

Inspection of a good school: Liskeard School and Community College

Luxstowe, Liskeard, Cornwall PL14 3EA

Inspection dates:

26–27 February 2020

Outcome

Liskeard School and Community College continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Liskeard School prepares pupils well for life beyond school. Pupils learn about the many opportunities to study and work in Cornwall and the South West. Through the curriculum, they gain a strong understanding of how their studies will support their future ambitions. Pupils also learn about the importance of tolerance and respect. Many pupils told inspectors that the school is a friendly place that welcomes everyone.

Pupils feel very well cared for at the school. Leaders and staff ensure that pupils develop academically, socially and emotionally. Pupils have very good relationships with staff. Although the vast majority of pupils behave very well, there is some disruption in classes. However, most pupils have very strong attitudes to learning and aspire to do well. Pupils state that bullying is extremely rare but if it occurs, it is resolved.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive exemplary support. Pupils in the area resource centre (ARC) follow personalised timetables that enable them to enjoy learning and achieve well. Leaders and staff ensure that such pupils are included in mainstream school as much as possible. Pupils respond very well to tailored support.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders and staff have worked hard to revise subject curriculums. Although GCSE results in English, mathematics and modern foreign languages were below the national average in 2018 and 2019, leaders have improved the design of the curriculums. Consequently, current pupils achieve well. For example, in French and Spanish, pupils develop very strong speaking and listening skills. Staff enable pupils to rehearse their understanding of grammar and vocabulary orally before writing and reading. Pupils revisit prior learning continuously. As a result, pupils are very confident about their knowledge of French and Spanish. Pupils frequently write at length about topical subjects such as children's rights and the environment. The quality of pupils' writing is very strong. The new curriculum has

enthused pupils and there has been a significant uptake at GCSE. However, leaders are aware that this approach needs to be embedded securely in every year group.

Leaders and staff have planned the curriculum to ensure that pupils develop progressively more complex knowledge and skills. Teachers build pupils' knowledge well. They have ensured that pupils review what they have learned before moving on to new concepts. Leaders in mathematics, for example, have revised the curriculum in depth. They have extended topics to ensure that staff address any fundamental gaps in pupils' knowledge. The curriculum enables current pupils to feel secure in their understanding so that they can tackle more complex concepts successfully. Leaders acknowledge that the new curriculum needs to be sustained and embedded in every year group.

Leaders have ensured that pupils develop strong skills of analysis. For example, in English, Year 8 pupils were observed analysing skilfully the links between different characters in John Steinbeck's novella 'Of Mice and Men'. Leaders and staff develop pupils' interpretive choices in art very well. Consequently, pupils achieve well.

Pupils with SEND do well. They access the curriculum with success and confidence. Leaders and staff provide a high level of social and emotional support to ensure that such pupils are ready to learn.

Leaders have adapted the curriculum to raise the aspirations of disadvantaged pupils. Leaders and staff provide high-quality guidance about future career paths. Leaders ensure that the curriculum develops such pupils' oral skills so that they can articulate their understanding more clearly. Leaders are aware that the revised curriculums need to be embedded securely in every year group to ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve more highly.

Pupils have a breadth of enrichment opportunities. For example, pupils visit the theatre and listen to visiting speakers such as Cornish lithium miners. Pupils value their school. They have many opportunities to develop leadership skills through peer mentoring programmes, student council, prefects and the trust council.

Sixth-form students achieve very well. They appreciate the high quality of education alongside the support for their wider development. For example, students explore the world of work through work placements and visiting professionals. Students participate in a peer reading scheme to help Year 7 pupils. Students value the strong, personalised support of staff. For example, students visit a range of universities dependent on their interests.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They state that leaders consider their workload when introducing new approaches. They also state that leaders provide effective professional development. Governors and trustees know the school well and are mindful of the well-being of staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have established a highly effective safeguarding team. They are tenacious in keeping pupils physically, socially and emotionally safe. Leaders record all referrals meticulously ensuring that pupils at risk can be supported in a timely manner. Staff receive up-to-date training. They respond quickly and appropriately to pupils who may show signs of harm. The school's checks on adults who work with children are effective. Leaders' work with a range of local authorities to protect children looked after is highly effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Although the vast majority of pupils' behaviour is exemplary, there is still some disruption in classes. Leaders need to ensure that the revised behaviour policy is embedded and sustained to eradicate disruption.
- Leaders need to ensure that the revised curriculum, particularly for English, mathematics and modern foreign languages, is effectively embedded and sustained in all year groups to raise outcomes at the end of key stage 4.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged Liskeard School and Community College to be good on 21–22 March 2013.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	144291
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10122358
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,052
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	112
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Richard Newton-Chance
Headteacher	Alex Lingard
Website	www.liskeard.cornwall.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 March 2013

Information about this school

- Liskeard School and Community College is part of the South East Cornwall Multi Academy Regional Trust (SMART).
- The school has an Area Resource Centre (ARC) for 20 pupils with SEND.
- The school is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of education, health and care (EHC) plans is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for support by the pupil premium funding is in line with the national average.

Information about this inspection

- The lead inspector held meetings with the headteacher, senior and curriculum leaders, governors, the chief executive officer of the trust and the chair of the trust.

- An inspector met with staff to consider their views. The inspector also evaluated the views of staff in the Ofsted staff questionnaire and 90 pupils in the pupil questionnaire.
- An inspector reviewed safeguarding records, including the single central record of recruitment checks on staff. An inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to review the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Inspectors spoke with pupils, both formally and informally, to discuss their views about their school.
- Inspectors considered the views of 125 parents who responded to the confidential Ofsted parental questionnaire, including 66 free-text responses.
- The inspection carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, modern foreign languages and art and design. This meant that, in each subject, the inspector met with senior and curriculum leaders, talked to pupils, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and looked at pupils' work.

Inspection team

Susan Aykin, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Carol Hannaford

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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