

# Cape Cornwall School

Cape Cornwall Street, St Just, Penzance, Cornwall TR19 7JX

## Inspection dates

22–23 March 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Inadequate</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Inadequate</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Inadequate</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an inadequate school

- Governors have failed to secure long-term, high-quality leadership of the school over the last two years. As a result, the school has failed to flourish. School leadership is overly reliant on the short-term support of the headteachers of local schools.
- There is insufficient leadership capacity in the school to improve teaching and learning. Consequently, over time teaching has failed to meet the needs of pupils.
- Leaders are not ensuring that teaching is good in all areas of the school. There is very significant variation in the quality of teaching. In some subjects, pupils are not challenged and progress is poor.
- Disadvantaged pupils underachieve significantly. This has been the case for many years and has not been dealt with effectively.
- Leaders do not use the pupil premium funding to support the progress of disadvantaged pupils appropriately and some has been used for other purposes. This has contributed to the school's failure to improve outcomes for these pupils.
- Teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour are not high enough. Pupils' progress is occasionally slowed by the low-level disruptive behaviour of a small number of their classmates.
- Teachers do not consistently show pupils how to improve their work clearly enough. Pupils are left confused and lose heart.
- A minority of pupils have poor attitudes to learning. They sit quietly but do not take part in the lesson. As a result, they do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Attendance is low. This has been a problem for some time. The decline in attendance has now been halted but there are few signs of a longer-term improvement, especially for disadvantaged pupils.

### The school has the following strengths

- The executive headteacher has proved remarkably effective in raising expectations of teaching, learning and assessment in the short time she has been in post. She has raised the morale of other leaders around her who are keen to improve their practice.
- The school is highly inclusive and welcoming. It is an integral part of its community.
- The teaching of English and history is strong.

## Full report

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by:
  - acting rapidly to secure the long-term strategic and operational leadership of the school
  - improving the skills of middle and senior leaders to raise standards
  - improving the leadership of teaching, learning and assessment so that expectations of teachers are consistently high and unambiguous
  - ensuring that the pupil premium funding is used appropriately to improve the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- Improve teaching, learning and assessment by:
  - dealing with pupils' poor progress, particularly of disadvantaged pupils, caused by poor teaching
  - raising expectations of what pupils can achieve across the school
  - ensuring that assessment is accurate and it is used to inform teachers of what pupils know, understand and can do
  - ensuring pupils know how to improve their work.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
  - improving the attendance of all pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils
  - eradicating the remaining low-level disruption so that all pupils are able to learn in a positive environment
  - improving pupils' attitudes to learning so that they engage with their learning and make better progress.

External reviews of governance and of the school's use of pupil premium funding should be undertaken to improve these aspects of leadership and management.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Inadequate

- Governors have failed to ensure that there is sufficient leadership capacity in the school. Since the substantive headteacher left in 2015, there have been two temporary executive headteachers. The first held the post for a year. The current incumbent has been in post for seven months. Both were commissioned on short-term contracts for half of the week. Leaders within the school are neither expert nor experienced enough to fill the gaps resulting from this arrangement. Consequently, the school has been unable to tackle the profound challenges it faces.
- Since her arrival, the current executive headteacher has made significant progress in tackling the school's deep-seated weaknesses. She has a clear and accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and she has worked with colleagues to develop a plan based on those identified weaknesses. She has acted quickly to carry out the first stages of that plan. However, she acknowledges that the changes she is making are far from being part of normal practice and weak practice remains widespread.
- The leadership of teaching is poor. The school's leaders lack the necessary experience and skills to ensure that teaching is consistently good across all subjects and year groups. Leaders have not ensured that teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils. The result is that pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, are not making the progress that they should.
- Until recently, leaders have not managed the performance of teachers effectively to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school, resulting in underperformance going unchecked. This year, the executive headteacher has introduced a much more rigorous structure which is entirely focused on the quality of teaching. Early signs indicate that this is having a positive impact in the classroom.
- Leaders have ensured that teachers have had some training opportunities to develop their skills. However, the impact of this has been limited. Some teachers have changed their classroom practice but many have yet to update their teaching. Leaders have not monitored the impact of the training with sufficient rigour or insisted on the required improvements.
- Leaders have not ensured that teachers routinely assess pupils' work accurately. Forecasts of GCSE results in 2016 were inaccurate. This is because leaders have not ensured that teachers are up to date with the latest GCSE guidelines. This year, the executive headteacher has ensured that there are opportunities for teachers to moderate their assessments so that the teachers are able to assess more accurately.
- School leaders have not responded to the changes to the key stage 3 national curriculum with sufficient vigour. Current assessment practice does not allow teachers to focus on what it is that pupils actually know, understand and can do. They cannot, therefore, guide pupils' next steps in their learning.
- Leaders have not ensured that the additional funding received for pupil premium pupils is used effectively. Approximately half of the funding has been used to support the school's staffing budget and, consequently, it has had only a limited impact on

disadvantaged pupils. This is an ineffective use of the funds.

