

# Inspection of Penwith Alternative Provision Academy

Penbrea Road, Penzance TR18 3NX

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Inspection dates: 11 and 12 October 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Inadequate**

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The quality of education

**Inadequate**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Inadequate**

Personal development

**Inadequate**

Leadership and management

**Inadequate**

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

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

The quality of education pupils receive is not good enough. Leaders within the multi-academy trust have started to tackle the weaknesses in the curriculum. However, there has been a lack of urgency to make the necessary improvements. Many pupils do not develop into successful and independent learners. Pupils are not well prepared for their next steps.

Learning is often disrupted by poor behaviour. This is because staff have low expectations of pupils. Pupils' attitudes are poor. Frequently, they are not engaged in their learning nor do staff positively encourage this. Staff do not consistently challenge the lack of respect shown by pupils towards others. Too often, pupils are not in lessons.

During the inspection, pupils were reluctant to share their views and opinions of the school in a respectful way. However, the school's records show that pupils do talk to staff about concerns they have. Records show that this information is taken seriously and appropriate action is taken to follow up disclosures. Pupils did not raise concerns to inspectors about bullying. However, many of the interactions observed between pupils were negative and disrespectful in tone.

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

The school's curriculum is not ambitious. It lacks coherence and structure. Those responsible for governance know where the weaknesses are. There are plans in place to tackle the improvements required. All staff want to do their best for pupils but they do not have the necessary knowledge and skills to provide an effective education for pupils. Leaders have not done enough to establish an accurate view of how well pupils learn and have not acted quickly enough to improve the weak curriculum.

Many subject leaders do not understand what makes an effective curriculum. They are unclear about how pupils build towards more complex learning. Work provided to pupils is commonly designed with the focus to keep them busy, rather than to learn specific knowledge. Subject leaders do not know the importance of establishing a clear sequence of learning to help pupils build knowledge over time. As a result, pupils' learning is not secure, which means they cannot move on to more complex work.

Not enough teachers have the expertise required to teach what pupils need to learn successfully. This means that the quality of education that pupils receive is poor. The early reading curriculum has a better impact on pupils' learning. Although the majority of staff are awaiting the most up-to-date training in this area, they now have a clearer understanding of how pupils learn to read. This is as a result of the profile of reading being raised in the school.

Leaders have identified the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, they do not consistently share this information with staff. This means teachers do not have the most accurate information about how to overcome the barriers to learning faced by pupils with SEND. Consequently, learning for pupils with SEND is not adapted successfully.

Staff know the importance of building secure and trusting relationships between themselves and pupils. However, expectations and approaches to this are too variable. As a result, pupils, particularly those in key stages 3 and 4, frequently resort to disrespectful behaviour and disrupt learning. Pupils are not supported well enough to manage situations that challenge them. There is no consistent approach to equip pupils with strategies to manage times when they find things more difficult.

The personal development curriculum includes recent work to address pupils' poor attitudes and lack of respect for others. However, this is not yet embedded. Low expectations and teachers' lack of ability to deliver an effective curriculum, undermine the effectiveness of this work. Pupils do not recall previous learning and are unable to make the necessary links to their own actions. They are not well equipped for the demands of everyday life. Leaders have plans for increasing awareness of diversity and preparing pupils for life in modern Britain. However, a weak curriculum and low expectations limit the success of what is currently provided.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are aware of their responsibilities to keep pupils safe. They follow the school's systems and processes for recording and reporting concerns they have. Staff have statutory training to keep them informed and up to date. Safeguarding updates are part of the daily communication to staff to ensure they are well informed.

Leaders make use of external agencies and challenge them when they do not feel decisions are in the best interests of pupils. Leaders acknowledge this could be strengthened further. Leaders know the challenges faced by pupils and are proactive in managing these.

Although leaders make the right checks during recruitment, they do not always ensure these are monitored in line with the trust's safeguarding policy. There were also examples where checks were not accurately recorded by the school. The school corrected this when they were identified.

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

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

- Trust leaders' vision and design for the curriculum has not been implemented. Leaders have not acted with urgency to ensure the areas of concern identified

have been prioritised. As a result, pupils are not receiving an adequate education. Leaders, including those responsible for governance, must ensure that there is a well-constructed curriculum in all subjects and all key stages, so that pupils receive a good quality of education.

- Subject leaders do not understand what makes an effective curriculum. This means that the essential knowledge that pupils need to learn is not clear or well sequenced. Pupils do not build the knowledge and skills they need. Leaders need to design a curriculum that enables pupils to achieve well.
- Expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. The majority of pupils require specific, targeted support to learn successfully and overcome barriers presented by their special educational needs. Learning is not sufficiently adapted to meet the needs of pupils. Consequently, pupils are not able to access the curriculum well enough. Leaders need to support teachers to know how to adapt learning appropriately to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Pupils do not have a secure understanding of what is expected of them. Relationships between staff and pupils do not reflect the positive and supportive culture that leaders intend. Staff do not challenge pupils' poor behaviour consistently. This has led to low expectations and a culture that accepts a lack of respect and the use of derogatory language in too many interactions. Leaders must ensure that expectations of behaviour and ways of managing it are clear to all.
- The curriculum to develop pupils' personal development is not addressing fundamental priorities in pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs. This means pupils are not well prepared for their next steps. Pupils' resilience and attitudes towards others are weak. Leaders need to ensure that their work with pupils means they are well equipped for the demands of every-day life.
- Having considered the evidence, it is strongly recommended that leaders and those responsible for governance do not seek to appoint early career teachers.

## 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.

## 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>	139760
<b>Local authority</b>	Cornwall
<b>Inspection number</b>	10248100
<b>Type of school</b>	Alternative provision
<b>School category</b>	Academy alternative provision converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	30
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Chris Jenkins
<b>Principal</b>	Andy Major
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.waveedu.org">www.waveedu.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	22 January 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Pupil admissions come through the local authority. There is a mix of pupils on single and dual registration placements. The majority of pupils on roll are dual registered.
- All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.
- 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

## Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, His 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.

- The inspection was carried out following a complaint made to Ofsted that raised serious concerns. His Majesty's Chief Inspector decided that an inspection of the school should take place to follow up the whole-school issues that were raised. Inspectors sought to establish whether safeguarding was effective.
- Inspectors gathered sufficient evidence on the first day of the inspection that some of the core reporting areas for judging a school had declined significantly since its last graded inspection. Inspectors needed to establish whether the effectiveness of the provision as a whole had declined. As a result, the inspection was deemed to be a graded inspection, under section 9 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 met with the principal, vice principal, pastoral leader, subject leaders, members of staff and the chair of the monitoring hub. In addition, an inspector spoke with the chief executive officer, the director of education and a curriculum leader from the multi-academy trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, English and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and some pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read to an adult.
- Inspectors considered how well the school protects pupils and keeps them safe.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- Inspectors analysed school documentation and a range of policies and procedures, including those that relate to the curriculum and education, health and care plans.
- An inspector spoke with two schools which have dual registered pupils with the school.
- There were limited responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors considered the eight responses to the staff survey.

## **Inspection team**

Leanne Thirlby, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Kathy Maddocks

His Majesty's Inspector

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