

St Cuthbert Mayne School

Trumlands Road, Torquay, Devon TQ1 4RN

Inspection dates

23–24 November 2016

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Good |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Good |
| Outcomes for pupils | Good |
| 16 to 19 study programmes | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Good |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since the headteacher's appointment two years ago, he has worked tirelessly to improve the standards at the school. He has succeeded in this. Results were below the floor standard in 2014 but they are good, now.
- The headteacher has appointed a new senior leadership team. Leaders have a clear understanding of what good teaching and learning look like. They are ensuring that all teaching staff provide opportunities for pupils to achieve well.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are good. The Christian ethos permeates the school. Tolerance and respect for differences and diversity are apparent.
- Leadership of the sixth form is good. The provision is inclusive. Disadvantaged students are successful. Students are guided to the right courses and all find appropriate education, training or employment when they leave.
- School leaders have revised the way that behaviour is managed in the school. Learning takes place without disruption most of the time. Pupils and staff spoke positively of the difference the new system has made.
- School leaders have embraced the opportunity to provide a new curriculum that allows pupils to develop skills, knowledge and understanding as they progress through the school. Criteria for assessing learning are very specific and support teachers in providing guidance.
- Pupils are confident and articulate. They speak of their school with pride.
- Governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well. They challenge leaders rigorously about issues and seek clarity on aspects that cause them concern. They are aware of the need to provide equality of choice for students and are determined to maintain this level of inclusion.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:
 - the best practice in teaching, learning and assessment is shared so that pupils' progress continues to improve across the full range of subjects
 - attendance of pupils is improved and the persistent absence of pupils is reduced
 - the school's feedback policy is evaluated consistently to make sure that pupils use the next steps teachers provide to extend their knowledge, understanding and skills further
 - the most able pupils attain the highest levels in all year groups and, in particular, Year 7 and 8.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Senior leaders have a very good understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas that need to be developed. They plan and act upon them as a team. This has provided the required capacity for significant improvements to be made in a relatively short space of time.
- Leaders of the school are aspirational and convey this to pupils, staff and parents at every opportunity. They are role models of excellence.
- The school has undergone significant staff restructuring to maintain a secure budget. Despite the inherent difficulties of dealing with such a situation, the headteacher has taken the staff with him through the process. His transparent accountability and moral integrity have enabled this to happen. This was apparent from the responses to Ofsted's online staff survey.
- There is a tailored approach to the professional development of staff. This enables individuals to improve their skill set. Leaders encourage a coaching model. This helps the school to improve and deal with the more difficult situations. However, there is scope for a more incisive evaluation of teaching.
- The systems for managing the performance of staff are rigorous and aligned closely to pay awards.
- Leaders and governors monitor the use of pupil premium funding efficiently. They evaluate the impact of actions well. As a result, barriers to involvement in extra-curricular activities have been removed. These activities provide pupils with confidence in their abilities which has a direct impact on their progress in school. Disadvantaged pupils spoke of their appreciation of the support they receive.
- Pupils eligible for Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up funding are making good progress. The use of reading and numeracy programmes speeds their progress. In addition, sixth-form students listen to pupils read frequently to support their advancement. Pupils are able to integrate fully with their peers in mathematics and English in Year 8.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. There has been detailed work in subject areas to assess the skills needed as pupils go through the school. Leaders have evaluated the needs of pupils with regard to the curriculum and the choices it offers, especially in key stage 4 and 5.
- There are a range of extra-curricular opportunities and trips in which pupils participate to broaden their outlook. There are links with schools internationally. Pupils speak to the pupils abroad regularly via video conferencing and this develops their cultural awareness intellectually. Pupils are successful in raising money for charities.
- The welfare of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is met effectively. The processes for monitoring the academic progress of these pupils are not rigorous enough. The pupils who have statements or educational, health and care plans make better progress than those needing more general support. Funding has been used to train learning mentors who provide support proficiently.

- Pupils are prepared positively for life in modern Britain through their personal, social, health and economic education programme. Pupils talk of how they are helped to understand the fundamental British values of democracy and equality. In particular, they enjoy debating political issues.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of the pupils and students is a strength of the school. The Christian ethos pervades the school in a variety of ways, visually and physically as well as educationally and emotionally. The chapel, known as the Cornerstone, is a place of refuge for quiet contemplation. The school has dealt with some highly sensitive issues in recent years. This area, where the full-time counsellor works, has been beneficial and provided much-needed care and comfort.

