

URN 136244

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Martyn Groucutt

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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 school is one of two independent special schools operated by Tulip Care. It is located in the premises of a children's home and has been registered as a special school since June 2010, admitting its first student in January 2012. The school is registered to provide education for a maximum of six students between the ages of eight and 16 years who have behavioural, emotional and social disabilities. There is currently one student on roll and one student has a statement of special educational needs with fees paid by a local authority. One student is resident in the children's home and the intention is that the majority of students will, in future reside there.

The school aims to provide a sensitive but suitably challenging education for students who have experienced considerable difficulties in previous schools.

This was an inspection of the school only with no inspection of the children's home. It is the school's first inspection.

Evaluation of the school

The school is providing a satisfactory standard of education, enabling students to make satisfactory progress. The curriculum is satisfactory, but provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is weak, some schemes of work have not yet been produced and there is no careers education. Teaching and assessment are satisfactory. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory, the judgement aided by an improvement in behaviour, which is satisfactory. Provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety, including the safeguarding of students, is satisfactory. The school is currently failing a number of regulations.

Quality of education

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. It is personalised and provides an appropriate level of challenge. It focuses on the development of numeracy, speaking and listening skills and improving other aspects of literacy. It ensures that special educational needs are met effectively, including meeting the requirements specified in statements of special educational needs.

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

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

While the curriculum covers most of the required areas of learning, there is no provision or schemes of work for art and music. There is also insufficient opportunity to use ICT and appropriate software packages in the classroom. Contact with the local Connexions service has been established but there is currently no careers guidance. Current provision is working towards entry level qualifications. These meet students' learning needs through a process of continual assessment and the completion of learning modules, giving opportunities to experience success from the outset. The school has started the process of registering as an examination centre but this is not yet in place. Personal, social and health education is a strong feature in the school and is woven through every aspect of the curriculum.

Provision is enhanced by a range of experiences during and outside the school day such as horse riding, cooking, dancing and swimming, with care staff from the children's home providing very good support. There is also other good collaboration between staff in the school and the children's home. For example, time is set aside in the children's home each evening for the completion of homework and staff there are well briefed on what has taken place during the school day.

The quality of teaching and assessment overall is satisfactory and is leading to students making satisfactory progress. Teaching and learning observed during the inspection were good. The lessons were well planned and based on six-weekly schemes of work. The lessons were individualised so that they met students' needs while setting challenging targets that promote progress. Portfolios of entry level work show satisfactory outcomes reflecting satisfactory teaching over time.

Some work is thematic in nature, such as the current study of Victorian times, which gives opportunities to develop academic skills within a broader context and to apply them in a range of ways. This includes some practical work, such as the observed experience of cooking from a Victorian recipe during a food lesson.

An initial baseline assessment on entry provides an effective starting point and there are plans to test progress termly so that a close eye can be kept on individual development. Recent work is regularly and supportively marked.

Resources are currently satisfactory but only just. The school plans to acquire new materials following the admission of individual students so that their needs can be addressed individually and directly. Responses to Ofsted questionnaires from placing authorities, parents and students all show a positive response regarding the effectiveness of education.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.

Behaviour is satisfactory. Students are encouraged to respect the law and to understand the concepts of right and wrong, for example by daily discussion of news stories from the press. The developing ability to discuss issues of justice and fairness

is providing a satisfactory understanding of personal behaviour. There is evidence, including that from questionnaire returns, which suggests that behaviour is improving as a result of the school's clear policy based on praise and reward that also provides clear sanctions for misdemeanours.

An effective start has been made in supporting the development of positive self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-awareness. One result is greater confidence when sharing mealtimes with staff, when there is constructive, reflective discussion. In addition, students are enabled to enjoy their learning.

Students are encouraged to make a positive contribution to their community and weekly house meetings are used to raise any concerns. Each school day begins with a look at headlines from the day's papers, which encourages a greater social awareness and promotes a better understanding of public institutions and services. A student who reflected on previous negative experiences of education said that she now feels that she is listened to and can play her part. Attendance shows dramatic improvement from that achieved in previous schools.

