

Continuum School

Independent school progress monitoring inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Mick Megee

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was conducted at the request of the Registration Authority for independent schools in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan following the previous inspection.

Information about the school

Continuum School is a small independent special school situated in a rural location in the South Hams area of Devon. The school is owned by Continuum Care and Education and is one of several such schools throughout England, also run by this company. The building is a former health club and the company has leased a major portion of this. The school was registered in February 2009 and opened in March 2009. The school provides for 12 boys and girls, aged from 10 to 16 years, who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The majority of pupils are looked after by the company within its local children's homes. The company also draws pupils from other care homes in the area and admits pupils referred by the local authority. All pupils have a statement of special education needs. The school aims 'to provide a rich and varied learning environment that allows pupils to develop their skills and abilities to their full potential'. A new headteacher has been in post from September 2010.

Context of the inspection

The school was inspected on 3–4 February 2010. It failed two regulations and was required to produce an action plan stating how it intended to meet the unmet regulations. The school's action plan was accepted on 16 August 2010. This is the school's first monitoring visit to assess the amount of progress the school has made with implementing the agreed action plan.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

The inspection of February 2010 found that the school did not meet the requirement for the teaching to utilise effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly. The school proposed in its action plan to develop the school's systems for managing behaviour, including appropriate rewards that are linked to improvements in pupils' behaviour and achievement. All staff now use the new points system to ensure that good behaviour and achievement are consistently rewarded throughout the school day. The headteacher has introduced new policies that set out clearly the criteria to be applied before physical interventions are deemed necessary. The headteacher has held training sessions for all staff so that there is consistency in the procedures for managing poor behaviour

and for rewarding good behaviour. Observations of pupils undertaken by the inspector on arrival, on departure, within lessons, at break times and at the end of the day show that there is now adequate consistency between staff in the management of the pupils, including calming strategies and the use of physical intervention. Pupils are involved with staff in assessing their own achievement and behaviour at the end of every lesson and reward points are allocated fairly. As a result of these actions, the school now meets this requirement.

The February 2010 inspection found that the school did not have in place procedures to ensure the proper supervision of pupils at the end of the school day. The school proposed in its action plan to put procedures in place that would ensure the safe departure of the pupils from the school. The headteacher has developed a written policy that clarifies staff responsibilities at the beginning and the end of the school day. All staff have attended training sessions so that there is a shared understanding of their duties at arrival and departure times. The headteacher has introduced a brief whole-school session at the end of each school day, involving all staff and pupils, in which pupils receive positive comments for what has gone well for them at school that day. This helps them to leave the school calmly and happily. The headteacher or the deputy headteacher is present every day to supervise departures and to welcome pupils as they arrive. Observations of the pupils by the inspector at arrival and departure times show that staff have a clear common understanding of their responsibilities and the procedures that they are required to follow. By putting into practice the agreed procedures, arrival and departure are now routinely smooth and safe. The school now meets this regulation.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school has made good progress and now meets all regulatory requirements.

School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Special School		
Date school opened	2009		
Age range of pupils	10–16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 9	Girls: 3	Total: 12
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 9	Girls: 3	Total: 12
Annual fees (day pupils)	£31,800		
Address of school	Staverton Bridge, Dartington, Totnes, Devon TQ9 6NU		
Telephone number	01803 762451		
Email address	Swavek.nowakiewick@continuumgroup.org.uk		
Headteacher	Swavek Nowakiewick		
Proprietor	Continuum Care and Education		