

Inspection of Callywith College

Inspection dates: 14–16 January 2020

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Education programmes for young people	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this provider

Callywith College is an Academy 16 to 19 Free School in Bodmin, Cornwall. It opened in September 2017. During the inspection, 1081 students were studying on education programmes for young people and 11 students in receipt of high-needs funding were studying on academic and vocational courses at levels 2 and 3. A small cohort of learners were studying on six courses at levels 1 and 2. These have the study of GCSE English and mathematics at their core. Health and social care and business are the level 2 courses with the largest numbers of students.

Students can choose to study from 30 A-level subjects and 12 BTEC Extended Diplomas. The courses with the largest numbers of students studying are in science, mathematics, English, humanities, health and social care, and sport.

What is it like to be a learner with this provider?

Students are overwhelmingly positive about all aspects of college life. They feel privileged to be a student there and take an immense pride in being part of the Callywith College community. Many students travel a considerable distance to attend.

Students thrive under the exceptionally supportive and caring environment. They are very well prepared for their futures, through highly effective information, advice and guidance. Staff provide high-quality teaching and pastoral support before students join and during their time at the college. Students enjoy the modern facilities. They benefit from the calm and positive environment at the college, which encourages them to focus intently on their learning and personal development.

Students gain new experiences and opportunities, through the extensive curriculum and daily life at the college. They develop an in-depth knowledge of their subject, the community and the wider world. Students are inspired to do well, because staff treat them with great respect. Students feel that staff have their best interests at heart. Staff act swiftly on student feedback which identifies improvement to the college. Students are constantly reminded of their ability and worth by staff. Students feel very safe and valued.

Students strongly appreciate the additional learning sessions provided as part of the curriculum. These help them secure and deepen their subject and wider knowledge. Sessions include subject workshops and health and well-being academies. Students develop their social and personal skills exceptionally well, through the broad tutorial and enrichment programme.

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

Governors, leaders and managers have a clear and ambitious vision for the college. They have developed a curriculum which raises the aspirations and achievements of its students and improves the life chances of young people living in one of the poorest regions in the UK. Since the opening of Callywith College in September 2017, leaders, managers and staff have worked tirelessly to create a culture of high expectations for all. Their dedicated focus on relentlessly providing a wide range of carefully designed academic and vocational learning programmes, and high-quality teaching, assessment and support is highly successful. As a result of everyone's combined efforts, almost all students who join the college stay on their programmes. They go on to make good or outstanding progress towards their curriculum and personal goals and achieve their qualifications.

The curriculum is highly effective in enabling students to reach their long-term aspirations. In 2018/19, all students who left the college progressed to further learning. Three quarters went to higher education. Just under two thirds of these students were the first in their family to attend a university. The remaining students

have gained employment, started an apprenticeship or continued with further study or training.

The curriculum offered is broad, purposeful and challenging. It meets local and regional needs well. Many students choose the college because of the wide range of academic and vocational programmes on offer. This means they can combine and study the subjects they need to progress successfully onto higher education or employment. For example, in science, business, art and design, and health and social care, the curriculum content meets the need of local employers and ensures that students develop new knowledge and practise workplace skills such as marketing, scientific research and laboratory skills.

Teachers understand well what the curriculum is preparing students to know and be able to do by the end of their subject or course. Nearly all teachers plan and design the curriculum carefully, and sequence it logically. They teach and consolidate foundation learning and key concepts, which build students' knowledge over time. Curriculum planning includes a wide range of teaching and assessment methods and a broad tutorial programme. Students have access to relevant work experience, work-related opportunities and work with community groups. As a result, students extend their knowledge, skills and behaviours significantly from their starting points. For example, students studying A-level law benefit from taking part in 'Bar mock trial' competitions against other students in the county. A-level business students benefit considerably when studying the Eden Project business plan.

Teachers have a passion for the subjects they teach. They have excellent subject knowledge and vocational experience. For example, in art and design, many teachers are practising artists, which means students are learning current practice from industry specialists.

