



Budehaven Community School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112045
Local Authority Cornwall
Inspection number 289158
Inspection dates 4–5 October 2006
Reporting inspector David Humphries HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Valley Road
School category	Community		Bude
Age range of pupils	11–19		EX23 8DQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01288 353271
Number on roll (school)	1307	Fax number	01288 353733
Number on roll (6th form)	277		
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Jeremy Dowling
		Headteacher	David Barton
Date of previous school inspection	11 October 2002		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11–19	4–5 October 2006	289158

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Budehaven is a specialist sports school which takes students from the seaside town of Bude and a large surrounding rural area extending into north Devon. Most students are from White British backgrounds and very few of them have English as an additional language. The proportion of students entitled to free school meals is below average, although there are significant pockets of deprivation within the school's catchment area. The school buildings are comparatively new and occupy a large campus including a leisure centre which is managed by the school in partnership with the local district council.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Budehaven is a good and improving school and some aspects of its work are outstanding. There is an increasingly purposeful atmosphere with rising expectations of what students can achieve. Behaviour is good and most students are positive about their education. They enjoy opportunities to take responsibility and are eager to contribute to the life of the school and wider community. Links with the community are strong: they enrich the curriculum and develop students' understanding of the world outside school. The school's specialist status is used well to provide students with a wide range of sporting and outdoor activities.

Students feel secure and valued and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from high quality individual support. The care provided for looked after children is outstanding. The school is working hard to tackle the poor attendance of a few students, although in recent months the local authority has been unable to provide a full range of support for this work. Teaching is good overall and, combined with students' positive attitudes to learning, is a key factor in the upward trend in students' achievement. Students now make good progress throughout the school and the most recent test and examination results are above average and are the highest that the school has achieved.

Senior leaders are aware that, while it is good overall, the quality of teaching is too variable. In a few cases, students' progress is impeded by unimaginative classroom practice and the inconsistent application of school policies in key areas such as assessment. The school is developing a more rigorous approach to tackling these issues. Middle managers are taking increasing responsibility for improving the quality of work in their subject areas, though there are variations in how confidently and effectively they are doing this.

The school has a keen awareness of its strengths and areas for development. The headteacher provides clear, determined and forward looking leadership. He has established a capable and committed senior leadership team who share his vision for the future of the school. The drive to improve teaching and learning is gaining momentum and many teachers are responding enthusiastically to new ideas and initiatives. One parent commented that students 'are more ambitious and want to achieve more – it seems now to be "cool" to get good exam results and stay on at school.'

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 2

The sixth form is good with a number of outstanding features. It has grown considerably in recent years and is providing rich opportunities for its students, including increasing numbers from another school. The two schools have established a very effective relationship to develop an imaginative and extensive curriculum. Students are well supported with their studies and in the care and guidance they receive. Impressive leadership opportunities enable students to extend their experiences and to contribute

to the wider community. The very effective leadership and management of the sixth form have contributed substantially to its success and to its steadily improving performance.

What the school should do to improve further

- ?
- Monitor teaching and learning more rigorously to: -
- ensure that school policies in key areas such as assessment are consistently implemented -
- challenge less effective classroom practice so that high quality teaching is extended more consistently across the school. ?
- Work with the local authority to improve the poor attendance of a small number of students.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Students enter the school with attainment which is broadly average. There is a clear upward trend in the standards they achieve. Students make good progress in their first three years in the school and the most recent test results at age 14 are well above average. The performance of this group of students comfortably exceeded the challenging targets set by the school in English and mathematics, and was slightly above the target set in science. This good progress continues in Years 10 and 11. The most recent GCSE examination results are above average and the school has been particularly successful in raising the achievement of boys so that it now matches that of girls. Overall results are in line with the challenging targets set by the school. However, there are marked variations between subjects, with consistently strong performance in geography, English, physical education and design and technology. In contrast, recent examination results in science have been less impressive. High quality support provided by the school's Learning Support Base enables students with a wide range of learning needs and disabilities to make good progress.

There is a similar pattern in the sixth form. Students continue to make good progress and standards are above average, although there are variations between subjects. Overall performance has improved steadily in recent years and the most recent results show that the majority of students taking advanced level courses gained A or B grades.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Students' personal development and well-being are good. Students much enjoy and appreciate their education. They talk confidently about their own lives and feelings and are keen to discuss issues in the wider world. Many students participate in

extra-curricular activities, both in and out of school, and these often enable them to make valuable contributions to the local community. The school's specialist status helps students to adopt active lifestyles and they have responded enthusiastically to the excellent healthy food options available in the canteen. A clear sense of maturity is evident when students have to make important choices: for example, when they move on to employment or the next stage of their education. There is a strong emphasis on preparing for future employment and most students become confident and articulate learners.