Governance of the school

- The governors represent the two denominations of Roman Catholicism and the Church of England. The Christian ethos is very important to them. However, recognition of the changing demographic of the school with more pupils without faith is understood. When school leaders were considering the withdrawal of modern foreign languages education for pupils with lower ability, governors challenged the lack of equality in this decision. This is a typical example of their belief in pupils having the fairest chance in the school. It epitomises how they are prepared to examine the decision-making of school leaders.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. School leaders have created a culture where assessing risk is the norm. The site is unusual in that the grounds are terraced on an incline, so monitoring of this situation is vital. The personal safety and well-being of pupils are secure. The headteacher's personal assistant has taken over the monitoring of the checks undertaken on staff, visitors and recruitment. The record manifests exemplary practice. Secure processes are in place for monitoring and recording any safeguarding concerns. The school will not allow any visitors on site without appropriate badges or similar validation of their role and business. Staff are trained on how to keep pupils safe from abuse, sexual exploitation, radicalisation and extremism. Staff work sensitively with parents and external agencies to monitor and support the more vulnerable pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The leadership of teaching, learning and assessment is strong. There is a clear understanding of the actions needed to maintain improvement. Strategic leadership is provided by the deputy and assistant headteachers, which provides valuable extra capacity to the headteacher. The lead practitioner works with teachers on a daily basis at a very helpful operational level.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good. This enables them to plan learning competently. Teachers use questioning to probe learning and deepen understanding effectively.
- Relationships between pupils and teachers are positive in the main. In the few instances where this is not the case, pupils are not engaged in the learning or are not encountering adequate challenges.
- The teaching of English is secure and leadership is well established. This benefits pupils in their literacy work in other subject areas.

- The leader of mathematics is an inspiring teacher and individual. Under his guidance, the teaching and learning in mathematics is improving. He is aware that there is more to do and is not complacent.
- Effective teaching strategies are used in the core areas of English, mathematics and science and physical education and art, as well as the sixth form. Weaker teaching occurs in humanities. Pupils are not stretched by the activities as there is too much work that is insufficiently challenging.
- Pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure as well as for learning. They are fluent and able to comprehend effectively.
- The most able and most able disadvantaged pupils are provided with higher expectations in key stages 4 and 5. Too often, these pupils in key stage 3 are not given work that reflects their ability levels, despite the clarity of opportunities in the new curriculum.
- Teachers comply with the school's policy on marking and feedback. At times, this work is following the 'letter of the law' rather than the 'spirit of the law'. In some subjects, pupils do not learn from the feedback given. This impedes rapid progress.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported by good learning mentors who understand the individual issues. Subject leaders are not working closely enough with the coordinator of special educational needs to monitor the progress of these pupils. The coordinator is not proactive enough in this area of work.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are keen to share their views. They are self-aware. Their understanding and respect for the differences in others are acute. This quality reflects the school's promotion of equality and diversity.
- The physical and emotional welfare of pupils and students is at the heart of the school's work. The school has allowed a high number of pupils excluded from other local schools to join the population. The majority have settled in well and have found academic and social success. When this is not the case, leaders have not shied away from making the decision that the pupils are not succeeding and need alternative provision.
- Sixth-form students provide mentoring for younger pupils who are experiencing difficulties associated with adolescence and friendship. The sixth-form students are an integral part of the wider school.
- Pupils and students understand the different forms of bullying that can take place. They are clear about what steps need to be taken as and when it happens. They spoke of the school's proficient systems for dealing with the rare occurrences.
- Pupils feel safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe. They understand how to protect themselves from risk, including online, and radicalisation and extremism.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils and students do not use derogatory language.
- The school campus is housed in many different blocks. Pupils travel across the school grounds with purpose and are on time for lessons.
- Pupils' attendance at alternative provision is good and monitored well.
- Pupils and staff spoke positively of the improvement in behaviour because of the new systems for rewards and sanctions. The majority of pupils behave well and show respect and tolerance for others. There are a few who disrupt learning. When this happens, most teachers use the new processes for managing behaviour. However, there are a few teachers who are not applying it consistently. As a result, other pupils' learning is impeded.
- Pupils are not encouraged by enough teachers to take pride in their work. Subject leaders are not monitoring this satisfactorily.
- Some pupils are not attending the school on a regular basis. The newly appointed assistant headteacher with responsibility for this aspect and the full-time attendance officer have worked successfully to improve the attendance and reduce the persistent absence of the more vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils. These groups had been a concern in past years. Despite this, the attendance of a minority of pupils is still stubbornly low.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The pupils who are in school currently are making good progress. The majority of pupils arrive in the school with starting points that are significantly below the national average. However, by the time they leave the school, at the end of key stage 4 or 5, they are achieving in line with the national average or better. Year 9 and 10 pupils are making very strong progress.
- The older pupils and students are more secure in their knowledge and understanding than the younger pupils in key stage 3 because of the exacting provision offered.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is broadly in line with that of other pupils nationally. There is further work to do to diminish the difference between these pupils and others in school. Leaders are aware of this and are being proactive in dealing with this concern. They have evaluated past actions and are using this analysis to make further improvements.
- Pupils with lower ability are achieving well and better than their peers in English, mathematics, science and other subjects studied for the English baccalaureate.
- The most able pupils are not performing as well in mathematics, core science and some of the subjects studied for the English baccalaureate, such as humanities. Teachers are not providing them with enough work that is taxing their thinking or deepening the learning. This was evident in Year 8 mathematics. Pupils were eager to share their knowledge of the Fibonacci code but this element was disregarded for more basic numeracy. The most able disadvantaged pupils are few in number. Those

