaged students. This has now started to improve since appointing new leaders to oversee its impact. They are evaluating activities more robustly and planning more carefully as a result. Gaps in the achievement of these students and others in the school are starting to close, but not fast enough.
- Because some groups of students are not making the progress of which they are capable, the school's commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for all is not fully realised.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have not been rigorous enough in their monitoring of how the school uses its pupil premium funding.
 - The governors know the strengths and areas for development of the school. They were slow in considering the impact of low attendance on achievement, especially as this had been an area for improvement at the sponsored primary school.
 - The governing body has changed significantly since the last inspection and is now more effective. There has been an external review by a national leader in governance. As a result, governors' confidence in challenging and questioning the leadership of the school in a strategic way is improving.
 - Governors are gaining an awareness of the quality of teaching through meetings with subject leaders. These are not yet structured with sufficient challenge.
 - Governors understand how well the school is performing compared with others nationally. They are growing in their confidence to challenge and question school leaders more effectively but this has not been prompt enough to stop the lack of progress of some of the disadvantaged students.
 - The Vice Chair is the Chair of the Governing Body at the primary academy which allows for good communication between the schools but key messages have not always been passed on quickly enough.
 - The school roll has fallen in recent years and the governors have effective financial plans to manage the resources.
 - A committee oversees the documentation in relation to the management of the performance of teachers. They are aware of the quality of teaching across the school and are now involved in decisions that reward teachers for good performance.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good.
- Most students display positive attitudes within and outside of lessons. They are polite and respectful to each other and to staff and visiting adults. They respect their environment and are, rightly, trusted to be sensible.
- Students come to school with the right equipment and are ready and prepared to learn. They maintain a polite and respectful attitude in all lessons.
- Low-level disruption is rare. The school has introduced a new system for rewarding students and this is popular and effective. Seventy per cent of parents on the online survey, Parent View, say that students behave well.
- Students who attend Roselands Community College and Truro College for their alternative provision attend and behave well.
- Behaviour logs show that students who reoffend are improving over time as a result of the school's interventions.
- Teachers set high expectations for behaviour of themselves and the students. There are no bells at the end of lessons so teachers are mindful of timings.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure requires improvement. Attendance is well below the national average, particularly for disadvantaged students and has not improved quickly enough.
- The school has taken determined action to improve attendance since the appointment of the headteacher. Pastoral support workers were appointed at Easter to deal more effectively with persistent non-attenders and penalty notices have been issued by the school to the families of the worst offenders with regard to

attendance. It is too early to be able to comment on their impact. Within school, students are punctual to lessons and arrive at school on time in the morning.

- The systems for ensuring that students are safe when in school are robust and effective.
- There are good systems for ensuring that the students who attend Roselands Community College and Truro College are safe.
- Students understand all forms of bullying, including cyber bullying and prejudice based bullying, and know how to keep themselves safe in these situations. They report that bullying is rare and dealt with effectively by the school. Sixty two per cent of parents agree that bullying is well managed and twenty three per cent say that they do not know if bullying is managed well on the online survey, Parent View.
- Students are made aware of how to keep themselves safe and follow safety rules in lessons and the school community. Students say they feel safe. Eighty five per cent of parents on the online survey, Parent View, feel that their children are safe.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Inconsistencies in teaching, which still exist within and between subjects, explain why most students have not learned well enough since the previous inspection. The amount of good teaching is not enough for students to make rapid progress.
- The policy for marking and feedback is not applied consistently across all subject areas. Not all teachers provide clear enough advice for students about how to further improve their work and do not always make sure that students follow up this advice by applying it and showing their teachers that they have understood.
- All class teachers are aware of which students are under achieving and are expected to set specific tasks to support these students in catching up in their knowledge. Too often, the guidance is too general and does not make an effective difference.
- There is a lack of challenge for the most able. As a result, too many of these students do not achieve their potential. There has been an improvement in the progress of these students in English and mathematics in the current academic year but there is not a strong enough whole school focus to support them.
- In the teaching of English, students are being challenged by classic Victorian texts and stimulating and provocative poetry of the nineteenth and twentieth century. This has been instigated by the new assistant headteacher in charge of English. The standards in English are improving as a result of the strengthened leadership in this area.
- Teaching in mathematics is consistently strong and outcomes are above the national average. The most able take additional subjects, statistics and further mathematics, in which they are successful.
- Students engage in reading in a constructive and purposeful way in English lessons and the nurture group. There are plans to extend this but, at present, reading is limited in other subjects.
- There are some successes in teaching; teachers use questioning effectively to gauge the understanding of learners and probe for deeper meaning; the school trains student learning detectives to discover the preferred way of learning for different subjects and this is used to inform more effective practice.
- The disabled and those with special educational needs are well supported. The newly appointed special educational needs coordinator has made a difference in a very short time. There is more engagement with parents. Staff training on how to support these students in the classroom is in its infancy.
- The school uses an online system for recording homework which can be viewed by parents and students. There is some variation in the quality of the tasks set but it is a system that can be evaluated by all stakeholders with ease.
- Students who attend Truro College and Roselands Community College are successful in their various courses and are taught well. There are systems in place for cross moderation and feedback on progress.
- Students in Year 7 who enter school with literacy levels that are below the national average are given extra support to help them achieve expected levels in reading and writing and communication. Some staff use resources effectively to promote good literacy; this was clearly evidenced in the humanities classrooms.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement is not yet good as the expectations of staff have been too low. At key stage 4, too many teachers have been satisfied with students achieving a grade C rather than a result that reflects their true

potential. Targets are now set based on student potential.

- The attainment for disadvantaged students is not as good as the other students in the school. Although there are signs of improvement, it is still not in line with the other students in the school or nationally. In English in Year 11, disadvantaged students are performing just over a grade below the other students in the school and just over half a grade below other students nationally. In mathematics in Year 11, disadvantaged students are performing just over a grade and a half below the other students in the school and over half a grade below other students nationally.
- In English and science, the results in 2014 showed a dip in progress. Standards in English have improved and the students are achieving better than the national average in both expected and more than expected progress. This is not the case in science; for the majority of students taking additional science, only half of them are making expected progress.
- Students who attend Truro College and Roselands Community College have gained passes in all their courses. Too few of them are achieving distinctions and merits where this is possible.
- The achievement of the most able in English in 2014 did not meet national expectations. None of the most able disadvantaged students met national expectations for achieving more than expected progress in mathematics in 2014. The systems put in place in September for setting targets and tracking students have helped some of these students make better progress this year.
- Too few most able students in science achieve the top grades in biology and physics.
- The most able mathematicians took the GCSE early in 2014 and were not impeded by this; it allowed them to continue with statistics and further mathematics and continue their success. Students in the current year 10 and 11 are continuing with studies in further mathematics. No students are currently being entered early for GCSE examinations.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs are performing in line with their peers. Staff working with these students have received training that is specific to their needs.
- Achievement in Years 7, 8 and 9 is good for the majority of students. The targets are slightly higher than those used nationally for expected progress. Where there is underachievement, this tends to be for disadvantaged students who have low attendance rates.
- French, drama, geography and information technology are subjects that set high standards and in which students have good attainment, especially in the achievement of the top grades, A* and A.

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	136567
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	462503

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	997
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Matthew
Headteacher	Nicola Edmondson
Date of previous school inspection	26–27 June 2013
Telephone number	01872274737
Fax number	01872242465
Email address	head@penair.cornwall.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2015

