

Chiltern Tutorial School

Independent school standard inspection report

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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 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

The Chiltern Tutorial School is an independent school that provides education for pupils who have a specific learning difficulty (dyslexia) and associated needs. It is located in the village of Otterbourne near Winchester. The school opened in 1995 and has occupied its present site since 2001. It is registered to admit up to 30 pupils aged from seven to 11 years. Currently, 26 pupils attend within this age range, five of whom have a statement of special educational needs. The large majority of places are privately funded, although a few pupils have their places funded by their local authorities. The school is seeking a material change to admit pupils up to the age of 13 years.

The school aims to 'provide a happy, supportive and caring environment in which children who are not reaching their potential are motivated to learn.' It seeks to raise pupils' self-esteem and to equip pupils with the skills to return successfully to mainstream school. The school was last inspected in January 2009.

Evaluation of the school

Chiltern Tutorial School is successful in meeting its aims and provides a good quality of education. Good teaching and a good curriculum take close account of pupils' specific learning difficulties and provision ensures that pupils make good progress. The caring environment and understanding approach shown by staff effectively promote pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school has improved since the last inspection and has addressed the small number of regulations it failed to meet at that time. Safeguarding arrangements have been strengthened and now meet requirements; all staff have received recent training in child protection at the appropriate level. Provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good and the school meets all of the regulations.

A material change to admit pupils up to the age of 13 years is recommended, once further evidence of planning for the practical aspects of the design and technology curriculum is provided.

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

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

Quality of education

The curriculum is good. It is supported by a clear set of aims based on a deep knowledge and understanding of the needs of pupils with a specific learning difficulty. Detailed planning, for individual subjects and for a rolling programme of topics, ensures that all of the required areas of learning are taught. Topics rotate over a four-year period to enable pupils in mixed-age groups to study different areas of learning as they move through the school. Curriculum planning mostly exists for Years 7 and 8, but the planning for practical aspects of design and technology is not fully in place. While it is recommended that the age range can be extended, the Department for Education must check that curriculum planning for practical design and technology work is secure.

There is a suitable balance between subjects and, in accordance with the school's aims, a strong emphasis is given to developing pupils' literacy skills. Individual tutorials and work in small groups are used to good effect. The personal, social and health education programme contains a good range of topics; for example, personal safety, positive relationships and how to lead a healthy lifestyle. Daily circle time effectively promotes the development of pupils' self-esteem and social skills. Information and communication technology supports literacy and topic work effectively and pupils have good access to computers. Physical exercise, provided by use of the adjoining large hall and the outdoor field, enables pupils to keep fit. The school effectively meets the needs of pupils as set out in their statements of special educational needs. Pupils have enjoyed visits to, for example, a local animal sanctuary and a science museum, and these visits are used well to inform topics being studied at school. However, generally there are few trips, visits and other activities to enrich the curriculum.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. It is not outstanding because outcomes are not outstanding. Teachers have good specialist knowledge of approaches to help pupils who have dyslexia and associated difficulties and they draw on a good range of resources to support learning. Thorough assessment is used to diagnose each pupil's specific difficulties and the information is used well to design an individual education plan. Teachers use a wide variety of activities which help to capture pupils' interest, for example, short breaks for exercise or 'brain gym', drama and practical tasks. These often involve pupils working together and discussing their ideas which help to further develop pupils' social and team working skills. A good example was observed during the inspection when pupils designed various games as part of their 'Olympic Games' topic. While these activities develop pupils' speaking and listening skills and give them greater confidence, opportunities are sometimes missed to reinforce learning through written work. In some topics, the pace of learning slows because the use of activities to extend learning, especially for higher attaining pupils, is underdeveloped.

Pupils make good progress, especially in reading. Many have a history of struggling to read and write and enter the school with a much lower level of attainment than expected for their age. Teachers use praise and encouragement well to boost pupils'

confidence and give pupils strategies which help them to 'make sense' of text. The intensive work provided in small groups, and in individual tutorials, is particularly effective in accelerating progress. Homework is used well to reinforce the learning of key words. Work is marked regularly using positive comments, although most feedback is given verbally which gives pupils a good understanding of how well they are progressing. A range of evidence, including assessment data and samples of work, is used to record pupils' progress over time. It shows that pupils make substantial gains in their learning. By the time they leave, pupils have gained a better understanding of their own learning needs and almost all return successfully to a mainstream school.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Raising pupils' self-esteem and encouraging them to experience success is at the heart of the school's work. Pupils grow in self-confidence and develop a good insight into their learning difficulty. They speak knowledgeably about the problems associated with dyslexia and how they can use strategies to overcome difficulties that they might have. Above all, pupils recognise that this difficulty need not be a barrier to success and they can name famous people who have dyslexia yet are successful in life. The school recognises success effectively through a 'marble' reward system for the whole group, and an achievement points chart for individuals, linked to small rewards and certificates.