- Leaders did not analyse the effectiveness of the previous year's pupil premium funding with sufficient rigour and consequently repeated the errors for a second year. The poor progress that disadvantaged pupils have made over an extended period is a key feature of the school's poor performance and the lack of analysis has exacerbated the situation. It is also a growing problem for the school as the proportion of disadvantaged pupils in the school is increasing.
- Middle leaders have not made sure that their areas of responsibility are managed effectively. They have only recently taken more responsibility for the quality of teaching in their departments and holding their teachers to account for pupils' outcomes. Accountability is not firmly and consistently embedded across all departments. The result is that there are significant inconsistencies within departments as well as across different departments. Pupils told inspectors that how much progress they made in lessons depended entirely on which teacher they had.
- Until recently, leaders did not analyse patterns of attendance and behaviour in detail. Consequently, they were unable to identify which groups of pupils needed attention and to react accordingly. This is now improving and the previous trend of declining attendance is beginning to reverse.
- Leadership of 'Kites', the attached resource base for pupils with complex learning needs, is very effective in making sure that these vulnerable pupils can gain access to appropriate provision. Leaders ensure that the additional funding for pupils in the main school who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is spent effectively so that pupils are well supported to access their learning. Leaders and teachers are also effective in the use of additional funding which ensures that pupils who fell behind in primary school make good progress and catch up with their classmates when they join Year 7.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils are able to access a broad spectrum of subjects in key stage 4. Many pupils are choosing a good range of academic courses, which prepares them well for further and higher education. Pupils, especially the most able, also benefit from additional opportunities to study less common subjects, such as astronomy.
- Leaders have ensured that suitable careers guidance is in place for pupils. There is a range of good-quality opportunities and pupils value them highly. As yet, however, these opportunities have not been fully coordinated into a coherent programme of careers education.
- Leaders have used external support extensively. Governors have worked with the local authority to commission additional leadership capacity. The local authority has also provided training opportunities for teachers and leaders. While this support has stabilised the school, it has not been effective in developing internal capacity so that the school becomes self-sustaining in the long term.
- The school may continue to appoint newly qualified teachers.

## **Governance of the school**

- In 2015, governors decided to begin to negotiate a partnership with other local schools but when their plans stalled they were unable to deliver a credible alternative.

Consequently, governors have been forced into a short-term survival strategy without the means to deliver a model of sustainable high-quality leadership. Governors acknowledge their error and are keen to work with the local authority to find a solution.

- Governors are passionate about the values that underpin the school. They are responsible for the welcoming, community-based ethos and are keen to protect it. They take pride in accepting and in helping pupils who have struggled to succeed in other schools.
- Until recently, governors did not hold school leaders to account. They accepted leaders' reports at face value and did not question underperformance with enough rigour. They therefore had an inaccurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. This has recently improved. They are now taking a more rigorous approach and they have a much clearer picture of the school's performance.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding is taken very seriously by leaders and staff, who maintain a culture of vigilance. The administration of all aspects of safeguarding is good. All the necessary checks prior to the recruitment of adults at the school are carried out diligently and staff training is up to date.
- Leaders work well with parents and with other local authority colleagues, such as social workers, to ensure vulnerable pupils are kept safe.
- Pupils report they feel safe and that there is someone that they feel they can talk to if they have a concern.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Inadequate

- The quality of teaching varies considerably across the school and there are too many occasions when it fails to meet pupils' needs. As a result, pupils do not make the progress they could.
- Typically, teaching expects too little of pupils. In many subjects, teaching does not challenge pupils to build on their skills. Consequently, too many pupils drift along without achieving their potential.
- Teachers do not assess precisely what pupils know, understand and can do. Consequently, they cannot tailor their teaching to meet pupils' needs. The result is that sometimes tasks are too easy for pupils and they fail to engage their attention.
- The school's feedback policy focuses on ensuring pupils know how to improve. However, teachers do not implement this consistently. Pupils therefore often remain confused and unable to correct their work.
- Teachers do not always make use of assessment information when pupils transfer from primary school. Consequently, teachers are unable to accurately pitch work which meets pupils' needs immediately. Pupils report that they are repeating some work they undertook in primary school.

