

Wadebridge School

Gonvena Hill, Wadebridge, PL27 6BU

Inspection dates 9–10 December 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Good 2
Leadership and management	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Sixth form provision	Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Students achieve well because the school's leadership, including governance, sets very high expectations for the students. It is continually seeking ways to improve
- Good teaching encourages students to engage well in their learning, and they respond well to their teachers as a result.
- Because students develop resilience in their attitudes to learning and strive to do their best, they make good progress and attain well.
- The attainment and progress of the majority of students are of a good standard, and of a very high standard in English.
- The school encourages students to become mature and responsible. This is seen in the excellent rapport and respect between staff and students that develop as students progress through the school.
- The behaviour of the majority of students is consistently good. They are polite and courteous to each other, to staff and visitors.
- Students feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe.
- Sixth form students are proud to be members of the school community and this is reflected in their success in all aspects of school life. They progress very well and achieve very high standards of attainment.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Not all the teaching is consistently outstanding. There are a few teachers who are not providing students with guidance that helps them to improve and make better progress.
- Not enough is being done in all subject areas to make sure that disadvantaged students make as much progress as others in the school.
- A few students occasionally use inappropriate comments to one another at breaks and lunchtimes.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 48 lessons, of which six were observed jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors observed two assemblies and visited tutor time in a range of year groups.
- Meetings took place with the headteacher, senior leaders, the teacher in charge of the most able students, the special educational needs coordinator and the leaders of English, mathematics and science.
- Inspectors met a key stage coordinator, the pupil premium advocates, a newly qualified teacher and teachers in the second and third years of their careers.
- Meetings were held with a group of governors, and students from Years 7 to 13.
- The inspection team observed the school's work, scrutinised the school's data about students' achievement, looked at their work, and examined records relating to behaviour, attendance, bullying, safeguarding and governance.
- Inspectors looked at documents used by the school's leaders to plan, evaluate and monitor work. They reviewed the school's survey to assess attitudes of staff, parents, carers and students to aspects of school life.
- There was a review of learning for Year 8 students on one of the inspection days, when students and parents and carers had individual meetings with tutors to discuss their progress
- Inspectors looked at the 186 responses to the online Parent View survey. They analysed 40 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Kathy Maddocks, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David Howe	Additional Inspector
Justine Hocking	Additional Inspector
Neil Blundell	Additional Inspector
Richard Johnson	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Wadebridge School converted to become an academy on 1 April 2012. When its predecessor school, Wadebridge School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of students supported by additional government funding, known as pupil premium, is lower than the national average. This is provided for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children.
- The vast majority of students are of a White British heritage. The proportion of students for whom English is not their first language and who come from an ethnic minority background is lower than the national average.
- Twenty seven students in Year 10 and 22 students in Year 11 attend Cornwall College to study agriculture, animal care, construction, early years, health and beauty, and motor technology. Three Year 11 students attend the North Cornwall Alternative Provision Academy.
- The school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress, in 2014.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that more teaching is outstanding by:
 - providing the levels of challenge and support in lessons that are appropriate for the learning of individuals and specific groups of students
 - making sure that students understand the expectations of them in feedback, written and spoken, and that they are provided with adequate time to reflect and respond
 - sharing best teaching practice and checking to ensure it is used to maximum impact on increasing students' learning and progress.
- Ensure that the activities that are proving effective in securing good progress for disadvantaged students are being carried out in all subject areas.
- Ensure that all students understand the impact of inappropriate comments to one another so that the entire community feels safe.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The school's leaders provide a culture and ethos in which teaching and good behaviour flourish. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in the school at all times.
- Leaders have high aspirations for the students and endeavour to provide as many opportunities as possible for them to experience life beyond Cornwall. The strong emphasis on social, moral, spiritual and cultural education prepares students well for life in modern Britain. This was clearly shown by the very effective student-led assemblies, and the discussions in tutor time.
- The leadership of teaching and learning provides tailored professional development opportunities that support individual teachers in researching what works best to improve students' learning. Those who are new to teaching or in their first years say they feel well supported. They are given opportunities to meet and work with experienced staff from other schools, and extend their own learning through placements on masters degree courses at Exeter University.
- The processes for monitoring staff performance include all staff members; they are robust and linked to pay awards.