Most teachers present information in a way that students find interesting, easy to understand and enjoyable. Teachers use stimulating teaching and learning strategies, such as critiquing film footage, peer review of work, digital quizzes and card games. They use questioning frequently and effectively to repeat and check students' learning.

Many teachers produce high-quality teaching materials, which they use very well in lessons to motivate students and stimulate their interest in the subject. They have developed a wide range of high-quality online learning resources. They provide links to podcasts, videos and online articles. Students find these extremely useful, because they can recap the learning which has taken place in lessons and develop their independent learning skills.

Assessment is mostly frequent and carefully ordered, which ensures that students can make excellent progress towards achieving their curricular goals. Most teachers provide students with high-quality feedback. This includes the use of specific technical or professional language and strategies to help them improve their work. However, a small minority of teachers do not set students challenging enough short-

term targets or provide timely and detailed feedback to help them improve or increase their knowledge beyond the minimum expectations of the qualifications.

Most students attend additional academic academies, the study plus programmes and study the extended project qualification. They develop extensive new knowledge and are prepared very well for their next steps in employment or further study. For example, students attending the Medics academy learn to suture by first practising on a banana, which replicates the feeling of skin, before moving on to synthetic skin, and those studying computer games design develop extensive new knowledge by using new industry-standard software.

Most students take considerable pride in their work and produce written and practical work of a high standard. They produce comprehensive notes in lessons, which prepares them very well for examinations.

Students, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, make significant progress in developing their personal and social skills. They participate in and benefit from meaningful work experience or work-related study. For example, in health and social care a few students interested in midwifery worked at a birthing unit in a local hospital. However, students do not routinely use this experience to identify strengths and areas for improvement, or to inform future career plans.

Many students are interested in wider issues such as current affairs and follow the news with interest. Students understand the fundamentals of British values. They know that the comparative lack of diversity in the region means they do not experience the full diversity of British society. However, they meet students from diverse backgrounds through external visits and attending national events. External speakers offer students insight into life beyond Cornwall. For example, a speaker shared the story of his life growing up in Uganda in a way that celebrated the things all young people, from different backgrounds, have in common.

Students are enthusiastic about their education and are keen to learn. They are always polite and exceptionally well behaved. Relationships between students and staff are extremely positive. Attendance rates are high. Student representatives make a significant contribution towards improving the college. For example, their feedback has helped make the college more environmentally sustainable.

Students benefit from high-quality individualised careers advice and guidance from staff. This helps them decide on which subjects to study and prepares them very well for their next steps.

Students with SEND and high needs and those from disadvantaged backgrounds receive highly effective additional support from staff and a range of external agencies. This enables them to continue with their studies, become more independent and make progress in line with their peers. For example, case studies show that vulnerable students such as refugees, who begin studying at level 2, are successful in gaining places at universities. However, a few teachers of the small cohort of students who have high needs do not always refine the teaching strategies

used to ensure that students make significant progress in achieving their precise education, health and care plan targets.

Governors, leaders and managers clearly understand local needs, issues and aspirations. They have been highly effective in managing the establishment of a new college, its culture and the significant growth in student numbers. Governors have a comprehensive understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the college. They use their wide range of skills and specialist expertise well to support and hold leaders to account for the quality of the education provided.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Students understand how to stay safe online and have a good understanding of local safeguarding issues, such as county lines and right-wing extremism. Leaders work effectively with a wide network of local organisations to support students with safeguarding and well-being issues. Managers provide staff with training in how to deal accurately with student concerns. Each year, staff develop resources using information from local agencies, such as the police, for a 'stay safe over summer' tutorial session. This focuses on students attending local festivals. Staff use the feedback received from a 'I wish my teacher knew' survey to inform tutorial sessions and work with local agencies.

Provider details

Unique reference number	144740
Address	Old Callywith Road Bodmin Cornwall PL31 2GT
Contact number	01208224000
Website	www.callywith.ac.uk
Principal/CEO	Dr Jonathan Grey
Provider type	Academy 16 to 19 Free School
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the assistant principal, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans. The inspection was carried out using the [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements, including observing learning sessions, scrutinising students' work, seeking the views of students, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

Inspection team

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