

Ofsted
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 4234
www.gov.uk/ofsted



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Mrs Samantha Fairbairn
Headteacher
Newquay Tretherras
Trevenson Road
Newquay
Cornwall
TR7 3BH

Dear Mrs Fairbairn

Short inspection of Newquay Tretherras

Following my visit to the school on 5 June 2018 with Ofsted Inspectors Anita Hemi and Steve Taylor, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in September 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection.

Since taking up your post in April 2016, you, together with your leadership team, have developed a positive and nurturing learning environment. Leaders are honest and accurate in their self-evaluation and ambitious for pupils' outcomes.

Governors are proactive in supporting the work of the school and provide suitable challenge where appropriate. You are committed to ensuring that the curriculum meets the needs of the pupils and supports their future aspirations. You have made recent changes to the curriculum to ensure that there is greater breadth at key stages 4 and 5, as well as support and challenge at key stage 3.

You were disappointed with the 2017 GCSE outcomes and, as a result, reflected carefully on them. You took appropriate action to ensure that key weaknesses were overcome, particularly in humanities, modern foreign languages and mathematics. This has been largely successful, but the progress of disadvantaged pupils, particularly boys, is not as strong as you would like it to be.

At the previous inspection, leaders were asked to ensure that teachers plan tasks that provide learning at the right level for all pupils, particularly the most able. As a result, teaching approaches have been developed to provide suitable challenge. This

has been particularly effective for students in the sixth form, who continue to make better progress from their starting points.

To underpin the drive for continuous improvement, you have strengthened processes which support middle leaders to develop classroom practice effectively. Leaders at all levels are meticulous in their planning and are positive and conscientious in their work.

Middle leaders are involved in the strategic planning of the school and value the regular interaction with the senior leadership team. New approaches which focus on the academic progress of particular groups of pupils have supported middle leaders to prioritise their work to good effect. Consequently, leaders at all levels share a common understanding of improvement planning priorities. They hold staff to account with a suitable blend of challenge and support in order to achieve these. Middle leaders share effective practice and whole-staff training is targeted and relevant.

There is no doubt that you value highly the pastoral aspect of the school's work. There are notable examples where actions show that leaders go to considerable lengths to provide support for pupils and ensure that exclusion is used as a last resort. You are rightly proud of 'The Wave', your on-site personalised learning and well-being centre. This is a highly effective provision that provides support for both academic and pastoral needs. Pupils value this and say that they have trust in the staff there.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. Thorough employment checks ensure that newly appointed staff are suitable to work with children. Senior leaders remind staff regularly about safeguarding expectations and provide suitable training.

Where there are concerns about pupils' welfare, a suitably qualified team of staff ensure that actions are timely and effective. Records are detailed and outline a clear chronology of action and response. Leaders engage with external agencies as appropriate. Where they are not satisfied with the support provided by other agencies, leaders challenge them to help resolve referrals more effectively.

The large majority of pupils say they feel safe in school and speak positively of the personal, social and health education they receive. They understand the importance of tolerance and respect, and recognise the value of diversity. This is reflected in the quality of relationships that exist within lessons and around the school, which are typically positive and respectful. The majority of parents and carers support the view that their child is kept safe in school. They value the care that staff provide, particularly when pupils make the transition into Year 7.

Inspection findings

- At the beginning of the inspection, we agreed on the key lines of enquiry. The first of these focused on the effectiveness of leaders' actions to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in humanities, modern foreign languages and mathematics. We particularly focused on the progress of disadvantaged pupils, those pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities and boys, which has been below that of their peers for the last two years.
- Leaders are acutely aware of the performance of these groups and work hard to develop teachers' practice to maximise pupils' progress. There is clear evidence that teaching is adapted appropriately to address the needs of those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Teachers are aware of the specific issues that may inhibit progress and teaching assistants ably support pupils to overcome these. As a result, pupils are making improved progress from their starting points.
- Leaders have taken action to overcome the weaknesses that led to disappointing results in 2017 in mathematics, modern foreign languages and humanities. Where practice is stronger, planning is well matched to pupils' needs and starting points. Teachers use effective questioning to probe, develop and assess pupils' knowledge and understanding, providing suitable challenge and support. However, these improvements are not yet fully embedded so pupils do not make as much progress as they could from their starting points.
- Teachers' expectations are not consistently high. As a result, some pupils, particularly boys, produce work that is unfinished and poorly presented. This prevents pupils from being able to follow the chronology of their learning easily and build on what they have done before. Teachers do not routinely correct misconceptions in mathematics and, therefore, gaps in knowledge continue into subsequent work.
- Leaders acknowledge that, while efforts are being made to improve the progress of disadvantaged pupils, particularly boys, these are still in their infancy and are not yet fully embedded. This is reflected in the variation in the 2017 outcomes, where performance was stronger in English and science than it was in humanities and mathematics. Crucially, while leaders have identified the barriers that exist for disadvantaged pupils and have implemented actions to address these, the evaluation of the impact of individual strategies is not precise enough.
- The second line of enquiry centred on how successfully leaders have improved the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. There is a shared awareness of the importance of overcoming this issue successfully and considerable resources have been used for this purpose. Pastoral leaders are aware of the pupils who do not attend as regularly as they should. They have implemented successful strategies involving pupils and their families, which are leading to improved attendance and decreasing persistent absence. Both are now in line with national averages. However, the evaluation of the impact of actions is not as sharp as it needs to be to accelerate improvements further.
- The final line of enquiry considered how well leaders ensure that sixth-form

provision is effective and supports students to make good progress from their starting points. We particularly focused on high prior-attaining students and girls, who have not performed as well as their peers in recent years. Since the previous inspection, leaders have made considerable improvements to the tracking of students' progress. Leaders have a clear understanding of the impact of actions taken to identify and support those students who fall behind. As a result, the performance of students in academic subjects is improving overall, including the two groups identified.

- School leaders are aware of the subjects that did not perform strongly at A level in 2017, and effective action has been taken to improve the quality of teaching in these subjects. Teachers ensure that students understand assessment objectives and know what they need to do to improve their understanding. As a result, current students are progressing well. They particularly value the individual support they receive from teachers and the pastoral care available.
- Students are positive about their study programmes and undertake work experience and work-related learning. Leaders ensure that students receive good-quality advice about their next steps and they track the future destinations of students carefully. As a result, teachers prepare students well for their next stage of education or employment. In addition, staff have worked hard, and successfully, to raise aspirations for pupils to access higher education. Consequently, the proportion of students who hold offers for places, including at Russell Group universities, has increased.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- the use of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is more sharply evaluated to support this group to make more rapid progress
- improvements in the teaching of humanities, modern foreign languages and mathematics are embedded and sustained so that pupils make better progress from their starting points
- teachers consistently demand a high standard of work, including the way in which it is organised and presented, particularly from boys, and routinely correct misconceptions
- support to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is developed further through sharper evaluation of its impact.

I am copying this letter to the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Cornwall. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Sarah McGinnis
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

At the beginning of the day, inspectors met with you and your leadership team to agree key lines of enquiry. Following this, we visited lessons and scrutinised pupils' written work across a range of subjects and age groups jointly with leaders. We met with members of the leadership team, the chief executive officer of the trust and representatives from the governing body, curriculum leaders, pastoral managers and pupils. We also scrutinised a range of documentation provided by the school, including policies relating to safeguarding. When making final judgements, we considered 128 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, 134 responses to the staff questionnaire and 129 responses to the questionnaire for pupils, provided by Ofsted.