

# Inspection of Tavistock College

Crowndale Road, Tavistock, Devon, PL19 8DD

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Inspection dates: 23 to 24 April 2024

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Good**

Sixth-form provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Inadequate

The principal of this school is Tristan Muller-Forster. This school is part of Dartmoor Multi Academy Trust which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Dan Morrow and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Tania Skeaping.

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

Pupils are proud of their school. Through the curriculum, they have many opportunities to learn about the world around them. For example, Year 10 pupils complete work experience in a range of settings. Pupils enjoy participating in a breadth of sporting activities, such as football and netball.

Pupils' behaviour is orderly and calm in lessons and around the school site. Pupils learn about the importance of mutual respect, kindness and empathy towards others. Through the personal, social and health education curriculum, pupils learn about the role of democracy and freedom of speech in shaping British society. Pupils are well prepared to be upstanding citizens of the future. Staff address bullying when it occurs. Pupils report that they can talk to trusted adults if they have a concern. Consequently, pupils feel safe and well cared for by staff.

Leaders and staff provide effective careers guidance to enable pupils to make informed decisions about their next steps. Sixth-form students particularly value the bespoke guidance provided by staff. They have clear information about what they need to achieve to access higher education, apprenticeships and work.

Pupils value their learning. However, there are still gaps in some pupils' knowledge, despite leaders' work to improve the curriculum.

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

The school's vision is that all pupils achieve academically, socially and emotionally. Leaders have revised the content of the curriculum to support pupils' learning in most subjects. In English, for example, pupils study a breadth of carefully selected texts. Leaders have also made decisions about the way in which the curriculum is taught, based on what they have learned from educational research. However, this work has not had the impact intended on pupils in all year groups. In some subjects, teachers do not have a strong understanding of what pupils know and do not know. Consequently, teachers do not typically adapt the ways in which they teach to help pupils learn successfully.

The school's support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is effective in some areas of the curriculum. Staff use information about pupils to provide academic and emotional support. In these subjects, pupils learn with confidence and success. Pupils who struggle to read receive effective support. This helps them to follow the wider curriculum more successfully. The school's whole-school approach to reading for enjoyment is clear and includes a well-thought-out selection of texts. However, this is not consistently put in place as intended.

Sixth-form students study a well-structured curriculum. The subject knowledge of staff is particularly strong, which supports students to extend their thinking. Students value the quality of education they receive. Students also have many

opportunities for personal development. For example, students support younger pupils with their reading. They also provide peer support for pupils who struggle with anxiety. In addition, they support the anti-bullying ambassador programme, helping to ensure that pupils report any incidents with confidence and assurance. Through the curriculum, students are well prepared for adulthood and are knowledgeable about concepts such as consent. Students also learn about how to identify and nurture healthy relationships in their own lives.

Pupils learn about the different groups in society who might face discrimination. They understand the importance of tolerance and the acceptance of others. Pupils gain an age-appropriate understanding of how to keep themselves safe in the world around them, including when online.

Pupils' behaviour is managed in a well-structured way. Consequently, there has been a significant reduction in poor behaviour in lessons and around the school. Staff implement the school's behaviour policy with consistency. Similarly, leaders are tenacious in working to ensure that pupils attend school. They have a strong oversight of pupil absences and, as a result, overall attendance has improved.

Governance is strong. Directors of the trust and the local stakeholder board gather pertinent information. They use this to pose challenge and support to leaders in equal measure. Staff, including early career teachers, feel well supported and are proud to work at the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- Teachers do not consistently check what pupils know and do not know. As a result, they do not have the information they require in order to adapt the teaching of the curriculum so that all pupils' learning needs are met. The school must ensure that teachers use assessment effectively to help pupils to learn well.
- The plans in place to encourage pupils to develop good reading habits are not put in place consistently. Therefore, some pupils do not routinely engage in reading for enjoyment. The school should ensure that their plan to promote reading is implemented consistently in all year groups.

## **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' is used to mean pupils with SEND; pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	145336
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	10298059
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,322
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	193
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Tania Skeaping
<b>CEO</b>	Dan Morrow
<b>Principal</b>	Tristan Muller-Forster
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://tavistockcollege.org">http://tavistockcollege.org</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	7 November 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.
- Tavistock College is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of pupils with education, health and care plans is above average.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider and three unregistered alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical educational qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

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

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with the principal and members of the leadership team.
- An inspector held discussions with the regional director for the trust, a member of the board of trustees and the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics, history, physical education and design technology. In each subject, inspectors met with senior and curriculum leaders, talked to pupils, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and looked at examples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with staff to consider their views.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and carers who responded to the confidential online questionnaire for parents, Ofsted Parent View. They evaluated the views of staff and pupils from Ofsted's online questionnaires for staff and pupils.

## Inspection team

Susan Aykin, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Matthew Collins	Ofsted Inspector
Nic Blunsum	Ofsted Inspector
David Simons	Ofsted Inspector
Sara Berry	His Majesty's Inspector

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