

# Newquay Tretherras School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112059
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cornwall
<b>Inspection number</b>	310778
<b>Inspection date</b>	8 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Robin Hammerton HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	16089
6th form	243
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Richard Simeons
<b>Headteacher</b>	Susan Martin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 November 2004
<b>School address</b>	Trevenson Road Newquay TR7 3BH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01637 872080
<b>Fax number</b>	01637 851066

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<b>Age group</b>	11-19
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector, with administrative support. Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school, along with aspects of: • teaching and learning • the curriculum • the sixth form • child protection and safeguarding • provision for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities • leadership and management • students' achievement and their personal development and well-being. Inspectors talked to students, staff, and governors. They observed the school at work, visiting lessons, an assembly, tutor periods and break times. They also scrutinised school documents, parental questionnaires and students' work. In other aspects, the school provided evaluations which inspectors considered and accepted, as there was no evidence that these were not justified.

## Description of the school

This is a larger-than-average, oversubscribed secondary school with specialist technology status. It serves the town of Newquay and surrounding isolated rural communities, which is an area with some pockets of disadvantage. Most students are White British, though a small proportion come from other ethnic backgrounds, and the school roll is stable. The overall attainment of students when they start in Year 7 is above average and has risen in the last few years; there is evidence that partnership work between a local cluster of primary schools and Tretherras contributes to this. The percentage of students identified as having learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average, although the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The school caters for a range of different needs, including some that are complex.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school, with a satisfactory sixth form. It is rightly highly regarded by parents, students and its local community. It is going through a period of ambitious and significant change. The key changes include:

students completing Key Stage 3 a year early, and taking their national tests at age 13 before beginning foundation GCSE courses in Year 9

important developments in the curriculum throughout the school, including the forthcoming introduction of vocational diplomas

the improvement of systems for assessing students' progress

an increase in the size of the sixth form

the restructuring of the senior management team and governing body, following the appointment of an experienced new headteacher in September 2007. These forward-thinking innovations, some of which were instigated by the previous headteacher, are all being carried through for sound reasons and are well managed. They make the current circumstances of the school complex and inevitably create some uncertainty. For example, there is work still to do to ensure that assessment systems being developed throughout the school fit closely enough together. Nevertheless, the school has a stimulating and energetic atmosphere, and has good capacity to improve further. Staff are actively involved in the process of change. They enjoy the opportunities to work together and improve further their practice and the curriculum. Students, particularly those in Year 9, have noted clear improvements in the teaching and curriculum they are offered. They know their personal academic targets, which are suitably ambitious, and much about what they need to do to reach them. Teaching is lively and well paced, especially in Years 9 to 11. It involves and engages students well, showing the enthusiasm and skill of the staff, as well as the benefits of the professional development and training being offered to them. The support provided for students who have complex learning or emotional needs is very good. This is shown in creative and successful interventions and curricular adaptations made for individuals, as well as the low rate of exclusions. Parents and the young people themselves are involved in planning this high-quality provision, which enables these often vulnerable students to make good progress. However, in day-to-day lessons, although the teaching is good overall, the work set does not meet well enough the needs of those students with more mild learning difficulties, and those who are simply lower attaining. Insufficient account is taken in lesson planning of the particular next learning steps they need to make. The students concerned are well engaged in their learning but their individual needs are not well enough provided for. As a result, the progress made by students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, taken as a whole, remains satisfactory rather than good. This is reflected in the unwelcome fact that, in 2006 and 2007, a lower percentage of students than the national average gained five or more GCSEs at Grades A\* to G. Most students, however, up to and including Year 11, are now making good progress as a result of the ongoing improvements and changes described earlier. The school has sound evidence of this, which is supported by inspectors' direct observations. Despite the low five A\* to G figure, standards at Key Stage 4 went up in 2007 and were well above average in terms of the proportion gaining at least five GCSEs at grade A\* to C. Students' attainment in technological subjects was generally high, reflecting the specialist status. Standards at Key Stage 3, however, were average in 2006 and 2007 and should have been higher, given the students' above-average attainment on joining the school. Standards

