

# Inspection of Bodmin College

Lostwithiel Road, Bodmin, Cornwall, PL31 1DD

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Inspection dates: 23 and 24 November 2021

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Sixth-form provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Bodmin College is a large and welcoming secondary school. There is a community atmosphere to which both pupils and staff say they feel proud to belong.

Pupils in key stages 4 and 5 select courses from an extensive list of options. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), have the opportunity to study the same curriculum. Pupils study many different combinations of subjects that suit their needs, interests and future ambitions.

Leaders and teachers share the same ambitions for pupils. They want all pupil to do well in their future lives. The school successfully promotes pupils' personal development and well-being. For example, pupils feel well supported to manage challenges in their lives and have many opportunities for work experience.

Pupils speak positively about the relationships they have with staff. They say they feel safe and know an adult in school they can speak to if they have any concerns. Pupils say that incidents of physical bullying are rare. When they do occur, staff are quick to deal with it. However, some pupils and parents share varied experiences of verbal abuse. They say this is more common and not always dealt with effectively.

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

Leaders are beginning to strengthen the quality of education. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has slowed the progress of this work. In most subjects, leaders have clear aims for what they want pupils to learn. However, in some departments, planning is not specific enough. It does not set out what all pupils must learn and how this will build over time. In some subjects, the curriculum is not ambitious enough, it focuses narrowly on the examination criteria, and this limits pupils' learning.

Pupils do not study a full and broad key stage 3 curriculum. In many cases, pupils do not learn the essential knowledge they need for future study. In key stage 4, pupils select their studies from a wide range of vocational and academic courses. Leaders encourage pupils to choose at least one option course that is part of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc). However, most pupils do not study more than one. The number of pupils studying the full EBacc is low and is declining. Leaders are aware of this issue and aim to increase this number in the future.

Pupils who need extra help get the support they need. Pupils are helped to become confident and fluent readers. Those who have fallen behind are supported to catch up quickly. Most parents of pupils with SEND are positive about the support their children receive. However, some raised concerns about the

consistency of support in all subjects. In the resource base, Greenfield, pupils get individual support, which helps their learning and growing independence.

Leaders recognise the challenges many children face following the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders offer a range of support for pupils' emotional well-being and mental health. Staff work well with external agencies to support pupils to overcome any barriers they may face.

Most pupils behave well in and out of lessons. However, there are inconsistencies with how teachers deal with poor behaviour. Some parents and pupils raised concerns about the use of racist and derogatory language. They say this is not always dealt with effectively. As a result, some pupils say it makes them less likely to report incidents to a teacher.

Pupils benefit from impartial careers advice. In the sixth form, students are well supported to gain insight into relevant industries, work placements and paid employment. As a result of the extensive links to industry and support, students go on to a broad range of destinations.

Through personal, social and health education (PSHE), pupils learn about issues relevant to life in modern Britain. However, pupils' learning is inconsistent. Leaders have plans in place to improve this. They recognise that the curriculum is not currently well designed. Relationships, sex and health education have taken place in key stage 3 and plans are in place for key stage 4 later this year.

Leaders and governors value their teaching and support staff. Staff benefit from ongoing training to develop teaching further. Teachers say that leaders are mindful of their well-being and consult them regularly to reduce workload. Early career teachers feel well supported. They say they are well prepared to manage behaviour.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff know how to keep pupils safe. Staff receive regular training and are aware of the local risks that children face. All staff recognise that safeguarding is an important part of their role.

Staff are aware of the process of reporting a safeguarding concern. Leaders keep good records of reported concerns and make sure pupils receive the support they need, including working with external agencies.

Pupils say they feel safe. They know who they can talk to if they have any concerns about themselves or their peers.

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

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some curriculum plans are not ambitious enough. They do not set out clearly how pupils knowledge builds over time. Leaders should prioritise curriculum development alongside developing teaching practice. Leaders should support teachers and subject leaders to develop their subject pedagogical knowledge further, so they have a clear understanding of the important concepts and principles in each subject discipline.
- Pupils do not study a full key stage 3 curriculum. As a result, they are not well prepared for their next stage of learning. Leaders need to ensure that pupils in key stage 3 learn a full and broad curriculum.
- The behaviour policy is inconsistently applied. As a result, staff do not always deal with incidents effectively. Leaders need to ensure that staff feel supported in implementing the behaviour policy and provide training to where needed. Leaders need to work with pupils to understand their experience and provide further support, so they feel able to report incidents to staff.
- Pupils follow a high-quality PSHE curriculum. The current provision does not map out how pupils' learning builds over time. Leaders need to ensure that the curriculum plans for PSHE have greater coherence.
- Leaders' strategic plans for curriculum development are not specific enough. Governors should undertake further training, which will allow them to provide further support and challenge the school, assuring themselves that the school is successfully improving the quality of education.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136383
<b>Local authority</b>	Cornwall
<b>Inspection number</b>	10200951
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1518
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The board of trustees
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Jason Coad
<b>Principal</b>	Emmie Seward-Adams
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.bodmincollege.co.uk">http://www.bodmincollege.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	22 and 23 November 2017 under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Bodmin College is a larger-than-average secondary school.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been a number of key appointments including the principal and a number of senior staff.
- The school uses one alternative provider.
- The school has a specialist resource base for pupils with education, health and care plans. Many pupils who attend this resource base also have lessons in the main school.

## Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors met with the principal, senior leaders, subject leaders, groups of teaching and support staff, and representatives from the trustees, including the chair.

- Inspectors conducted deep dives in: art and design, English, modern foreign languages, media studies and geography. They discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work.
- Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding. They met with the designated safeguarding lead. They looked at the school's records and at how staff work to keep pupils safe.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. In addition, they met with pupils informally and formally to hear their views.
- Inspectors considered responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View. They also looked at the responses to the pupil and staff surveys.

### **Inspection team**

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