

Inspection of Brannel School

Rectory Road, St Stephen, St Austell, Cornwall PL26 7RN

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 April 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

The school is ambitious for its pupils. There is a shared vision for pupils to achieve highly and develop strength of character during their time at Brannel School. There is a strong sense of being part of a community.

Pupils follow an exciting curriculum. Alongside learning a range of subjects, they also participate in the weekly 'Brannel Challenge' as part of their personal development programme. Pupils have opportunities to broaden their horizons and raise their ambitions, for example with a Year 10 trip to Exeter University. Pupils are also encouraged to think about how they can develop their own knowledge across the curriculum.

Pupils learn how to become global citizens. For example, they hosted a virtual eco conference at the same time as the G7 Summit took place. Within the curriculum, pupils focus on important areas of personal development. For example, Year 7 pupils learn about democracy and the rule of law.

Pupils feel safe and say they are happy at school. Leaders model the high expectations they have of pupils. As a result, there is a calm and positive atmosphere around the school site. When rare incidents of poor behaviour or bullying happen, leaders act quickly to address these. However, there is a small minority of pupils who repeatedly display negative attitudes to learning.

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

Leaders across most subjects have created an ambitious and varied curriculum. They have thought carefully about how pupils should learn important knowledge. This allows pupils to build their knowledge well over time. For example, as part of the curriculum, there is a focus on learning new vocabulary. Pupils keep word glossaries and are keen to use a new word in a discussion. In some subjects, however, it is less clear what pupils must know in detail.

Leaders have carefully planned how to assess what pupils know. In some areas of the curriculum, this information is used to make changes to what pupils learn next. Some parents who responded to the Ofsted survey, Ofsted Parent View, want leaders to tell them more about how successfully their child is learning.

The school quickly identifies pupils at the early stages of reading, or those who have fallen behind. Appropriate additional reading support is provided to help them to catch up. Leaders are developing a culture of reading across the school, with pupils reading daily.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included in the life of the school. Teachers receive suitable training and know the needs of their pupils well. In some lessons, a small minority of pupils with SEND find it hard to follow the curriculum, and do not always receive the support they require.

Leaders are working to increase the proportion of pupils who choose subjects that make up the English Baccalaureate. In particular, leaders encourage pupils to take a modern foreign language at GCSE. The success of this can be seen in the increased number of pupils studying a modern foreign language for longer.

The school provides an excellent range of career opportunities for pupils from all year groups. 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. Year 7 pupils also learn about careers, to give them an early understanding of future opportunities.

Leaders have created a well-planned and resourced spiritual, moral, social and cultural curriculum. For example, pupils learn about British values and explore different beliefs. There are many extra-curricular activities available for pupils to take part in. Leaders provide some of these within the school day to ensure that pupils who travel by bus can also take part. They also track rates of participation so they can encourage pupils who may lack confidence to choose activities.

Those responsible for governance understand the vision of the school. They support and challenge senior leaders well. Staff are proud to work at this school. They say they are well supported by leaders. Early career teachers describe being welcomed into the community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know pupils well and form strong relationships. Pupils spoken to by inspectors say they feel safe and have a trusted adult in school they can talk to if they have a concern. The school teaches pupils how to keep themselves safe online and understand risks they may encounter in their everyday lives. Leaders act quickly to protect and support pupils. The school makes effective links with outside services.

Leaders have created a vigilant culture of safeguarding. Staff receive regular and appropriate training to help them keep pupils safe. The school has a thorough process for the safe recruitment of staff.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some parents do not feel the school communicates well with them about their child. This can lead to a breakdown in the partnership between school and home. Leaders should ensure they develop strong channels of communication with parents to allow them to work together effectively.
- A minority of pupils do not always show positive attitudes towards their learning in lessons. As a result, they are often removed from lessons to work elsewhere.

Leaders must ensure that all pupils develop positive attitudes to learning through the consistent implementation of an effective behaviour policy.

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	145108
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10227720
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	849
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Geoff Brown
Headteacher	Chris Liles
Website	www.brannel.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Since the inspection of the predecessor school, the headteacher has changed.
- The school uses two registered alternative providers.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, including the special educational needs coordinator, curriculum leaders, a group of governors and the trust lead.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, history and computing. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, looked at curriculum planning, visited a sample of

lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- To gather evidence on the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised the single central record of adults working in the school. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to consider how well the school identifies pupils who are at risk and engages with external services. Inspectors also spoke with a range of pupils and staff about safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered 95 responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including 74 free-text comments. Inspectors also considered 59 responses to the staff survey and 136 responses to the survey for pupils.

Inspection team

Kelly Olive, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Matthew Collins	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Lovett	Ofsted Inspector
Deirdre Fitzpatrick	Ofsted Inspector

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