

Inspection of a good school: St Ives School

Higher Tregenna, St Ives, Cornwall TR26 2BB

Inspection dates:

30 November and 1 December 2022

Outcome

St Ives School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

St Ives is a happy and welcoming school. The school's core values, including kindness and respect, are important to the school community. Staff and pupils reflect these values in the positive way they approach school life. One pupil's comment that reflected the views of many was, 'At this school, you can be yourself and everyone will accept you.'

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Pupils live up to these expectations. They conduct themselves well, both in lessons and around the school site. Bullying is rare. If it occurs, pupils are confident staff will act quickly and effectively. As a result, pupils feel safe at school. They say they can approach staff to report any concerns or worries.

Pupils take part in a wide range of activities beyond the academic curriculum. The 'Be inspired' programme allows all pupils to try new pursuits each term. These include astronomy, learning British sign language and lakeside fishing. Many pupils also enjoy participating in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme or performing in musical shows.

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

The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. Subject leaders have a clear intent for their curriculum. They have carefully planned the knowledge they want pupils to learn and the order it should be taught. As a result, most pupils talk confidently about what they know and remember. In some subjects, the curriculum is not delivered as effectively as it could be. This leads to some pupils having gaps in their knowledge.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils in key stage 4 to learn English Baccalaureate subjects. More pupils study a modern foreign language than in previous years. Leaders have introduced a new approach to assessment this academic year. Curriculum areas are at different points in their development of assessment. Where it is most effective, teachers frequently check pupils' understanding and address any misconceptions quickly.

Staff are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders regularly review how pupils' needs are identified and change over time. Pupils with SEND receive good support in lessons. Staff usefully take into account pupils' own views on what helps them to learn.

Leaders recognise that some pupils need additional support with their reading. These pupils have extra lessons that allow them to become fluent and confident readers. There are opportunities for all pupils to read for pleasure. However, there is not a strong culture of reading across the school. Most pupils do not read widely and often beyond the curriculum.

Pupils manage their behaviour well, in lessons and at social times. Staff use the behaviour system consistently. Therefore, low-level disruption is rare. At lunchtimes, pupils participate in extra-curricular activities. Pupils with SEND have the use of 'The Harbour' as a safe and supportive space.

Leaders have created a rich personal development programme. Pupils speak confidently about the issues they have covered in the curriculum. These include consent, addiction and developing resilience. Pupils learn about beliefs, cultures and religions that are different to their own. Although they are taught about fundamental British values, pupils are not as confident in explaining them.

A detailed careers programme helps pupils to decide what to do next. Pupils learn about stereotypes in the workplace as well as how to develop the skills they need for work. This is supported by a short period of work experience available to Year 10 pupils. The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause.

Staff are positive about how the new senior leadership team ensure staff's well-being. This has included making significant reductions to workload in a short space of time. Staff are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

A clear and thorough system ensures that newly recruited staff are suitable to work with children. Staff and governors receive appropriate safeguarding training. This is adapted to reflect any emerging needs, either locally or nationally.

Leaders monitor the well-being of pupils carefully. They work effectively with external services where necessary. This ensures that pupils receive the help and support they need.

The school has an appropriate curriculum and school-wide policies and practices in relation to sexual harassment, online sexual abuse and sexual violence (including sexualised language) in and around the school. As a result, pupils talk confidently about their understanding of these issues.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not fully developed a culture in which pupils read for pleasure. As a result, most pupils do not read widely or often beyond the curriculum. Leaders should ensure pupils read a rich and diverse range of texts to improve the culture of reading for pleasure.
- In some subjects, staff do not implement the curriculum consistently well. They do not have sufficient expertise. As a result, pupils do not learn as effectively as they could and are not as positive about their learning in these subjects. Leaders must ensure staff have the expertise they need to implement the curriculum fully.

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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2017.

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

Unique reference number	140675
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10211241
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	614
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Anita Firth
Headteacher	Simon Horner
Website	www.st-ives.cornwall.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	18 and 19 January 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There have been significant changes in leadership since the previous inspection. A new headteacher started in September 2022.
- The school uses one registered 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

- 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, the special educational needs coordinator, curriculum leaders, the chief executive officer of the trust, the chair of trustees and the chair of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science and physical education. 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 evaluate 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 responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents and carers, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors also considered responses to the staff survey and responses to the survey for pupils.

Inspection team

Kelly Olive, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Malcolm Willis

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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