The diversity of the staff helps students develop positive attitudes towards others in an atmosphere where different backgrounds are appreciated and valued. Issues such as racist comments are dealt with firmly.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Overall provision for welfare, health and safety is satisfactory. There is a full range of policies, including those for child protection, behaviour, anti-bullying, fire, health and safety and first aid. Most are satisfactory in content except that the first aid policy does not contain clear enough directions on procedures to be followed. The anti-bullying policy is very clear but makes no mention of cyber-bullying and bullying based on gender or sexual orientation. There is a clear policy and set of appropriate procedures relating to the supervision of students. The school undertakes the required recruitment checks. All staff have received the appropriate training in safeguarding.

Sometimes behaviour is very challenging but this is dealt with well. Staff have been trained in the use of safe restraint. On the few occasions when safe restraint has been used, incidents have been properly logged.

Rigorous risk assessments are in place that cover safety in school, including arrangements for regular fire drills, and also on school trips. All checks of equipment and the safe storage of potentially hazardous materials pay due regard to national guidance. The school fulfils the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

Systems and procedures for the recruitment of staff, including enhanced level checks through the Criminal Records Bureau, are securely in place. Details are included in a suitable single central register.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The school is based in a large modern detached house with a pleasant garden, which provides a suitable environment for safe and effective learning. The size of classrooms, standards of maintenance, fixtures and furnishing are very good in the classrooms and throughout the home. The provision of washrooms and facilities for students taken ill meets requirements. The garden is available for outside play and good use is made of community facilities for physical education.

Provision of information

Most of the required information is provided, or made available, to parents, carers and others. However, the information does not include details regarding exclusions, sanctions in the event of misbehaviour, arrangements for promoting safety on trips and visits and details of staff, including a summary of their qualifications.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The complaints procedure meets all regulations.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.³

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the quality of education provided (standards in part 1) and must:

- fully develop the curriculum policy which is supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, and implement them effectively (paragraph 2(i))
- ensure the curriculum gives pupils of compulsory school age a full-time education with experience in the following areas of learning: linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative (paragraph 2(ii)(a))
- make provision for appropriate careers guidance for pupils receiving secondary education (paragraph 2(2)(g)).

³ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1997/contents/made.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for welfare, health and safety of pupils (standards in part 3) and must:

- develop effective procedures to prevent bullying which have regard to DfE guidance *Preventing and tackling bullying – advice for school leaders, staff and governing bodies* (paragraph 10)
- produce a written policy on first aid and implement this (paragraph 14).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information (standards in part 6) and must:

- make available the following information to parents of pupils and pupils of prospective pupils, and, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State, or an independent inspectorate:
 - particulars of the school's policy on and arrangements for admissions, discipline and exclusions
 - particulars of policies relating to bullying, health and safety, the promotion of good behaviour and sanctions adopted in the event of pupils misbehaving as required under part 3, paragraph 9
 - particulars of the arrangements for tackling bullying, and for promoting pupils' health and safety on the school premises and on educational visits as required under part 3, paragraphs 10, 11 and 12.
 - the number of staff employed at the school, including temporary staff, and a summary of their qualifications (paragraph 24(1)(b)).

What the school could do to improve further

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

- complete registration of the school as an examination centre
- build more swiftly on the present satisfactory level of teaching resources to provide a richer experience for students and more support for teachers.

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	Special school for students with behavioural, emotional and social development needs		
Date school opened	January 2012		
Age range of pupils	8–16 years		
Gender of pupils	Female		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 1	Total: 1
Number of boarders	Boys: 0	Girls: 1	Total: 1
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 0	Girls: 1	Total: 1
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 1	Total: 1
Annual fees (day pupils)	£39,000		
Email address	enquiry@tulipcare.co.uk		
Headteacher	Terrie Horn		
Proprietor	TulipCare		

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.



26 February 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of your school.

I am writing to thank you for the warm welcome you gave me during the inspection and your willingness to talk to me and share your views. Although the school has only been operating for a very short period it is already giving you a satisfactory education. It is helping you to address the difficulties you have had with your behaviour and with your learning in the past, and to make more of your skills and talents.

From the questionnaire answers it is clear that you appreciate the efforts that staff are making on your behalf. They really want you to succeed and education and care staff work together well to support you in this. For your part, I saw some hard work being done and your portfolios of work show how much you have achieved already. Well done and keep it up.

In order to make things even better I have asked the school to give you more opportunity to study art and music and to use computers more. You also need careers guidance. Parents, carers and others also need a little more information about the school.

It was good to see you working well. I am pleased that you have found a school where you can enjoy your learning and get on well with the adults around you and I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Martyn Groucutt
Lead inspector.