

Inspection of Saltash Community School

Wearde Road, Saltash, Cornwall PL12 4AY

Inspection dates:	7 and 8 May 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Sara Del Gaudio. This school is part of South East Cornwall Multi Academy Regional Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Dan Buckley, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Lee Hallam.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's expectations of pupils' behaviour and learning have increased significantly. Most pupils meet these expectations. The changes to the behaviour policy have caused some unrest in the pupil and parent body but have resulted in a school which is calm and orderly. Strong routines and clear expectations ensure that learning is rarely disrupted. The school takes bullying seriously and has responded robustly to concerns about occasional instances of pupils' use of derogatory language. Pupils feel safe.

Pupils learn from an ambitious curriculum, which has been carefully planned. The expectations of what pupils should learn and be able to do have increased. Most of the time, pupils learn effectively and have time to put their learning into practice. Improvements to the curriculum are not reflected in the school's published outcomes, including in the sixth form.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular activities, which effectively develop their talents and interests. Sports clubs and competitions are popular, but increasingly, pupils also participate in performing arts, the school production being a particular highlight. Many pupils participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. The school has also recently increased its support for pupils' mental health. Students in the sixth form enjoy wider opportunities, such as sports leadership and the extended project qualification.

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

The school has identified precisely what pupils should learn and in which order, including in the sixth form. This supports them to build their knowledge over time. The impact of this work is more evident in some subjects than in others. Some older pupils still have gaps in their knowledge as a result of a previously weaker curriculum. However, the school has helped pupils to fill many of those gaps in their knowledge.

The school has ensured that staff have the expertise to deliver the curriculum well. Most of the time, staff provide clear explanations and show pupils how to complete work effectively. Pupils are given regular opportunities to revisit learning. As a result, most pupils remember what they have learned and make links between current and prior learning. In addition, pupils have opportunities to correct misconceptions and improve their work.

However, some of the time, staff do not use the school's approaches to teaching effectively. Sometimes, they do not check that pupils have understood before they move on to independent work. This means that these pupils struggle to complete this work and do not deepen their understanding of what has been taught.

The school's reading curriculum is robust. Pupils enjoy using the library and regularly read a range of texts with their tutors in the morning. Pupils who have fallen behind, are quickly identified and supported to catch up, including with phonics, when needed. Students in the sixth form take their roles as 'reading buddies' to younger pupils seriously, supporting them with reading fluency and comprehension.

The needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are mostly accurately identified. The school has recently improved its systems to support these pupils. However, there are still weaknesses in this provision. There is a lack of oversight of some of the plans in place to support these pupils. Some are not reviewed regularly, alongside the pupil and their parent or carer. This is reflected in the views of some parents. While these pupils mostly learn effectively alongside their peers, these systems need to be strengthened to ensure their needs are consistently met. The school is highly ambitious for pupils who attend the Area Resource Base. These pupils receive a highly personalised curriculum, delivered by expert staff.

The school's personal, social and health curriculum ensures that pupils, and students in the sixth form, receive age-appropriate information about healthy relationships. Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe and healthy. The school teaches pupils about the importance of respecting people's differences. In addition, the school carefully plans its curriculum and wider opportunities to ensure pupils' experiences teach them about Cornish heritage and increase their awareness of other faiths and cultures.

The school has clear and ambitious plans to ensure that pupils receive appropriate advice and guidance about their next steps. Pupils attend careers fairs, and they complete work experience. However, the impact of this work is less effective in the sixth form. Sometimes, students do not remain on their A-Level courses or complete work experience.

Following a period of instability, the headteacher and her team have united staff in their vision for the school. Staff are overwhelmingly supportive and feel empowered to continue driving improvements. Local governors know the school well. They support and challenge leaders when making changes. This has had a positive impact on pupils' learning, behaviour and attendance.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Staff do not check pupils' understanding consistently well. This means that some pupils struggle to put their learning into practice and build their knowledge over time. The school must ensure that recent work to improve the use of assessment is embedded effectively across the curriculum, so that pupils can learn with confidence and deepen their understanding of what has been taught.
- The systems in place to support the learning of some pupils with SEND are not strong enough. In particular, the review and implementation of some pupils' plans are not completed consistently well. This means that these pupils and their parents or carers

feel let down by the school. This also means that teachers do not have the necessary information to adapt their teaching to meet these pupils' needs. The trust must ensure that the leadership of this area of the school is effective so that positive partnerships are developed between the school, pupils and parents and that teachers are able to make necessary adaptations.

- For some students in sixth form, the information and guidance they receive do not support them consistently well. This means that retention rates are too low on some courses and some students do not complete work experience or choose ambitious destinations at the end of key stage 5. The school must ensure that students receive appropriate CEIAG so that they successfully complete their study programmes and have meaningful encounters with the world of work.

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 special educational needs and/or disabilities (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

Unique reference number	136575
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10378917
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,152
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	90
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Lee Hallam
CEO of the trust	Dan Buckley
Headteacher	Sara Del Gaudio
Website	www.saltash.net
Date of previous inspection	25 March 2024, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The leadership of the school has changed since the last graded inspection. The current headteacher has been in her substantive post since the start of this term, having been acting headteacher since January 2024.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school hosts specially resourced provision on behalf of Cornwall Council. This provides support for pupils with a variety of SEND. There are currently 27 pupils on roll.
- The school currently uses seven unregistered alternative provisions, and two registered alternative provisions.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth-form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 met with the headteacher and other senior leaders and a selection of staff during the inspection.
- The lead inspector met with two members of the board of trustees and the chair and three other members of the local governing board.
- The lead inspector met with the CEO and Director of Education for South East Cornwall Multi Academy Regional Trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, geography, physical education and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors analysed responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the free-text comments.
- Inspectors considered the responses of staff and pupils to Ofsted's online surveys.
- An inspector evaluated how well the school identifies and supports pupils with SEND.
- 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 spoke with groups of pupils during lessons and social times. They met with staff who oversee the personal development and behaviour of pupils, including reviewing relevant documents related to how behaviour incidents are reported and followed up.

Inspection team

Victoria Griffin, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Matthew Collins

Ofsted Inspector

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Sarah Parsons

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