

Tumblewood Community School

Independent school standard inspection report

DfE registration number	865/6034
Unique Reference Number (URN)	132775
Inspection number	393339
Inspection dates	22–23 May 2012
Reporting inspector	Tom Fisher-Smith
Social care inspector	Clare Davies

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/090070.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

No. 090070

© Crown copyright 2012



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 purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

Tumblewood Community School is a small special school and therapeutic community for girls aged from nine to eighteen years who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. It was established in 2001 and occupies a former farmhouse with adjacent outbuildings. All pupils who attend are residential and most are of White British origin. Currently there are eleven pupils on the school roll, six of whom have a statement of special educational needs. As well as displaying challenging behaviour, pupils may also have additional learning and communication difficulties; many have had a disrupted history of education. All pupils are looked after by their home authorities who also fund their placement. The school aims to assist pupils 'in changing learned patterns of behaviour and attitudes'.

The education provision was last inspected by Ofsted in March 2009 and was also inspected by Ofsted Children's Directorate in September 2011.

Evaluation of the school

In meeting its aims the school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. Many features of the school's work are good, including the curriculum and teaching and assessment. Care provision is good. Pupils make good progress in their academic and personal development. The provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good and safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. The school has maintained the standards noted at the last inspection and has responded well to the recommendations made at that time. It meets the independent school regulations but does not fulfil the requirements of the 2010 Equality Act.

Quality of education

The curriculum is good and provides for all of the required areas of learning. Curriculum planning is detailed and ensures that learning in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are given an appropriate emphasis. Where pupils have a statement of special educational needs the requirements are fully met. The curriculum is based on the National Curriculum as well as the requirements of external accreditation bodies. Detailed schemes of work complement the curriculum policy. Provision for scientific enquiry and design and technology are limited on the premises, but the school's

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents.

active links with other local schools ensure that pupils' opportunities are not restricted. A strength of the provision is that all pupils are given programmes which provide successfully for their individual needs. Post-16 pupils have opportunities to study programmes for National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) accreditation, such as in equine studies and retail customer care. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is taught as a separate subject but also combined within the wider provision of the therapeutic community.

In the last year, all pupils in Year 11 successfully gained accreditation in GCSE or the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN). Pupils in Year 9 gained entry level certification in English and information and communication technology (ICT), while those in Year 10 successfully completed a course in Preparation for Working Life. Since the last inspection, the school has improved its provision for preparing pupils to leave and move on to the next stage of their lives. In addition to semi-independent living within the community, there is also a good careers programme that is supplemented by opportunities for work experience that often lead to NVQ accreditation.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. The school has a very effective tracking system that enables staff to determine the quality and rate of progress made by each pupil. Teachers and their assistants form productive relationships with pupils based on a detailed understanding of the needs of each pupil. Pupils make good progress in both their academic and personal development. Pupils who have been at the school for the longest time show considerable maturity and openly acknowledge the benefits that their learning has brought.

Teaching is good because staff provide interesting and challenging lessons. Relationships within the classrooms are excellent and these enable teachers to push the boundaries of pupils' learning. Lesson objectives are shared with the pupils at the outset and the quality of their learning is good. Teachers pitch the learning at the most appropriate level for each pupil and have high expectations of them. Groups comprise of pupils of differing ability but the needs of all are fully considered in planning the work they are given to do. Teamwork by staff is good and welfare staff ensure a continuity of understanding about each pupil throughout the day.

The assessment of pupils' work is done systematically and thoroughly. This is achieved by checking on progress within the lesson, the effective and constructive marking of pupils' work and by comparison of the outcomes to national expectations. The judgements on progress are further consolidated by undertaking peer reviews with similar schools to ensure that the highest standards are maintained. However, opportunities for giving pupils individual feedback about their achievements are sometimes missed.

All pupils make at least good progress. Learning is supported by a range of good resources that are used effectively to support work on each topic. Since the last inspection, interactive whiteboards have been installed and are used very effectively to illustrate points within lessons, for example, as in one lesson when video clips from the internet provided background information about the history of the

Olympics. This work was supplemented by a visit to see the local parading of the Olympic torch. Other enrichment activities, such as visits to places of local historical interest and opportunities for work experience, ensure that pupils are prepared well for their future lives. Since the last inspection, the school has improved its provision in preparing pupils for moving on.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The very strong ethos of the school as a community successfully promotes the self-esteem and self-confidence of the pupils. They are proud to talk about their work and achievements. The supportive work of therapists, such as those for speech and language and play therapy, enables the pupils to face up to their difficulties and successfully change their patterns of behaviour. While the school provides good support, there is also a strong emphasis on pupils being able to manage their own emotions and behaviour. This creates in pupils a tolerance and understanding of others who may be different, as well as acceptance of their individual difficulties.