- The provision for disadvantaged students is monitored and evaluated closely. The two pupil premium advocates are particularly successful, working closely with students and their families both in and out of school hours. They have helped the parents and students to understand the importance of education and, as a result, the students' attendance at school has improved.
- The majority of middle leaders in the school are very effective at holding staff to account and ensuring that students make good progress in their work. The leaders of English, mathematics and science meet regularly to monitor the attainment and progress of students, ensuring that suitable support is provided for those students who are falling behind. The impact of these sessions can be seen in the rising standards in these subject areas.
- The curriculum has been considered carefully and provides students with suitably challenging activities to help them achieve well. For those students for whom vocational learning is more suitable, links have been established with the local college so that they can learn the skills needed for future apprenticeships and employment. The school monitors carefully the progress, attendance and behaviour of those students attending Cornwall College. The results in 2014 show that students are well prepared for their future lives, having successfully passed their academic and vocational qualifications, and are ready for further education, training and employment.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet all the statutory requirements.
- There has been external monitoring to challenge the senior leadership of the school with regard to planning and ambition. As a result, targets for improvement are more ambitious and the school's monitoring and evaluation are more effective.
- The advice and guidance given to the students in the school are very informative and have improved student choices in Year 9, Year 11 and Year 13. Students are more successful in their examinations because they have been helped to pick the right subjects. More students are staying on in school from Year 12 to 13 as they are better able to cope with the demands of a sixth form education.
- The most able are provided with mentors and given specific activities to help them make effective choices and build their confidence from Year 7 onwards. Equally, those who have special educational needs are supported by Careers South West when making decisions about choices post-16. Additional visits to colleges are provided when necessary.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have developed effective links with subject leaders, enabling them to better understand how to judge success and identify areas for improvement. Protocols for link visits are clear and transparent; visit reports show that governors take a keen interest during these meetings and take the opportunity to ask relevant questions and challenge what they are told. Governors are fully involved in the processes for monitoring staff performance in the school and manage the pay awards scrupulously. They have undertaken a skills audit in order to assess their competencies, covering all aspects other than marketing. Governors understand the school's performance information, and ask searching questions of the school's leadership to more fully understand, and to hold the school to account. The Chair of the Governing Body and several governors are new this term, and have requested an external review to help them in evaluating their strengths and suggest areas for development.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Students show respect and courtesy as they walk around the school. The majority of parents, carers and staff agree that behaviour is good.
- Students are able to manage their learning without fuss and bother. They work quietly when necessary and respond well when in discussion groups.
- Students are keen to progress well in their learning. They displayed resilience in their determination to improve written pieces, especially in the examination classes in Year 11 and the sixth form.
- The school environment is respected by the students and there is no evidence of litter or graffiti in and around the buildings.
- Incidences of low-level disruption are very rare. The school deals with any behavioural issues effectively and stringently.
- Attendance in the school has improved but it remains slightly lower than the national average. Persistent absence has reduced but is very slightly higher than the national average. The attendance of disadvantaged students is at the same level as for others in the school.
- The attendance of students who are educated at Cornwall College is monitored carefully. Year 10 students have a 100% attendance record at all their courses, and Year 11 have almost full attendance. Those attending North Cornwall Alternative Provision Academy have difficulties managing their behaviour. Their attendance is slightly lower than those attending Cornwall College because of the impact of fixed-term exclusions. Nevertheless, a better attitude and attendance for these students has been noted as a result of this provision.
- Very occasional instances of disrespectful language were mentioned by students. These happen in outside areas of the school. The impact of homophobic behaviour is not understood by a few students. They have been given individual support to understand the impact of their comments.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- The incidences of bullying are reducing year-on-year; 13 instances were recorded in the past year. Students reported that the school does not tolerate bullying, but that when it does occur, it is dealt with swiftly and effectively.
- Students feel safe in the school and know where to go if they feel the need for support. Staff and parents and carers have no major concerns about the safety of students at school. Students are well advised as to what constitutes risk and fully understand how to ensure that they are not placed in any danger.
- Students in Year 10 are trained as 'Empower Plus' mentors. They provide a drop-in lunchtime support service as well as email and text support. The emails are monitored by staff members.
- Students, staff and governors are made aware of the dangers of cyber bullying. Students were not aware of any cyber bullying and there are no records of it having taken place. The e-safety policy is under review in the light of constant changes in technology and communication.

