

# Inspection of St Columb Major Academy

Newquay Road, St Columb, Cornwall TR9 6RW

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Inspection dates: 6 and 7 December 2022

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Requires improvement

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

The school motto, 'happy, hard working, successful', accurately describes pupils' day-to-day experiences at St Columb Major Academy. Pupils are confident and inquisitive learners. They articulate the many reasons they are proud of their school. Everyone is valued and treated equally. Pupils talk about the inclusive ethos, giving examples of how they are encouraged and enabled to take part in all that leaders offer.

Pupils know that only their best effort is good enough. Staff share the same high expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They know pupils' individual needs well and provide support that enables them to experience success.

Pupils are happy and safe. They enjoy attending school. Pupils struggle to remember a time when bullying happened. Consequently, they do not worry about bullying. Pupils know there are many trusted adults in school they can share any worries with. They say that all adults care for them. Parents see this as an important feature of the school.

Parents praise leaders for the many recent positive changes. Parents rightly view pupils' personal development as a strength of the school.

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

Leaders have set out an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including those with SEND. This starts in the early years, where leaders have made clear the important knowledge pupils need to learn. Teachers have a secure understanding of this. Leaders have developed assessment procedures that help teachers to gain an accurate understanding of what pupils already know. Teachers use this information to decide what pupils will learn next. The trust supports leaders to plan and deliver relevant training for staff. This has improved the teaching of the curriculum. However, in some subjects, teachers do not have the depth of subject knowledge they need. They lack the expertise to sequence learning effectively, to help pupils learn as well as they could.

Reading is central to pupils' education. Pupils learn to read well. They talk with enthusiasm about reading. Staff have a secure understanding of the school's approach to phonics. They deliver the phonics programme effectively. Leaders check how pupils progress through the phonics programme. They quickly identify pupils who need extra help to catch up. Pupils develop into confident and fluent readers because they read books that match their ability. They read widely and often. Pupils talk about books from a range of authors. They enjoy having books read to them. 'Non-fiction Friday' gives pupils the opportunity to expand the types of books they read.

Leaders use advice from experts to consider how to best meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers regularly review targets and make the necessary adaptations to learning. As a result, pupils with SEND get the precise support they need to learn well.

Pupils behave well. They are proud to attend the school and value their learning. All staff have clear and consistent expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils try hard to meet these high expectations. In the early years, children settle quickly into the routines. They share, take turns and listen because they know this is what teachers expect of them. Pupils throughout the school say they are rarely disturbed by poor behaviour. Some pupils receive targeted support to help them to behave well. This is successful and enables them to learn alongside their peers.

Leaders provide many opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests. They remove any potential barriers and enable all pupils to take part in the extra-curricular offer, including residential visits. This includes opportunities to represent the school at music and sporting events. The pupil leadership team represents the voice of pupils across the school. Within this, the 'super sixes' act as role models for younger pupils. Pupils take their responsibilities seriously and aim to do their best. They have a secure understanding of the British values. From the early years, pupils have first-hand experiences to make their opinions count through voting. Pupils contribute well to their local community. Most recently they have raised funds for a local charity. They know what it means to be an active citizen in modern society.

Staff praise leaders for the consideration they give to their well-being and workload. They appreciate leaders' support and care. Governors have the relevant knowledge to fulfil their responsibilities. They check that leaders' actions will lead to sustainable improvements.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff are vigilant for the signs that a pupil may be at risk. Leaders ensure that staff understand the procedure for recording and reporting concerns. They take swift action to get vulnerable families the help they need. Leaders challenge external agencies when they feel the right actions are not taken quickly enough.

Pupils learn how to keep safe through the curriculum. In addition, some pupils are 'stay safe' mentors. They advise other pupils about aspects of keeping safe, including online.

Leaders follow safer recruitment procedures when appointing staff to join the school.

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

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

- In some subjects, teachers do not have the depth of subject knowledge they need. They lack the expertise to sequence learning effectively, to help pupils learn as well as they could. Leaders need to ensure that all teachers have the depth of subject knowledge needed to support pupils to build knowledge well. This will help pupils to remember more of their learning over time.

## 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>	136862
<b>Local authority</b>	Cornwall
<b>Inspection number</b>	10241228
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	368
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	David Parker
<b>Headteacher</b>	Marie Taylor
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://scmajor.kernowlearning.co.uk">scmajor.kernowlearning.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	15 and 16 January 2019

## Information about this school

- St Columb Major Academy is part of the Kernow Learning Multi-Academy Trust.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.
- There are four mixed-age classes in Year 5 and 6.
- There is before- and after-school provision on the same site.

## Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this graded 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and religious education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers,

spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.

- Inspectors spoke with school leaders, subject leaders, pupils, governors and representatives from the trust.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read.
- The lead inspector received and considered three letters from parents during the inspection.
- To evaluate safeguarding, inspectors spoke to the designated safeguarding leader (who is the headteacher). Inspectors also spoke with staff, governors and pupils, and evaluated record-keeping and staff training.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents, and comments made by parents online during the inspection. Inspectors also considered responses from the staff and pupil surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Jane Dennis, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Sean Millar	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Lovett	Ofsted Inspector

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