Pupils' behaviour is good because rules are explained clearly and pupils are involved in discussing the rationale behind them. They display positive attitudes to their work and are polite and sensible around the school. Occasionally in lessons, when explanations by the teacher are too long, a small number of pupils lose concentration and fidget. Pupils enjoy learning and their attendance is good. The attendance of some pupils has improved markedly since joining the school.

Pupils make a good contribution to their school and wider community. They routinely take turns to clean up after lunch and put equipment away at the end of lessons. They have also raised funds for charity, for example by organising a cake sale and through a sponsored skipping event. Topics are often organised to encourage pupils to take responsibility, to work collaboratively and to develop their own ideas. For example, the current 'Olympic Games' topic resulted in pupils organising sports events, timing the races and awarding the medals. Pupils' general knowledge of public institutions and services is supported by topics on national events, for example the Queen's Jubilee celebration and visits from services such as the local fire service. Satisfactory support is given for pupils to develop an understanding of different religious and cultural traditions in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony. The major faiths are studied as part of the religious education curriculum, although this work is not closely aligned to a celebration of the different festivals that take place throughout the year.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The quality of welfare, health and safety of pupils is good. A caring ethos is underpinned by staff's detailed knowledge of pupils' individual needs. Pupils feel valued and appreciate that their difficulties with reading and writing are accepted and understood. They report they feel safe and that they can discuss readily with a member of staff any concerns that they might have. They particularly appreciate working in the smaller groups which they feel enable all to receive attention. Comparing with their previous school, one pupil commented, 'You don't get left out here.' Pupils report incidents of bullying are very rare and that they are dealt with swiftly by staff. Older pupils describe how they are encouraged to play an active role in helping those pupils who become isolated to join in.

Detailed health and safety and risk assessments cover all aspects of the school's work. Safeguarding arrangements are robust, have been strengthened since the last inspection, and now fully meet requirements. There is an appropriate level of staffing throughout the school day to ensure pupils' safety. The behaviour policy is implemented consistently with a strong emphasis on accentuating the positive. Consequently, incidents of misbehaviour are rare. There is a suitable first-aid policy and staff are appropriately trained in first aid. Fire drills are held regularly and fire-fighting equipment is checked by a specialist company.

The school meets the requirements in respect of the Equality Act 2010. Good access is provided through the provision of ramps and a toilet for disabled users.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school has thorough procedures for the safe recruitment of staff. All of the required checks on the suitability of the proprietor and of staff have been completed effectively. All checks are recorded appropriately in a single central register.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The school occupies rooms on the site of the Otterbourne Village Hall complex. The accommodation provides an attractive environment for learning and it is well maintained. The premises, facilities and furniture and fittings are suitable for an extension of the age range to 13 years. One large hall contains teaching areas for each of the class groups. Two smaller rooms lead off this hall and contain a library and a computer base. Teaching space is of adequate size for the numbers on roll. The school has access to a hall in the same building for teaching physical education. A playground and small field provide suitable space for outside play and recreation.

Provision of information

The school provides, or makes available, all of the information required by the regulations for parents, carers and others. Information is provided through the school's web site, a 'Welcome Pack' and additional leaflets on dyslexia. Detailed

reports are provided for parents and carers twice each year, and for pupils' annual reviews. Parents and carers hold overwhelmingly positive views about the school's work and feel well informed about their children's progress.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The complaints policy meets all of the required regulations.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

In order to accommodate the material change in terms of taking pupils up to the age of 13 years, the school must provide further evidence of planning for the practical aspects of the design and technology curriculum.

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 opportunities for pupils to practise writing in subjects across the curriculum.
- Include more extension activities in lessons, especially to enable higher attaining pupils to learn at a faster pace.

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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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		✓		
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School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Primary school for pupils with specific learning difficulties		
Date school opened	September 1995		
Age range of pupils	7–11 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 17	Girls: 9	Total: 26
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 5	Girls: 0	Total: 5
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£6,630		
Address of school	Otterbourne Hall Cranbourne Drive Otterbourne Winchester SO21 2ET		
Telephone number	07855 766675		
Email address	jane@chilterntutorial.co.uk		
Headteacher	Jane Gaudie		
Proprietor	Bruce Gaudie Jane Gaudie		

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.



5 July 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Chiltern Tutorial School, Otterbourne, SO21 2ET

As you know I visited your school recently to check how well it is doing. I enjoyed my visit very much and appreciated the welcome that I received. Thanks to those of you who took time to talk to me about your work and life at school. I thought you were very sensible and I was impressed with the way you could discuss your difficulties. I also talked to teachers, observed lessons and looked at your work.

Here are the main points.

- Your school gives you a good education and all government requirements are met.
- You enjoy coming to school, behave well and make good progress.
- The school is particularly good at helping you to improve your reading.
- The school helps you feel good about yourselves and about your achievements.
- The school looks after you well and you feel safe in school.

I have asked the school to improve by doing the following things.

- Include more opportunities for you to practise your writing skills in topics.
- Give some of you, particularly the more-able, extra activities in lessons to help you learn at a faster pace.

You can help by writing down more of your ideas and by asking the teacher how you can follow up some of your ideas in more detail.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Redpath
Her Majesty's Inspector