

Treloar School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	116636
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	379277
Inspection dates	30–31 May 2012
Lead inspector	Bob Pugh

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection of residential provision was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

Type of school	Special
School category	Non-maintained
Age range of students	7–19
Gender of students	Mixed
Gender of students in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of students on the school roll	73
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	4
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Del Mar
Principal	John Stone
Date of previous school inspection	31 March–1 April 2009
School address	Treloar School Holybourne Alton GU34 4LA
Telephone number	01420 547 400
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Social care unique reference number	SC012024
Social care inspector	Brian Mcquoid

Age group	7–19
Reference source	Error! Reference source not found.
Inspection date(s)	30–31 May 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Bob Pugh

Additional Inspector

Lynda Walker

Additional Inspector

Brian Mcquoid

Social Care Regulatory Inspector

David Coulter

Social Care Regulatory Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Fifteen lessons taught by 15 teachers were observed during the inspection, totalling seven hours of lesson observation time. Meetings were held with parents and carers, members of the governing body and staff, including therapists. Inspectors met students in small groups and individually. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at the school's development plan and its evaluation of its own work. School policies and minutes of governing body meetings were reviewed. Responses in 17 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were considered. Inspectors also took account of questionnaires completed by staff and students.

Information about the school

Treloar School is a special school of average size and has a residence for up to 60 young people. Day students often join resident students for recreational activities after school hours. All of the students have a statement of special educational needs. There are slightly more boys than girls on roll. Most students come from Hampshire and the south of England though a few have homes which are further away. They are overwhelmingly from a White British background and just a very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. All have physical disabilities and a large majority have associated learning difficulties, with some having profound and complex learning and living needs. There are very few students in the care of their local authority. There have been some important changes in the last year: the school principal and head of school have both been in post for less than one year and the school recently moved site to share location and some facilities with Treloar College; classrooms are modern, well equipped and purpose-built. In 2009, the school gained Physical and Sensory Specialist School Status.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school, where considerable recent changes have been well managed to ensure that good quality teaching and learning have been maintained. The small sixth form is good because the quality of teaching and learning matches that found in the rest of the school. The school is not yet outstanding because of some remaining weaknesses in teaching.
- Students, including those in the sixth form, achieve well and are suitably prepared for the next stages of their lives. In almost all cases, they overcome significant barriers to learning to make good progress, with a few gaining good GCSE passes.
- Teaching is good. In nearly all lessons, teachers use their precise understanding of students' needs to plan highly personalised lessons and thus capture their attention and enthuse and motivate. In a few lessons, the level of challenge is not high enough. Sometimes, learning support assistants do too much for students and insufficient time is provided for students to reflect on their learning and share experiences with peers.
- Students behave exceptionally well. They are considerate of each other, and respectful towards adults, the school and wider environment. They speak highly of the school's efficient systems for managing behaviour and reporting concerns.
- Leaders, including the governing body, have recently introduced more robust systems for monitoring the work of the school. Recent work to improve performance management has established what needs to happen to achieve higher standards in teaching and learning. However, leaders have not yet had time to ensure that all teaching matches the very best. The governing body undertake regular monitoring visits to the school and residences.
- All aspects of residential provision are outstanding because first-class quality assurance systems are in place to gauge how well students are doing and to make any necessary improvements.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that there is a sustained focus in monitoring on the remaining weaknesses in teaching.
- Building on current good practice, extend the level of challenge to students in all lessons, by
 - providing more opportunities for them to do more for themselves
 - ensuring that learning support assistants' time is used to better effect in enhancing students' learning.
- In all lessons, ensure that sufficient time is permitted for students to discuss their progress together in small groups so that opportunities for learning from each other are developed further.

Main report

Achievement of students

Although attainment is low, students make good progress. This is because teachers, care staff and therapists work together effectively and use school and community resources well to promote understanding and achievement. Students apply their classroom-based learning on regular trips to shops. For example, they use money to buy ingredients from supermarkets for meals they will eat later in the day. They demonstrate the good progress they have made in developing physical skills in school through participation in residential trips and sports events, including national swimming competitions.

From their earliest days in school, students make good progress towards the targets which are set and reviewed regularly. Many know their own targets for improvement and are working hard to achieve them. One student was clear about what he needed to learn in school to be able to go on to further education college to follow a business studies course. In one lesson, a student used a communication device very effectively to demonstrate his improving reading skills while another captured the emotions of wartime parents by skilfully inserting descriptive words into a piece of writing: 'I really miss my daughter and her wonderful smile'.