who are not succeeding have specific issues of which the school is aware. Leaders are supporting them to continue in appropriate educational pathways.

- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are making progress that is in line with other pupils nationally. The pupils who have statements or education, health and care plans make good progress.
- Pupils and students are well prepared for the next stage of their education, employment or training. All pupils and students have places in sustained education, employment or training when they leave.
- Pupils in South Devon College taking NVQ level 1 or being educated elsewhere for medical reasons are achieving well.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- The leadership of the sixth form is highly competent. Both administrative and welfare staff give good support.
- Leaders set aspirational targets for students who show determination to succeed. Effective tracking systems are used in the sixth form, too. If students are not keeping up with their studies, they are mentored and monitored closely until they are back on track. Students commented on their appreciation of this.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good. Teachers provide challenge and support to maximise progress.
- The school meets the needs of students well by offering a range of courses. The guidance offered to students prior to their commencement in the sixth form means that they are taking appropriate programmes of study. The school provides impartial advice and supports students who choose to take up courses elsewhere. Leaders make sure that these students continue to thrive in their new environment through links with the alternative colleges.
- The majority of students stay at school for both Years 12 and 13. A few stay on into Year 14. Even though the school does not receive funding for these students, leaders ensure that the students are ready and prepared for the next stage in their careers.
- Students who are retaking their English and mathematics GCSEs are given effective teaching for sufficient time each week. Most students achieve better grades at the end of the course.
- Students taking BTECs go on work experience in local businesses and places of employment. The business studies department has very good links with employers. Those students taking academic courses do not have such opportunities.
- Students' attitudes to learning are commendable. Students are engaged in their learning and participate well. This is evident in courses that are not taken at key stage 4 such as sociology and psychology, as well as in subjects such as history.
- The sixth-form environment is age-appropriate and stimulating. The students respect it and teachers use the space proficiently.
- Students behave well and their consideration for the younger pupils is shown in the way they support them in mentoring, lunchtime activities and with reading.

- Students are aware of how to keep themselves safe and commented on the high focus this has in the teaching of personal, social, health and economic education. Students are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 113551 |
| Local authority | Torbay |
| Inspection number | 10000441 |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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| Type of school | Secondary comprehensive |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 18 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 923 |
| Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes | 149 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Michael Cronin |
| Headteacher | Peter Brown |
| Telephone number | 01803 328725 |
| Website | www.st-cuthbertmayne.co.uk |
| Email address | admin@stcm.torbay.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 28–29 September 2011 |

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about a named person for enquiries; the school's most recent results at key stage 4 with regard to attainment 8 and English baccalaureate subjects; the behaviour policy does not cover search, restraint or force or powers beyond the gate; the report for special educational needs does not mention evaluation, assessing and reviewing; and governance does not include the structure of sub-committees nor a register of interests on its website.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school. It has a higher

proportion of girls, more pupils eligible for pupil premium and more pupils who need support with special educational needs and/or disabilities than the national average.

- The school is located in an area with a level of deprivation higher than the national average.
- Pupils go to South Devon College to study NVQ level 1 in construction. Other pupils attend the medical tuition service on a full-time basis and Evolve psychotherapy for two days a week.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 36 lessons of which 16 were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- A wide sample of pupils' work, from all year groups and a range of subjects, was scrutinised.
- Inspectors talked with a group of disadvantaged pupils from all years and sixth-form students in formal meetings, as well as with pupils informally across the site.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, a number of senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Information and other documentary evidence were evaluated including that relating to safeguarding, assessment, school evaluation and external reviews.
- Inspectors took account of the 83 responses to the Ofsted online Parent View survey and the parental survey undertaken by the school, and the 47 responses to the staff online survey.

Inspection team

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|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
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