

Community & Hospital Education Service AP Academy

4 East Pool, Tolvaddon Energy Park, Tolvaddon, Camborne TR14 0HX

Inspection dates 20–21 May 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Outstanding 1
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- Innovative leadership by the headteacher, very ably supported by the governing body, has resulted in high-quality teaching that has enabled students to make outstanding improvement in their literacy and numeracy skills during their time at the school.
- The very high-quality support that is provided by the Acorn Academy leaders has led to exciting and successful virtual learning as well as individual provision for students in their homes or in hospital.
- As a result, all groups of students make rapid and sustained progress in English, mathematics and science from their initial starting points at the school. This leads to a high proportion of students quickly reintegrating back to their mainstream schools.
- Governors are rigorous in their drive to improve all aspects of the school. They regularly challenge leaders about students' progress and have an accurate view of the school's outcomes.
- Governors ensure that extra support is provided for students who are eligible for additional funding, and for those with additional special needs. This ensures that these students achieve at least as well as their classmates in English and mathematics.
- The parents and carers who spoke to the inspector are very supportive of the school. They are extremely pleased with their children's progress and personal development.
- Subjects and topics are well planned to meet individual needs so that they fully match each student's abilities.
- Very effective resources for information and communication technology ensure that students achieve exceptionally well in this area of learning.
- High-quality support and guidance for students ensure that they make excellent progress in their personal development. As a result, the vast majority of students go on to college, local sixth forms or employment when they leave the school at the end of Year 11.
- The excellent promotion of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has resulted in strong improvements to students' personal development.
- Opportunities for students to improve their physical skills are too limited. This is because too few indoor activities are planned to ensure that all groups can improve their physical development, including keeping fit.
- Students' behaviour is exemplary and they enjoy their lessons. They show this by the way their attendance improves rapidly once they start at the school.
- Students are safe and secure in all areas of the school.
- Teaching in English, mathematics and science, as well as in a range of other subjects, is outstanding. Students benefit from high levels of individual support which helps them to rapidly improve their skills.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed students' learning in five lessons, four of them virtually with the headteacher.
- A few students at the hospital school talked about their school and their work.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Pupil Performance Sub Group, academy leaders and other staff.
- The inspector observed the work of the school and looked at a range of documents. These included the school's own information about students' progress, planning and monitoring documents, safeguarding information and students' books.
- Several parents and carers were happy to talk to the inspector by telephone about their views of the school and their children's progress.
- The inspector talked to two senior leaders from local feeder schools and with an Education Officer.
- There were too few responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, to provide the views of other parents. As a result, the inspector talked to some parents and carers by telephone and looked at the results of the school's own recent parent questionnaire.
- The inspector took account of 16 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Denise Morris, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school became an alternative provision converter academy on 1 June 2013. It is part of the Acorn Multi-Academy Trust which includes six other short-stay schools across Cornwall. These are: Glynn House Academy, Nine Maidens Academy, North Cornwall Academy, Restormel Academy, Caradon Academy and Penwith Academy. This school was not previously inspected.
- Students come from all areas of Cornwall. Most are at the school for short periods of up to three terms because of their complex mental health and/or medical difficulties.
- The vast majority of students in Key Stage 4 are virtual learners. They undertake lessons in their homes via the internet.
- Younger students are taught individually in their homes by visiting teachers on a daily basis.
- Students in the Trelisk Hospital School usually stay for a few days and have their own classroom.
- Almost all students have dual registration with their mainstream school.
- Many students have been out of regular attendance at mainstream schools for a considerable period before attending this school.
- A minority of students have a statement of special educational needs for their learning difficulties.
- Almost all students are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of students supported by the pupil premium is above average. This is additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority. The school does not receive this funding because it is retained by students' mainstream schools. However, the school does provide additional support and resources for this group of students.
- Early entries to some qualifications are available to students in Year 10. Early entries to GCSEs are available to students in Year 11 in the November prior to the main GCSE examinations in June.
- Students do not attend vocational opportunities at nearby colleges because of their mental health issues. Nearly all students go on to colleges, including Truro and Penwith College, Cornwall College, or local sixth forms when they leave the school at the end of Year 11.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that there are more opportunities for students to take part in physical activities both indoors and in the community so that they improve their fitness.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher, ably supported by academy leaders, governors and staff, has developed an innovative approach to learning. This is for those students who cannot attend school because of their mental health issues and/or their medical difficulties. Exceptional vision and aspiration have resulted in students making rapid progress in English and mathematics once they start at the school. As a result, students catch up fast so that a high proportion of younger students are quickly reintegrated into their mainstream schools.
- Middle leaders contribute extremely well to students' achievements. They ensure that all teachers are supported and that assessments of students' progress are regular and accurate. As a result, provision in English, mathematics and science is very strong.
- The school is developing its new curriculum effectively and continually broadening opportunities and extending qualifications for students. The curriculum is based on delivering virtual learning for groups of students at Key Stage 4 in particular. This, along with the individual teaching of younger students and those in the hospital class, meets the needs and abilities of all groups of students very well.
- Targets are set for teachers to ensure high-quality challenge for their students. This helps leaders to check the impact of teaching on students' achievements. Increases in teachers' salaries are matched to how well these targets are met.
- Leaders make sure that students' behaviour is outstanding through regular checks and observations of lessons. Students often have reduced timetables due to their mental health issues or their medical difficulties, but leaders ensure that expectations of behaviour are always high.
- Leaders promote students' understanding of British values effectively through the curriculum. For example, there are regular fund-raising events for different charities. Through their personal and social education, students recently engaged in discussions about the importance of voting in the recent Parliamentary elections. Activities such as these prepare them well for life in modern Britain.
- British values are well promoted through the curriculum, particularly through literature. For example, reading *Of Mice and Men* led to many discussions about different lifestyles and getting on well together.
- Staff are very supportive of leaders. Responses to the inspection questionnaire are overwhelmingly positive about leadership, and students' progress and behaviour.
- Leaders work very well with their Acorn Academy partners who provide highly effective support. For example, they are well advanced in jointly developing the way they will be assessing students' progress in the future.
- Parents and carers who spoke to the inspector are extremely pleased with the school and with the quality of provision. They highly value the regular newsletters. 'This school has been a lifesaver. My child had been out of school for a year but the teachers here really understand her needs', commented one parent or carer. Another said, '... wonderful provision, doing well in English and reading regularly'. These are typical comments from parents and carers.
- The school makes sure that there is equality of opportunity for all students through the curriculum. This helps them to develop an understanding of others and the different views that others might have. As a result, there is no discrimination at the school and students' attitudes are positive.
- The academy leaders provide high-quality support to staff through regular visits and whole-academy training. For example, there are lead teachers in key subjects who support staff across the academy. They ensure that students make better than expected progress during their time at the school. As a result, GCSE results last year were of a very high quality in relation to students' starting points.
- Leaders from feeder schools are overwhelmingly pleased with the provision and the way that this school supports their students. One commented, 'The impact of this school goes beyond the statistics of outcomes. We are very impressed with this provision.'
- Careers guidance is excellent, ensuring that students are well prepared for life at college. Staff regularly go with students to visit different colleges to ensure that the right one for each student is chosen. Nearly all students who leave the school at the end of Year 11 find college places or employment.
- Students' physical skills are limited by the nature of their home tuition or virtual learning. Leaders have not planned well enough for the development of students' physical skills.
- Safeguarding procedures fully meet requirements. Staff receive regular training so that they know how to identify any pupil at risk of harm. Policies ensure that students are safe and risk assessments are thorough.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is extremely effective. Members of the governing body have received training which has