Sometimes, the rate of progress slows when the level of challenge is insufficient or when students have few opportunities to review their own learning. While the school caters for a very wide range of abilities, progress is equally good among all groups whatever their special educational needs or disabilities. All gain nationally recognised forms of accreditation, including some who achieve passes at GCSE level.

The small number of students in the sixth form (each one of whom has particularly complex needs) achieve well as a result of effective collaborative working between teachers and therapists. For example, in a strong lesson on climate led by a therapy support worker, students showed great pleasure and understanding as they used their senses of sight, hearing, smell and touch to imagine a day at the seaside.

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Parents and carers are pleased with their children's progress. One parent noted that her son's 'focus, social interaction, confidence and switch [operating] skills' had all improved since attending the school.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in all key stages including the sixth form, is good. Parents and carers agree. One parent commented that she particularly likes the 'holistic approach to learning [where] educational and medical needs are both very well catered for'. Therapists and health workers make vital contributions, including producing individual communication profiles which add to teachers' understanding of how much students have learned; students work hard with therapists to build physical strength and movement which improve their opportunities for learning in class. Because students' seating or standing positions are carefully planned by therapists, and the most suitable communication aids are made available, teachers are able to organise lessons which nearly always motivate each individual to work hard and do well.

Teachers' plans usually take good account of students' understanding of what has been learned in previous lessons and, over time, they build on existing skills by carefully raising the challenge and students' expectations of themselves. In a small minority of the teaching, there is insufficient challenge. Teachers generally use questioning well to check on how much individual students have learned and they allow time for students to respond, using their preferred communication method. However, in some lessons the work of learning support assistants is not well managed and sometimes this leads to too much help being offered to students; assistants occasionally appear to be unclear about what they are meant to be doing.

During the inspection, many teachers were seen to be promoting good literacy, numeracy and communication skills in a range of subjects. There are good age-appropriate books and magazines available to aid learning in classrooms and in the well-stocked library. In a particularly effective swimming lesson, students were encouraged to make good use of their communication skills and discuss their performances, while another played an important role by timing how long it took one of her classmates to swim a length and offering constructive advice on how she could improve. However, in some lessons the opportunity for discussion, working together and commenting on each other's work is underdeveloped. In too many lessons, teachers encourage students to discuss their work only with an adult, thus missing opportunities for learning from each other. Nevertheless, there are many examples of good teaching to promote aspects of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, students were taught well about how education is organised in an African country for children who have physical disabilities and were thus able to compare these experiences with their own.

Behaviour and safety of students

In all areas of the school, including the residences, students behave particularly well. The School Charter, which outlines a set of agreements for learning and living, is

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prominently displayed in most rooms and public areas. In an excellent religious education lesson, students contributed well to a discussion on discrimination and tolerance. In this lesson, they demonstrated good turn taking whilst valuing each other's opinions.

Students manage their own behaviour extremely well and show great compassion and understanding for those who require additional support because of their particular needs or as a result of illness. One younger resident student mentioned to an inspector that occasionally he feels homesick, but was eager to provide examples of how well staff and other students help him at these times. There are very few reported incidents of bullying of any kind over time; records show that appropriate follow-up actions have been taken, including in the residential provision. Given their complexity of needs and medical conditions, attendance rates are good. There is no unauthorised absence from school. Parents and carers feel their children are safe, although a few were unsure about how well behaviour is managed; students themselves are very confident that any inappropriate behaviour is managed very well. They say that behaviour is good and that they are also very confident about reporting any concerns they may have. All the evidence from the inspection indicates that this is a safe, calm and orderly environment in which students make good progress and enjoy high quality learning and living experiences during the school day and beyond.

The school site is well signposted in words and symbols which encourages safe independent movement and mobility. Corridors, passage ways, entrances and exits are well maintained and clear of clutter and obstructions. Access to the site and buildings is carefully controlled at all times.

Leadership and management

School leaders at all levels, including the governing body, demonstrate great vision and drive. They have managed change well and ensured that there is good quality teaching and learning throughout the school. Consequently, the school has a strong capacity to improve further. Their vision for providing an excellent service for their students has been conveyed successfully to all in the school community. Staff speak highly of the programmes for professional development which focus on raising standards. All monitoring systems have improved recently, including lesson monitoring, and this has strengthened performance management. School leaders provide feedback on strengths and areas for development. For example, advice has been given on improving the use of questioning in lessons, to check how much individual students have understood, though this has not yet had the full impact which school leaders intend.

