

Inspection of Humphry Davy School

Coombe Road, Penzance, Cornwall TR18 2TG

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 May 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending Humphry Davy School. They feel safe, happy and well-cared for. Pupils value the warm and respectful relationships they have with their teachers. It is a highly inclusive school where bullying is not tolerated. Pupils are kind to one another and respect diversity.

Pupils enjoy learning. The curriculum is increasingly ambitious for all. Leaders know the areas where work is needed to develop the curriculum further. All pupils learn a broad range of subjects as well as enjoying a variety of creative, musical and sporting opportunities. Music remains central to the school's ethos.

Pupils' personal development is prioritised. They learn about how to stay safe. Alongside clubs and activities, pupils learn about and contribute actively to their local community. There are regional, national and international trips to broaden pupils' life experiences. Pupils are proud to attend the school, so there is a strong sense of community. As a result, poor behaviour is rare.

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

Leaders have designed a curriculum that is rooted in its local community. They have ensured that all pupils can study a wide range of subjects in key stage 4, including those that make up the English Baccalaureate. Pupils also enjoy a range of creative and vocational subjects. Partnerships with local employers support pupils' learning. This means pupils are well prepared for their next steps.

In most subjects, leaders are clear about the knowledge that pupils should learn. Some subject leaders are further on in their journey to ensure that teaching delivers the curriculum effectively. Where this is the case, pupils learn well, especially those in key stage 4. They build on prior knowledge before learning new content. This does not happen consistently well and in some areas the curriculum is not as strong, particularly at key stage 3.

Leaders ensure that the additional needs of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are identified effectively. Teachers have appropriate information that helps them to adapt their teaching. As a result, pupils with SEND are very well supported.

Leaders promote the importance of reading. All pupils read ambitious texts as part of the school's mentoring programme. Through this, pupils also learn about current topical issues and learn new vocabulary. Pupils who have fallen behind with reading are supported to catch up.

Pupils behave well in lessons and during social times. The relationships between adults and pupils are a strength. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes towards school. Pupils respect their school environment. Many speak with confidence and enthusiasm about their experiences at school and their plans for the future.

Leaders ensure that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, have access to experiences beyond the classroom. Many pupils participate in the wide range of activities and sports clubs, and all pupils take part in music during their time at the school. Pupils also contribute to the local community through creative arts projects. A significant number complete the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Pupils learn about the importance of mental and physical health, and about healthy relationships.

Pupils in all year groups benefit from a strong careers programme. They receive personalised advice and guidance alongside visits from local colleges and trips to prestigious universities. This means pupils make informed choices about their post-16 options. Pupils in Year 10 complete work experience and many speak positively about the opportunity to experience the wider world of work.

Leaders, including governors, have faced significant challenges in recent years, including supporting staff, pupils and their families following the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, curriculum development has been slower in some areas than others. Leaders at all levels often have multiple responsibilities but continue to work with moral integrity and purpose.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding at the school. Leaders work with total commitment to ensuring that all pupils, including the most vulnerable, are safe. Staff are vigilant and know that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Reporting and record-keeping are detailed and thorough. Leaders have a detailed knowledge of any ongoing issues and work in the best interests of pupils. They engage tenaciously with external safeguarding partners to secure the right support when needed.

Safer recruitment practices are in place. Staff receive regular training and updates. As a result, they are well informed about local risks.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders, including governors, have not yet ensured that an ambitious and well-sequenced curriculum is delivered to all pupils. As a result, some pupils do not build on prior knowledge and achieve well. Leaders must act quickly to provide clarity, strategic direction and challenge to ensure all pupils access an academically rigorous curriculum.

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	112067
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10227935
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	820
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Terry Binns
Headteacher	William Marshall
Website	www.humphry-davy.cornwall.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 October 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Humphry Davy School is a foundation school and a member of The Penwith Education Trust.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school uses three registered alternative provision settings for its pupils.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors 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 met with senior staff, including those who oversee behaviour and curriculum.

- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator and reviewed plans that support pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead, reviewed documentation related to safeguarding and referrals to the local authority. They also spoke to staff about how they keep pupils safe.
- Inspectors met with members of the governing body.
- On the first day, inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, humanities, and design and technology. As part of this, they held discussions with senior leaders, subject leaders and teachers. They also talked to pupils about their learning and looked at work they had completed.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted’s online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, and the views of staff and pupils in Ofsted’s online survey.

Inspection team

Victoria Griffin, lead inspector	His Majesty’s Inspectors
Simon Tong	Ofsted Inspector
Matthew Barnes	Ofsted Inspector
Matthew Collins	Ofsted Inspector

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