helped them to develop their skills, ensuring that they successfully hold leaders to account for students' achievements. Governors are fully involved in checking the quality of teaching and behaviour so that they understand their impact on students' outcomes. Members know how successful the school is because they check performance data regularly with other similar schools in the academy, making sure they are accurate. Governors also receive high-quality information from school leaders. Members rigorously check the performance of staff and know that teaching and achievement are outstanding. Financial management is very effective. Governors make excellent use of additional funding to ensure that students who are eligible benefit from it. This ensures that students achieve as well as their classmates in English and mathematics. Governors set targets for teachers and ensure that those who achieve their targets are rewarded.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Students value their lessons. They show this by their very high attendance. Despite students' wide range of medical difficulties they behave very well in lessons and there are no disruptions.
- Behaviour in lessons is managed very well so that there is a calm ethos in which the students can thrive. Any incidents are very effectively dealt with. The highly structured individual lessons matched to students' needs ensure that students stay on task and achieve extremely well.
- High-quality support for students ensures that their personal development improves rapidly at the school. Their self-confidence rises so that they can gradually leave their homes and take part in joint activities. In the hospital class, students value the tuition they receive so that they are respectful and engage very positively in learning.
- Students are aware of the school's approach to the Christian religion, which is balanced with the study of other world faiths. The recent introduction of an online course about different religions helps students to understand about other faiths and lifestyles.
- The school prepares students well for college through their improving self-esteem and confidence, their high attendance and their excellent progress and behaviour.
- The behaviour of students while on trips is outstanding.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Students are safe because of high-quality procedures to ensure that safety policies are in place.
- Close links with the other academy schools ensure that safeguarding policies fully meet requirements.
- Students receive high-quality support from the academy staff. Teachers who visit students at home ensure that students know how to keep themselves safe in the community. Those who receive teaching through virtual lessons also benefit from high-quality teaching and monitoring that ensures they are safe on the internet.
- Students at the hospital school told the inspector that they enjoy their lessons and feel safe at the school because the teacher or other staff are always there to help them.
- Students are aware of risks. Risk assessments are fully in place. Many students find it difficult to go outside of their homes due to their illnesses. Nevertheless, they know and understand that they are safe with their teachers and teaching assistants.
- There is no evidence of any bullying because very few students ever meet each other. There is no evidence in records of any bullying at the school and no evidence of cyber bullying.
- The school takes every precaution to ensure that students are safe at all times when on trips.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Students' achievements in English and mathematics are excellent because the impact of teaching during the relatively short time students are at the school is outstanding.
- Many teachers work remotely with students, particularly in Key Stage 4, through virtual learning on the internet. Small groups of three or four students attend each lesson. Teachers, therefore, are able to plan precisely to meet the very individual needs and abilities of each student. As a result, tasks are always very well matched, enabling progress to be rapid.
- All staff receive high-quality training in online teaching and they provide highly detailed lesson plans and