and progress in the sixth form are also average compared with national figures. Examination and test grades, then, give a mixed picture and have not all caught up with the improved progress students are recurrently making. Although most students' achievement is now good, the school knows it needs to embed and build on the recent advances in teaching and students' progress to raise outcomes further. The current changes in the school are largely designed to do this. The school is a strong, united and happy community. Students are very good at looking out for and supporting each other, often across year groups. Their personal development is good, with some outstanding aspects. They really enjoy school and rightly feel safe and well cared for. Attendance rates are above average, with effective systems for monitoring this and reducing absenteeism. Students say there is very little bullying and, if it does occur, it is well dealt with by staff. Child protection procedures are thorough. Students feel they can turn to staff for help if needed. However, the school provides too few opportunities for students' spiritual development and reflection in all year groups; tutor sessions at the start of the day are insufficiently stimulating or thought provoking. The school prepares students for their future lives well. However, the school does not do enough to further students' understanding of our multicultural society, although it supports and celebrates local traditions and culture positively. Students' moral and social development is very good and promoted well. Partly as a result, students' behaviour and attitudes to learning are excellent. The school has an excellent, popular and inclusive range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities for all age groups. These increase further students' overall enjoyment of school. The particularly wide choice of well-organised sporting activities helps many to lead very active and healthy lifestyles. The curriculum is good and is being thoughtfully improved. Rightly, the school is exploring further ways to use its extensive grounds and on-site facilities as well as its fortunate location (with the town, countryside and coast so readily accessible) to bring more learning opportunities to life outside the classroom. Leadership and management are good at all levels. The new headteacher thought through the intricate set of circumstances she inherited very astutely and, whilst fully involving others, put her stamp on them. For example, she has clear and evolving ideas about working with local primary schools to develop further the very productive partnership that already exists. This is particularly important given the school's changing structure at Key Stage 3. She has carefully restructured the roles of members of the leadership team to ensure they fit current circumstances. Performance management for staff is well established and effective. It keeps everyone well focused and grounded at this time of upheaval. The new school development plan also has this positive effect. Although not yet complete, it is ambitious in all the right areas, gives strong direction to the work of the school, and is the result of a genuinely collaborative process. Senior and middle leaders know the needs and circumstances of the school community well. They are clear about their roles and accountabilities and are working very effectively to manage change. The school's self-evaluation is thorough, honest and clear. In a few aspects, it is over-generous in terms of grades, but it clearly identifies appropriate improvement needs. The governing body has a perceptive understanding of the school's current position and makes a good and active contribution to its work and planning. Its recent streamlining of its committee structure, to make this more efficient, is well thought out.

## **Effectiveness of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 3**

The sixth form is satisfactory, with signs of improvement. Standards are average and achievement satisfactory when compared with national figures, with more variability in students' progress across different subjects than in other parts of the school. In the best lessons, teaching is lively

and interactive, promoting independent learning, which the students appreciate. However, the quality of sixth form teaching is inconsistent; in some lessons and subjects, where progress is slower, teaching is less engaging and students are less actively involved. The curriculum is good and improving, with a well-planned increase in qualifications other than A levels. This makes the sixth form more inclusive and attractive to a wider range of students. The personal development of sixth formers is good. They confidently play a full part in school life, showing enthusiasm for leadership, volunteering and decision making. They are aware of important health matters and many adopt very healthy lifestyles. The majority are successfully involved in the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Guidance offered to students about their progress and future options is effective and nearly all go on to further or higher education, apprenticeships or employment. Revised senior staffing arrangements have ensured the sixth form is well led, with a clear strategic focus on raising students' achievement.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the teaching in lessons for students who are lower attaining, or who are identified as having milder learning difficulties, so that it is consistently well matched to their needs, enabling them to make faster progress.
- Increase the quality of teaching in the sixth form to the level of the best, so that it is consistently at least good.
- Improve students' opportunities for spiritual development, to reflect on important issues and to learn about our multicultural society.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	3
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	IE <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> IE - denotes that insufficient evidence was available to inspectors for a judgement to be made.



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2	3
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**

May 2008 Dear Students Inspection of Newquay Tretherras School, Newquay TR7 3BH As you know, we inspected your school recently. We were only in school for a day and a bit, but we found out a great deal. We particularly enjoyed meeting many of you, either in arranged meetings or around the school. Thank you for your friendly welcome and for speaking to us with such honesty. Thanks also to those of you who pointed us in the right direction when we were trying to find our way somewhere. Your behaviour was excellent and you were all a great credit to yourselves and your school. This letter is to tell you about what we found out, though of course you can read the full report if you wish. We found that your school is good and it prepares you well for the future. It is a very friendly and happy place which you enjoy going to. It is also going through a period of change, as you will know. There are alterations to Key Stage 3 and Year 9; new courses are becoming available and new ways of assessing your progress and giving you targets, for example. Mrs Martin and her team are managing these changes well; they are being made for good reasons and are improving your school. They make the school an exciting place to be but they have quite a long way to go yet, which is a positive challenge for everyone. The progress most of you are making in your lessons is improving and generally good. GCSE results are good, although they could still improve further. Key Stage 3 and sixth form results are about average overall; they could certainly be better than this and everyone hopes and expects they will improve as the changes in the school take full effect. The school runs some fantastic extra-curricular activities, productions and visits out. It was great to hear so many of you talking about these and how much benefit you get from them. These activities help many of you to lead really active and healthy lifestyles. We have made some suggestions to help your school on its journey of further change and improvement. These are: 1) to give more help to those students who find certain lessons more difficult; 2) to improve some lessons in the sixth form; and 3) to give you all better opportunities to reflect on important issues in the world and your lives and to learn more about the fascinating multicultural world we all live in. With best wishes for the future Robin Hammerton Her Majesty's Inspector

**Annex B**

May 2008

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Robin Hammerton  
Her Majesty's Inspector