- The most able pupils are not routinely given work which encourages them to strive for the highest standards. In some subjects, the most able pupils attempt additional 'challenge questions' which are designed to encourage them to think more deeply. However, these questions offered to pupils are rarely built on in future learning.
- Teachers do not ensure that disadvantaged pupils receive the extra challenge and support they need. Leaders have provided a range of strategies that teachers may use to help disadvantaged pupils but these are not always applied with sufficient rigour. Disadvantaged pupils often leave their work incomplete and their attendance is poorer. Teachers do not routinely follow up the subsequent gaps in learning. The outcome is that disadvantaged pupils fall far behind other pupils.
- The teaching of literacy is inconsistent between subjects. In English and history, teachers apply the school's literacy policy rigorously but in other subjects teachers do not.
- In English and history, pupils are making strong progress over time as a result of good teaching. Pupils are set challenging tasks which encourage them to think deeply and they are asked questions which probe their understanding. They are then expected to develop answers in extended pieces of writing. The rapid progress they make is evident in their books.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning vary between subjects and are dependent on the quality of teaching. Most pupils apply themselves well in their lessons and are keen to succeed. However, there are a number of pupils who give up too easily when faced with a challenge or a task which stretches them. Their concentration wavers and they sit quietly waiting for the lesson to finish.
- Some younger pupils report that they are concerned about bullying. This is reinforced by parents who feel that their children are sometimes the victims of bullying. However, both parents and pupils say that the school deals well with these issues.
- Pupils understand how to stay safe in both the real and the virtual worlds. Their understanding of online safety is very good. They are less well prepared, however, on other aspects of living in the modern world. They do not have a clear understanding of British values, for example.
- The school cares for its pupils well. Parents report that when their children need extra emotional support, the school responds well, providing individual care and ensuring that each pupil receives the attention they need.
- Pupils benefit from good careers guidance which prepares them for the next stage in their education. For most pupils, this is at a local further education college, which works well with the school to provide effective transition.

- A small number of pupils attend off-site provision because they are struggling to learn in school. The school works closely with the providers to ensure pupils are well looked after and make progress with their learning.
- Pupils who attend the 'Kites' resource base flourish because the staff ensure that they receive well-planned care to meet their individual needs. Their personal development needs are addressed effectively and this allows them to engage in their learning.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- The vast majority of pupils act in a mature and sensible manner around the school site at break and lunchtimes. They are polite and respectful of each other and they are confident when talking with adults. However, a few older boys do not behave as well. They are boisterous with each other and with others. As a result, some younger pupils feel nervous around them. School leaders have taken firm action to deal with this recently and this has led to improvements in the behaviour of this small group.
- Behaviour in lessons is generally good. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and pupils respond quickly when spoken to by staff. However, sometimes, when teaching is weaker, a minority of pupils disrupt the learning of others.
- School leaders have now halted the long-term decline in attendance. Although attendance is still below the national average there are some signs of improvement. However, too many disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are persistently absent. This is slowing the progress these pupils make.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Inadequate

- Pupils' progress overall has typically been weaker than the national average over the last four years, although it was in line with other schools in 2016. Pupils currently in Year 11 are not making good progress.
- In 2016, approximately half of the year group gained a GCSE grade A to C in both English and mathematics. This compares with six out of ten, nationally.
- Progress is inconsistent between subjects. In English and history pupils do well as a result of the good teaching they receive. In other subjects, for example in mathematics, science and geography, they make much slower progress and the standards they reach are lower.
- Disadvantaged pupils make slower progress than in nine out of ten schools in the country. Progress has been poor for three of the last four years and shows no sign of significant improvement. Less able disadvantaged pupils made particularly slow progress in 2016.
- The most able pupils achieved in line with their peers nationally in 2016. In 2016, these pupils reached very high standards in English, where they gained almost twice the national average of GCSE grades A\* and A. In mathematics and science they achieved far fewer of the higher grades than in other schools. The most able pupils currently in

school are following a broadly similar pattern. They are achieving well in English and history and poorly in mathematics and science.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. The school ensures that each pupil develops their skills appropriately. For some pupils, this involves achieving a full range of GCSEs; for others it may involve other, more appropriate, outcomes. Pupils attending alternative provision also benefit from a curriculum which is adapted to meet their needs and so make good progress.
- Most pupils have good basic literacy skills. They make good use of opportunities in some subjects, for example history and geography, to practise the skills they learn in English lessons. In these subjects, teachers give pupils clear advice about their literacy alongside the content of their own subject. Pupils are less confident with numeracy. They resort to using a calculator too readily.



## School details

Unique reference number	112063
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10024979

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	312
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rachel Thomas
Acting executive headteacher	Jan Woodhouse
Telephone number	01736 788501
Website	<a href="http://www.cape.cornwall.sch.uk">http://www.cape.cornwall.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:enquiries@cape.cornwall.sch.uk">enquiries@cape.cornwall.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	July 2013

## Information about this school

- The school is much smaller than the average secondary school.
- The school is currently overseen by a temporary executive headteacher who has been commissioned from another local school.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by pupil premium funding is above average.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. There are very few from minority ethnic groups and a very few speak English as an additional language.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11.

- The school uses a number of small alternative providers to meet the needs of some pupils who struggle to be successful in school.
- The school hosts 'Kites', a resource base for pupils with complex learning needs.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning across a wide range of subjects and age groups, and scrutinised a wide range of pupils' written work. Some of the observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation including minutes of governors' meetings, development plans, analysis of pupils' progress, attendance and behaviour data, safeguarding documents and the school's review of its own performance.
- Meetings were held with governors, the executive headteacher, senior and middle leaders, and groups of pupils.
- An inspector spoke with representatives of the alternative providers the school uses.
- Inspectors took account of 46 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. They also took into account the 8 responses to the staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Andrew Lovett, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Gillian Carter	Ofsted Inspector
Malcolm Willis	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

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. [www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings](http://www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings).

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](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

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, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2017