reports to leaders for each lesson. This, along with online monitoring of learning, helps leaders to know how effective teaching is and how well students achieve. Regular checks show that the quality of teaching results in outstanding achievement for students.

- Younger students usually receive visits at home from their teacher and also make excellent progress because of individually taught tasks. As a result, the achievement of this group is rapid and many quickly return to mainstream education.
- At the hospital school, excellent individual teaching ensures that students, who attend often for a few days only, keep pace with the learning they are involved with at their own school. Very effective liaison with mainstream schools plays a valuable part in the success of these students.
- Students are highly challenged by the work set for them. Marking of their work is of a high quality, focusing on improvement. It is interactive, enabling students to respond to comments so that they can improve their work.
- Students' reading skills improve while at the school because of high levels of encouragement and individual support as well as regular reading in lessons.
- Teaching in mathematics and science is often practical, helping students to enjoy their learning. Effective questioning is the key to students' success in these subjects because it challenges them to think carefully about how to solve problems. Teachers regularly provide practical experiments or challenges which help to build students' confidence in their own abilities so that they succeed.
- The most able students benefit from additional challenges so that they can achieve their potential. For example, they are regularly set additional tasks to increase their work rates.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Students' achievement is outstanding because they make rapid progress during their often short time at the school because of the extremely innovative approaches to teaching.
- When students enter the school, their attainment is almost always below or well-below expected levels for their age. This is because many have been out of school for up to a year due to their mental health difficulties or other illnesses. The needs of many students are incredibly complex. Most quickly settle and begin to catch up with past missed learning so that their achievement starts to improve rapidly.
- School data show that progress in English and mathematics is outstanding during students' time at the school. They make very rapid progress initially, and over two or three terms this progress is rapid and sustained.
- A high proportion of students reintegrate back into their own mainstream school within two or three terms. In the current academic year, for example, 31 students have already returned to their previous schools, and only seven of these stayed for more than six months. Students who arrive at the school in Key Stage 4 generally stay to complete their GCSEs.
- In 2014, students acquired good GCSE qualifications in a wide range of subjects, including English, mathematics, science, additional science, information and communication technology, and Spanish. A higher proportion of students in Key Stage 4 achieved five A* to C grades, including in English and mathematics, than all students in alternative provision nationally.
- Some students in Year 10 take early entry Functional Skills examinations in English and mathematics to ensure they achieve some qualifications while at the school. Early entry for Year 11 students takes place in the November prior to the main examinations in July. This is to provide students with the space to take additional examinations in July, and enabling them to achieve higher grades.
- All groups of students, including disadvantaged students and those with additional special needs, achieve equally well. This is due to the high quality of individual support that they receive.
- Students achieve particularly well in information and communication technology. They acquire high grades in their examinations because they really enjoy the subject and benefit from very effective resources.
- Not all students have access to indoor or outdoor sport. This is due to students' medical conditions which often inhibit outdoor activities. As a result, provision for any form of physical education is not good.
- Students make excellent progress in reading and writing because of a strong focus on literature. For example, students preparing for their GCSE examinations were studying a text linked to life in Afghanistan. They were checking how the writer created excitement in the text. Students valued the very effective virtual teaching which enabled them to have private conversations with the teacher to improve their skills. They improved their understanding of how to create impact in their writing through careful reading of the text.
- In mathematics, students make excellent progress with almost a 100% attaining A* to G grades in the most recent GCSE examinations. Clear explanations and questions challenge students to work things out

for themselves. This was evident when a student at the hospital school was able to show excellent understanding of the use of brackets in algebra following high levels of challenge by the teacher.

- The most able students achieve exceptionally well in their tasks, gaining high grades because of the very effective quality of challenge that is provided for them.
- Students are well prepared for their futures at college because of their outstanding progress and their improved personal development.

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	139741
Local authority	Cornwall
Inspection number	447815

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Academy alternative provision converter
Age range of pupils	5–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	67
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jenny Veal
Headteacher	Dominic Black Rob Gasson - CEO Acorn Academy Cornwall
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01209 715079
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