Generally, pupils' behaviour is good but that of older pupils, who have been longer at the school, is noticeably better. All clearly understand the difference between right and wrong, even though younger pupils sometimes make unwise choices. Most have a good moral understanding, which was illustrated in their responses in a lesson about the advertising industry and its attitudes to poverty. Relationships within the school are unfailingly positive; staff treat pupils with patience and respect, although opportunities for positive feedback to them about their behaviour in lessons and around the school are sometimes missed. Pupils' attendance rates at lessons are very high, illustrating their desire to learn and improve their life chances, and attitudes to learning are positive.

Strong relationships and good communication between welfare and education staff ensure a seamless, good quality provision to support the personal development of pupils. Pupils make a positive contribution to their own and the broader community. They have opportunities to raise issues at community meetings, have the chance to serve on the school council and become involved in the appointment of new staff. In the wider community pupils have worked in local care homes for the elderly and completed a first aid course under the guidance of the St John Care Trust. Pupils develop a good knowledge of public institutions through studies, such as that on the British electoral system and work experience with the local historical society. Cultural awareness is promoted through pupils' involvement with a similar school in Portugal as well as a project in which pupils interviewed members of the local Caribbean community.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is good. A good community ethos pervades the school and ensures a caring environment is established. There is a clear understanding of pupils' needs in both the residential and education settings. Staff treat all pupils with an even-handedness and consistency which ensures that

pupils are encouraged to learn and develop as individuals. Staff are trained to a high standard in behaviour management techniques and, in conjunction with their professional expertise, this enables them to offer consistently good care. The staff know the pupils very well and use their knowledge of pupils' difficulties to ensure they make the most appropriate responses. Their management of behaviour is good and, because of this, pupils understand that bullying will not be tolerated. Policies are used effectively to guide the work of the school in this regard. Pupils are well supervised throughout the school day and any incidents are quickly addressed. The atmosphere during the school day is one of calm and purposeful activity, although interspersed with occasional outbursts, exclusively from younger pupils.

Teachers support the promotion of healthy lifestyles through lessons in PSHE and by ensuring that any medical appointments are kept. Pupils are given many opportunities for physical activity, in addition to learning about what constitutes healthy eating. Child protection procedures are known and understood by all staff who are trained to the appropriate levels, including the designated officer. Staff are suitably trained in first aid. The school operates safe recruitment procedures in line with its policy and the details are recorded appropriately within the central register of staff. Policies for health and safety, fire prevention, anti-bullying refer to national guidance where appropriate are all implemented effectively.

The school does not meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school undertakes the necessary checks on all staff and others for their suitability to work with pupils. Full information is held on the single central register.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The accommodation is safe and effective for the education of pupils. Two large classrooms, along with a subsidiary room, enable teaching styles to be varied. Specialist rooms include those for music and drama. Dedicated rooms for speech and language provision, play therapy and one-to-one tuition are also available and used effectively to support pupils' personal and academic development. The school's gardens and play areas are extensive and are used to support formal learning as well as recreational activities.

Provision of information

The school provides all the required information for parents, carers and others and ensures it is available. The school's prospectus is very informative. Good reports of pupils' academic progress are provided at least three times a year and these, in conjunction with other care reports, provide a full picture of each pupil's personal and academic development. Where parents or carers responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire they indicated unanimous agreement with the good work done by the school.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The complaints policy meets all of the regulatory requirements.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations').

- In order to comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, the school should devise a three-year accessibility plan.³

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- provide more individual feedback to pupils about their behaviour in lessons and around the school and their achievements.

³ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents.

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
-------------	------	--------------	------------

The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of pupils		✓		

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		✓		
--	--	---	--	--

School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Special School		
Date school opened	August 2001		
Age range of pupils	9 – 18 years		
Gender of pupils	Female		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 11	Total: 11
Number of boarders	Boys: 0	Girls: 11	Total: 11
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 0	Girls: 6	Total: 6
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 11	Total: 11
Annual fees (boarders)	£202,800		
Telephone number	01373 824 466		
Email address	phil.madden@tumblewood.org		
Headteacher	Mr Phil Madden		
Proprietor	Sue Hortop and John Kearney		

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



24 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Tumblewood Community School

As you know I recently came to visit your school along with my colleague Clare Davies. It was a pleasure to meet you and to spend time watching you at work. We appreciated the time you gave us and also the way in which you welcomed us to your school. As well as spending time with you we spoke at length with your teachers and welfare staff. This letter is to let you know what we found and here are the main points.

- Your school gives you a good education.
- You get on well with your teachers and welfare staff and try your hardest in lessons as well as in other areas of the school, and make good progress in your academic work as well as improving as individuals. We were full of admiration at the way in which many of you have matured into thoughtful and mature young people.
- The school is good at helping you to improve your behaviour and the community atmosphere is very supportive of your efforts. Staff are determined to help you and some of you told us this was so.
- I was most impressed with the examination results and the different activities you are successful in, especially the work you do in helping others in the local community and in your work experience placements. Well done!

I have asked the staff to consider making one improvement:

- Provide each of you with more feedback about your behaviour in lessons and around the school and your achievements.

I wish you every success in your future.

Yours sincerely

Tom Fisher-Smith
Lead Inspector