Behaviour is good and the great majority of students are courteous and take good care of each other. Peer mentoring and sports coaching provide students with opportunities to take responsibility and develop leadership skills. Students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good.

Attendance at school has improved recently and is now satisfactory. However, when students take lengthy holidays during term time their progress is impeded. The school is working hard to tackle the poor attendance of a few students, but at present the local authority is not able to provide a full range of support for this work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

There is a strong emphasis on improving the quality of teaching. While it is good overall, it is still too variable. In many lessons, lively teaching and good relationships stimulate students' interest and motivation. Work is challenging and enjoyable with a good balance between direction by the teacher and active participation by students. The best sixth form lessons combine intellectual rigour with opportunities for independent learning. In a minority of lessons, teaching is dull and unimaginative: teachers talk too much and students lose interest. In a few sixth form lessons, work is not sufficiently challenging and there is little active participation by students.

Most teachers encourage students well by praising and rewarding hard work and some use questioning very effectively to develop students' understanding and check what they have learned. Many teachers provide constructive written comments which help students to know how well they are doing and how to improve further. However, this is not done consistently well and in too many cases marking is superficial. In a similar way, there are wide variations in the teachers' approach to homework. One parent, who was otherwise very happy with the education provided for her son, was frustrated that 'there are inconsistencies in how some staff tackle problems – behaviour, uniform, homework etc.'

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

The curriculum is good. The school has carefully analysed the changing needs of students in the rapidly growing sixth form and is working hard to extend the range of academic and vocational courses in conjunction with a secondary school and further education college in north Devon. In Years 10 and 11, vocational opportunities complement a wide range of GCSE subjects and all students benefit from a high quality work related learning course.

Sporting and outdoor activities are enhanced by the school's specialist status. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of after school clubs, activities and residential visits. These are popular with students and often provide them with valuable opportunities to develop organisational, leadership and coaching skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support is good. The school provides a safe environment where students feel secure and valued. There are effective procedures to deal with child protection issues and with the very few incidents of bullying or racism. There is a very effective team of staff who support vulnerable students and those with learning difficulties and disabilities. The care provided for looked after children is outstanding. The school makes excellent use of the specialist support provided by a range of outside agencies. Highly committed staff are often successful in re-engaging students who are unhappy in school.

A well designed induction programme helps new students to settle quickly into school. There are comprehensive arrangements to help students make choices about their future education or employment. During annual monitoring days, students review their progress and set targets with their parents and tutors. However, there are marked variations in how effectively this is done and in how well it is followed up.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides clear direction which encourages staff at all levels to place students' learning at the heart of the school's work. This is now having a positive impact on students' achievement but there is still too much variation in the quality of teaching and in how consistently important policies are implemented by teachers and monitored by middle managers. The headteacher's collaborative approach is respected by many staff who appreciate his encouragement

for the initiatives they are developing. The senior leadership team is a strong and coherent group with complementary skills. It is now well equipped to implement fully new, more rigorous systems to check the quality of the school's work and to ensure that other leaders apply school policies consistently within their areas of responsibility.

The school's self-evaluation is sharp and accurate. Governors know the school well and provide valuable insights for its further development. Senior leaders are very clear about the school's strengths and areas where more progress is needed. The school has considerable potential to improve.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The attendance of learners	3	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I am sure that you will remember that your school was inspected on 4 and 5 October 2006. Some of you met the inspectors and many of you will have seen us around the school. We enjoyed talking to you and listened carefully to what you had to tell us because what you think about your school is very important. Many of the people who look after you at home completed a questionnaire to let us know how they felt about the school and we were very interested in their views. I hope you will talk to them about the inspection report and this letter because they explain what your school does well and how it can become better.

Budehaven is a good and improving school and some aspects of its work are outstanding. Most of you are positive about your education and want to do well. The school has very strong partnerships with the local community and because it is a specialist sports college there are many sporting and outdoor activities. Many of you are keen to take responsibility and develop leadership skills. Older students benefit from a wide range of vocational and examination courses and are very well prepared for the next phase of their education or employment. The school provides you with good care and support and very helpful guidance about the next stage of your education or future employment.

The school is working very hard to improve the quality of teaching and this is leading to better examination results. In many lessons, you make good progress because teaching is lively and the work is interesting. However, while teaching is good overall, there are still too many variations in the quality of teaching and also in key areas such as marking and homework. We have asked the school to ensure that these things are done consistently well. The school is also working hard to improve attendance. We have asked it to try and work with the local authority to tackle the poor attendance of a few students. They need to think very carefully about how missing school stops them learning and affects their future.

One of the reasons for the success of your school is that you have a very good headteacher who is well supported by some capable staff. They want the very best for you and know how to achieve that.