

Inspection of Lipson Co-operative Academy

Bernice Terrace, Lipson, Plymouth, Devon PL4 7PG

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 November 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils respond well to the high expectations that staff have of their behaviour. Poor behaviour is dealt with effectively. Pupils enjoy their lessons and most engage well with learning in the wide variety of subjects on offer.

The school's expectation of kindness from staff and pupils is evident in and out of lessons. Pupils do not think bullying happens often, but most say if it does, it is dealt with effectively.

Most pupils attend school regularly and are punctual. Pupils feel safe. They know how to stay safe online and why their 'digital footprint' matters. Pupils remember what they have been taught about issues like sexual harassment, consent and healthy relationships. They value opportunities to learn about personal safety. One pupil summed up the opinions of many by saying, 'The experience here is about more than just getting the grades you need; they want you to become better citizens.'

Pupils have many opportunities to develop as individuals. Sports, music, drama and other clubs are well attended, including by many who are disadvantaged. Pupils are encouraged to take an active part in the school through the 'Student Parliament', by becoming prefects or helping to run clubs. Enrichment opportunities for sixth-form students include helping younger pupils with extra-curricular activities.

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

Since the previous inspection, senior leaders have strengthened the leadership of subjects. As a result, the curriculum is thoughtfully sequenced across all subjects. This helps pupils gain the key knowledge they need for the next stages in learning. However, teaching does not always allow pupils to fully develop their understanding. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged learn successfully.

Teachers make regular checks on pupils' learning and most gaps in knowledge are closed when they are identified. Pupils understand why they should read regularly but few say they do so out of lessons. However, for some pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, gaps remain where they have not attended lessons.

The behaviour of pupils is now a strength of the school. Leaders have developed clear and well-understood systems to address poor behaviour. Pupils' conduct in lessons and around the school site is calm and orderly. There has been a significant shift in the culture of the school. Staff and pupils, particularly students in the sixth form, feel the school has improved since the last inspection.

Leaders' sustained focus on staff's development is leading to a solid understanding of how teachers can help pupils to make progress. Effective training for staff means there is consistency in how teaching methods are being used across the school.

Pupils appreciate the extra support they receive to achieve well. For example, there is a 'Study Café', an after-school club for Year 11 pupils to support revision. The 'IStudy Centre' supports the development of independent study skills for students in the sixth form.

Leaders, including trustees, are clear on what they are trying to achieve and why. There is a strong sense of moral purpose that puts disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND at the heart of the school's work. This is evident in classrooms, as well as in the school's plans and policies. Leaders consider teachers' workload and ensure that formal assessments are manageable. However, leaders' analysis of patterns of attendance is not precise enough.

Leaders have ensured that an effective careers programme is in place. The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are proactive in making sure pupils are safe, with a well-planned curriculum to support this. Staff receive regular training focusing on local and national priorities. Staff understand their responsibilities and feel well supported by the safeguarding team. Any concerns reported by staff are acted on promptly, and the school works well with a variety of agencies and the local authority to support pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils know that reading is important, but most are not keen to do so. This limits their exposure to a broad range of ideas and to vocabulary that would deepen their learning. Leaders need to ensure pupils read widely and often.
- Sometimes, teaching does not allow pupils to extend their knowledge as far as they could. Leaders need to ensure that the implementation of the curriculum enables pupils to develop a rich body of knowledge.
- Leaders analyse a range of data relating to many aspects of the school. However, they do not always identify the underlying causes of patterns they find. Leaders need to ensure that they accurately identify issues shown in their analysis so that they can be proactive in spotting areas for development, especially in relation to attendance.

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 information from Ofsted

Parent View 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	136668
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	10207204
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	1,086
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	233
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Kevin Bishop
Headteacher	Martin Brook
Website	www.lipsonco-operativeacademy.coop/
Date of previous inspection	24 and 25 September 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- Lipson Co-operative Academy is a large secondary school.
- A much larger proportion of pupils than the national average is eligible for free school meals. Similarly, there is a larger proportion of pupils with SEND or an education, health and care plan.
- The school uses alternative provision at Breakwater and Marine Academy Plymouth.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and trustees. Meetings were also held with curriculum leaders, heads of year, teachers (including early career teachers) and the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead, examined school records and discussed safeguarding cases.
- Inspectors completed deep dives in the following subjects: English, science, physical education and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the views of staff and pupils in Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Sarah Favager-Dalton, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Andrew Lovett	Ofsted Inspector
Tracey Reynolds	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jen Gibbs	Her Majesty's Inspector

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