The quality of teaching is good

- In the majority of lessons, teachers create a positive climate where students are engaged and interested in their learning. As a result they make good progress. In English their progress is excellent.
- Because of good teaching, students are highly motivated. They are very responsive to the many stimulating situations provided for them. Teachers provide feedback that is meaningful and which helps students to reflect and respond accordingly. The cultural aspects of British literature, historically and currently, are explored well through poetry, plays and novels.
- The learning in mathematics is improving. The progress of individuals is monitored more carefully so that effective support can be put in place swiftly. Assessment of the way that students learn provides teachers with a clearer understanding of which strategies are successful and which skills are embedded. Teaching methods are adjusted and changed accordingly.
- Learning in geography and history provides opportunities for students to explore moral and political issues that they discuss and research in a mature way. Year 10 students were challenged when learning about

urbanisation because of the appropriate pitch of the resources. They showed strong debating skills when considering the various causes leading to Hitler's rise to power.

- Additional support in literacy and numeracy is supplied in tutor time in Years 7 to 9. This, plus the strength of the English provision, means that students are proficient in reading and writing. The more able students in Year 8 are reading challenging classical literature such as that of the Brontes, developing their skills in understanding literature, ready to take their GCSE examination early in Year 10.
- Teaching assistants and other adults proactively support students in their learning, and have the skills to do this well. They attend professional development sessions with teaching staff and are kept up to date with the school's policy on teaching and learning.
- The Learning Café offers revision sessions for students in Year 11 after school, and is very well attended on a regular basis. The school provides transport for all students in outlying areas.
- The most able students are provided with extension work to further challenge their understanding and, as a result, they are highly successful in their class work and examinations.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have plans in place with specific activities for teachers to use that have been designed to improve their learning. The success of these can be seen in the improved results for students who took examinations in the summer of 2014.
- The school improvement group is attended by teachers and middle and senior leaders. It provides a forum for teaching initiatives to be promoted and trialled by all members of staff, keeping the school aware of recent research on how to further improve learning.
- The school's electronic system for homework provision is accessible to students and parents and carers from home. It is at an early stage of development.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Students in Years 7, 8 and 10 have attainment that is broadly in line with national averages; in Years 9 and 11, the attainment is significantly above. In the current Year 11, disadvantaged students have attainment that is broadly in line with that of other students nationally.
- In 2014, students performed particularly well in English, science, humanities and modern foreign languages. They performed less well in mathematics.
- Students read well and often in the school. In Years 7, 8 and 9, students read regularly at the start of their English lessons. Teachers monitor the range of books being read and provide helpful guidance for students in their choices. Students are developing their vocabulary and understanding of social issues and life, past and present. In the majority of subjects, students achieve well and acquire skills that will support them well as citizens in modern Britain. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
- Aspirational targets are being set for the current students and the information on their results shows that they are progressing well to achieve them.
- Disadvantaged students are performing in line with others nationally in English, and a grade below in mathematics. They are performing a grade below other students in the school in both English and mathematics.
- Students in Year 7 who are below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics are given additional lessons to improve their skills so that they can make good progress in their learning.
- The most able students are performing significantly above the national average in comparison with other students of higher ability nationally, and in comparison with all students nationally. The most able disadvantaged students in the school do as well as the other students. The school's well-considered mentoring programme is proving successful for all of the most able students.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs perform as well as other students in the school, and some are performing significantly above the national average. This is the same for those students for whom English is not their first language and those from a minority ethnic background.
- A small cohort of students were entered early for mathematics, and achieved significantly above the national average. Students have taken statistics as well as mathematics in past years, but this practice is not happening for the current Year 11. Students take English literature GCSE in Year 10 and English language GCSE in Year 11. This has been highly successful.
- Students who attend alternative provision have been successful in all their examinations. The stringent management of the behaviour of the minority has helped them refocus on their studies and be successful.

The sixth form provision**is good**

- The sixth form is good. It is well led and managed. The students are set challenging targets and their progress is monitored regularly.
- There are excellent relationships between staff and students. Students are well supported, and the guidance they receive is very personalised and thorough. A school bursary supports disadvantaged students who need to pay for transport.
- School leaders recognise that limited transport links in a rural environment can create difficulties for students when making choices for post-16 education. They therefore adjust the sixth form provision to meet the needs of the students who wish to continue studying at the school, and review what is offered regularly.
- The achievement and progress of all students is good. Those studying the academic subjects at A level, and vocational subjects at Level 3, are performing significantly better than the national average. There are notable successes in business studies on a regular basis.
- Students are provided with a range of extra-curricular activities, such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award. These help to broaden their understanding, as well as providing additional opportunities to acquire the skills of leadership and responsibility. The president and vice-president of the sixth form are proactive and passionate about the school and provide strong student leadership.
- The quality of teaching in the sixth form is good. Strong relationships provide students with the confidence to ask searching questions both in and out of lessons. Feedback is frequent and detailed, enabling students to improve. Teachers deepen the students' learning through skilled questioning. The skills for the specific examinations are kept at the forefront of development.
- The numbers on roll in the sixth form fluctuate. However, the retention of students staying on from Year 12 to 13 has improved and is now above the national average, including those who are disadvantaged.
- The sixth form provides a sports academy, encouraging students to participate in a range of sports as well as gain coaching and officiating qualifications.
- Those students who wish to study at the more sought-after universities are successful in the majority of their applications, as are students who wish to specialise in vocational courses. Current students are able to follow the career path of past students through the close links they have maintained with the school.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	138024
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	448631

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,154
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	117
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs V Crabb
Headteacher	Miss T Yardley
Telephone number	01208 812881
Fax number	01208 814883
Email address	enquiries@wadebridge.cornwall.sch.uk

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