A good example of how the improvement plan is implemented on a daily basis is the preparation underway for extending the sixth form. Students who will move into the expanded sixth form in the next academic year have been encouraged to participate in planning, and to consider options for courses to study.

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The promotion of equality of access and equal opportunities for all and the absence of discrimination are strengths of the school. This is reflected in the excellent resources made available to all students, enabling participation in a wide variety of learning activities and experiences.

The school's good curriculum offers rich opportunities for students to experience and to achieve in a broad range of subjects and activities on the school site and beyond. Sport is a particular strength and there are many fine examples of students achieving well at Paralympic sporting events. The safety and well-being of students underpin all aspects of planning, in classes and in the residences, and procedures are exemplary. Inspectors observed good teaching about the safe use of the internet in an ICT lesson. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is promoted well through the curriculum which enables students to learn about the needs of people who live in various parts of the world. The school chaplain meets students individually and makes a good contribution to the programme of celebration of different faiths.

Governors demonstrate an impressive understanding of what is working well as a result of frequent visits and monitoring. Through all the recent changes, they have judged to good effect the amount of challenge and support to present to school leaders. Particularly strong residential leadership and management have led to the development of outstanding provision in this part of the school.

Residential provision

The overall effectiveness of the boarding provision at the school is outstanding. Resident students receive a high quality of individualised care within a nurturing environment. Relationships with staff, quality assurance arrangements, and a highly integrated approach are significant strengths. Students make excellent progress in their personal and social development and grow in confidence during their time at the school. They are extremely positive about the residential experience and thoroughly enjoy their time living at the school. Parents and carers agree; 'I cannot rate the school highly enough' is one example of the positive comments received. There is a strong sense of respect for others which runs through the school and the behaviour of resident students is exemplary. They are treated with dignity and have a strong voice within the school. Deciding upon the activities to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee was one example of the involvement in decision making.

The residential accommodation provides a welcoming environment which is ideally suited to meet the needs of students. There is good provision for enabling resident students to maintain contact with their families; however, this could be improved by installing cordless phones within each residential wing. Resident students say they feel safe within the campus.

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Staffing arrangements within the residential provision provide an excellent continuity of care. Comprehensive admission procedures provide extremely well for students and their parents and carers to get to know the school and key members of staff. All resident students are routinely consulted about all aspects of care delivery and have their personal preferences integrated within their individual care plans. The staffing arrangements ensure there are sufficient qualified and experienced staff to meet the needs of resident students at all times. There is excellent provision for addressing students’ health needs and for promoting their physical and emotional well-being. A health centre is staffed 24 hours a day, a range of specialist services including counselling are available and there are well-established working relationships with external health professionals.

The residential provision for students is managed highly efficiently. While the school provides comprehensive information about itself, there is a need for information relating to residential provision to be provided in formats accessible to all resident students. There is an acute awareness of developments within the field of care provision in schools.

The school meets all of the national minimum standards and has successfully addressed the recommendations from the previous inspection. Outstanding practice has been sustained and there is exceptional provision for monitoring, self-evaluation, and for driving forward improvements linked to the school development plan.

National minimum standards

- The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

These are the grades for the residential provision

Overall effectiveness of the residential experience	1
Outcomes for resident students	1
Quality of residential provision and care	1
Resident students’ safety	1
Leadership and management of the residential provision	1

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its students' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its students well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its students.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its students. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



1 June 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Treloar School, Alton GU34 4LA

Thank you for the welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting you and looking at your work and all the marvellous facilities you have in classrooms and in the residences. Particular thanks to those of you who came to meet us to talk about your experiences of the school and all it has to offer you. You told us that you enjoy school very much, you have made good friends at school and really appreciate the wide range of experiences which you take part in, in class, in the local community and further afield, such as the residential trips and sports events.

We think that yours is a good school, where you are taught well and achieve well. The standard of care offered in the residences is outstanding. We were especially pleased to note how well you behave in and around the school. Your principal and head of school, along with the governors and all members of staff, are working hard to continue to improve the school and you play an important part by continuing to respect each other's views, work hard in class and care for all the members of the school community. To make yours an even better school, we have asked your school leaders to make sure that:

- they check carefully all the teaching and learning
- there is more challenge to you in every lesson to make even more progress and that you are always given proper time to do as much as possible for yourselves
- you are given more opportunities in class to discuss your work with each other and to learn from and with each other.

I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Bob Pugh
Lead inspector

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