

Inspection of Falmouth School

Trescobeas Road, Falmouth, Cornwall TR11 4LH

Inspection dates:	23 and 24 April 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 Joanne Guest. This school is part of the Roseland Multi-Academy 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), Christopher Challis, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Lisa Michell.

What is it like to attend this school?

Falmouth School is aspirational for its pupils. Expectations are increasingly high. The curriculum is ambitious, broad and sequenced carefully. Staff share in leaders' determination and want the best for the pupils they teach. They ensure lessons are predictable, clear and meaningful. Pupils take pride in their work and achievements. Many realise their potential. Overall, pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged.

The school has improved how it promotes positive behaviour successfully. Staff apply the school's behaviour policy consistently and fairly. Pupils behave well. Lessons are focused and purposeful. Low level disruption is extremely rare. Pupils move around the school calmly and respectfully. Pupils make a positive contribution to the friendly atmosphere.

Pupils benefit from an extremely broad and varied offer. They embrace the opportunities to build on their interests and talents. For example, the school provides a wide array of extra-curricular opportunities across sports, the arts and in response to pupils' passions. Pupils contribute to the life of the school and wider community diligently. The school is establishing itself at the centre of the community effectively.

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

The school has established an effective and interesting curriculum, including in the sixth form. The school and trust have worked collaboratively to maintain a sharp focus on what pupils need to learn. This has raised expectations, ensured learning is sequenced appropriately and strengthened how well the curriculum captures pupils' interest.

Teachers typically make strong use of the school's approaches to structuring lessons and checking that pupils remember what they have been taught. The school has developed detailed 'workbooks' across subjects to help ensure the implementation of the curriculum is consistent, predictable and accessible. This approach allows teachers to help pupils, including those with SEND, remember relevant knowledge, which pupils apply with success.

Nevertheless, the school knows there is more to do. The workbooks are newer in some subjects and need more time to have the impact intended. Sometimes expectations could be higher and errors picked up more rigorously, where there are inconsistencies in approach. However, overall, pupils learn the curriculum well. This is reflected in the increasingly strong outcomes achieved by pupils at the end of key stage 4.

The school has strengthened its work to identify how to support pupils with SEND. There are now much sharper processes for identifying pupils' needs and sharing this information with staff. For example, the school works purposefully and deliberately with local authority SEND services to ensure that pupils' needs are identified accurately and in an increasingly timely way. For many pupils with SEND, these improvements are effective. However, inconsistencies remain in the application of these improved processes in class. This

means, as with other elements of the implementation of the school's policies and practices, occasionally the experience for pupils with SEND could still be better.

The school's work to improve behaviour and pupils' attendance is effective. The school has usefully focused on working more collaboratively with pupils and their families. Pupils respond well to the higher expectations of staff, who typically apply the behaviour policy with empathy. As a result, there is an increasing reduction in suspensions and pupils' absence from school.

Pupils' reading is prioritised. Pupils learn from a range of strategies to help them to read better. This includes exposure to a carefully chosen breadth of literature, delivered through the tutor reading programme. Furthermore, pupils who struggle to read benefit from a focused reading programme. This helps them read with greater independence and fluency.

Provision in the sixth form reflects the improvements made to the curriculum at the school overall. Students, including those who are disadvantaged and with SEND, achieve well. Students gain qualifications, which are tailored to meet their needs and they are supported effectively into ambitious next steps. However, the school rightly recognises the curriculum offer in the sixth form is not as broad as it could be. As a result, the choice for those wanting to remain at the school post-16 is limited.

Pupils' personal development is promoted and provided for appropriately. Pupils have plentiful opportunities to understand social, moral and cultural issues. Extra-curricular activities enrich pupils' experiences. Effective careers advice is woven carefully into the curriculum. Pupils work together and develop leadership skills through wide-ranging opportunities, such as on the school council or as prefects. Consequently, pupils learn to be self-aware, are prepared well for the future and know how to keep themselves safe.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Occasionally, the implementation of the curriculum is varied. This means that, at times, pupils' learning is stronger in some subjects than others, including for those with SEND. The school should further strengthen how staff implement the curriculum so that there is even greater consistency in the outcomes that pupils achieve.
- The school's vision for the sixth form has yet to be realised. This means the curriculum choices for pupils who would like to remain in the school's sixth form post-16 are not as broad as the school's ambition. The school should continue to grow provision in the

sixth form so that it can mirror the breadth of curriculum provision seen in key stages 3 and 4.

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	137223
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	10378927
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	885
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	36
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Lisa Michell
CEO of the trust	Christopher Challis
Headteacher	Joanne Guest
Website	www.falmouthschool.net
Dates of previous inspection	7 and 8 February 2023, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Falmouth School is part of the Roseland Multi-Academy Trust.
- Since the last inspection, a new headteacher took up post in September 2024.
- The school uses two alternative provisions. One of these is an unregistered alternative provision.
- 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.

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.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, geography and music. 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 also listened to some pupils read.
- Inspectors met with leaders, including the headteacher, the deputy headteachers, assistant headteachers and the special educational needs coordinator. They also met with the CEO and the senior school improvement lead from the trust.
- The inspectors spoke to two representatives from the board of trustees, including the chair and vice-chair and a member of the local monitoring committee.
- 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 took account of the answers to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. They also considered the responses to the Ofsted staff and pupil surveys.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including documents relating to governance, leaders' evaluations, records relating to behaviour, suspensions and exclusions, the long-term strategy of the school and information about the school's curriculum.

Inspection team

Matthew Barnes, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Daniel Roberts	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Burgess	Ofsted Inspector
Kathy Maddocks	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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