

# On Track Training Centre

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.<sup>1, 2</sup>

## **Information about the school**

On Track Education Centre (Wisbech) is a special independent mixed day school owned by On Track Education Services Limited. It was established in its current premises in converted office buildings in 2006 and is registered with the Department of Education to provide places for up to 24 students aged from 11 to 18 years. There are currently 21 boys and girls on roll, aged from 12 to 17, of whom nine have statements of special educational needs. Twenty students attend the school on a full-time basis and one part time; two students are subject to care orders and live with foster parents locally. Students' behaviour can be challenging, resulting from severe emotional and behavioural difficulties and problems, with learning difficulties relating to autism and attention deficit hyperactive disorder. All students have experienced personal traumas and disruption in their previous education.

The school aims to enable students 'to experience positive academic achievement and success and to acquire skills and knowledge which prepare them for adult life'. The school was last inspected in December 2009.

## **Evaluation of the school**

The school meets its aims and has continued to improve since the last inspection. The quality of education is good and it is planned carefully to meet all students' individual learning and personal needs. Students, including those with statements of special educational needs, make good progress supported by the outstanding curriculum, the hard work of a committed staff and school leadership which demonstrates a clear vision for future development. Teaching is good and procedures for assessing students' work and monitoring their progress are good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good, with policies and strategies for safeguarding and ensuring students' welfare established effectively. The school meets all the regulations for independent schools.

## **Quality of education**

The quality of the curriculum is outstanding. The high quality of the curriculum is reflected in the notably wide range of broad and balanced learning opportunities

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<sup>1</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents).

<sup>2</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents).

provided for students, both in school and in local colleges, which encourage them to learn and enable them to make good progress. It reflects the school's aim of preparing young people for their future lives and achieving academically. The nature and range of the provision is appropriate to the needs of students of all ages and aptitudes, including those with statements of special educational needs and those above compulsory school age. This encourages them to improve their attendance and to re-engage with education. The curriculum is set out clearly in a policy, with appropriate detail provided for parents and carers through the prospectus and school website. Detailed schemes of work are prepared for each aspect of the curriculum, including long- and medium-term plans, and supported by a wide range of published documentation.

Students appreciate the rich range of learning opportunities provided. A key strength of the curriculum is its ability to respond to each student's individual needs and aptitudes. Suitable short-term provision is being made for one part-time student currently because of particular needs. Where appropriate, students attend courses at local colleges, for example in construction and drama. Response to special interests is reflected in the wide range of sporting activities offered, such as badminton, basketball and fishing. Practical lessons in woodwork, mechanics and cookery are used well to engage students and to support the development of their skills in literacy and numeracy, and to support work done in English and mathematics. A well-prepared art course, which includes a programme of visits, encourages the development of creative skills using a range of media. Students are provided with the opportunity of attaining a carefully chosen range of qualifications, including in foundation skills and GCSE. The introduction of Business and Technology Education Council (BTec) courses provides students with pathways into further education and training.

The curriculum gives high priority to students' personal development and the development of social skills. This is supported through specific lessons in personal social and health education (PSHE) and embedded throughout the curriculum. Outside specialists are employed by the school to support sex and relationships education, and to provide guidance relating to the dangers of drugs. Aspects of citizenship are identified in the school's PSHE curriculum and in humanities. Careers education is supported by visits from local authority advisors, visits to careers conventions, an army careers day, visits to colleges and guidance from local Connexions services.

Teaching and assessment are good. The good quality of teaching is supported by teachers who are patient and skilled, and who employ a range of effective and essential strategies for managing behaviour. The small size of teaching groups supports dialogue and interaction between teachers and students. This helps them to learn and to develop the academic and personal skills reflected in their good progress. Relationships between teachers and students are good and students say that teachers listen to them. Lessons are well planned and questioning used sensitively to challenge or encourage, where appropriate. In the best lessons, for example in mechanics, questioning was particularly effective when linked to mathematics, science and aspects of students' personal development, such as

accepting responsibility and showing initiative. There are sufficient resources to support learning and teachers are adept at using learning materials that they have prepared themselves.

Assessment is good, representing improvement since the last inspection. A framework is in place to assess students' work regularly. Students say that they know that they are making progress because they discuss their grades regularly with their teachers. The school undertakes baseline assessments when students enter the school as their previous education experience sometimes provides limited information. There are clear procedures, supported by very regular staff meetings, to ensure that teachers are kept informed of students' needs and to support lesson planning. Monitoring systems ensure that each student's academic and personal progress is assessed regularly. Students benefit from regular meetings with a 'key worker' member of staff to review their personal and academic progress. Despite the strengths of assessment procedures established, there is no marking policy and teachers' written comments on students' work are of inconsistent quality.

## **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and well supported by the wide range of activities and the good example set by staff. The school's 'key worker' system plays an important role in supporting students to reflect on their behaviour. Their self-esteem and self-confidence is supported effectively by: the use of praise when deserved; reward systems which recognise individual successes and improvements; and curriculum opportunities within the school and, where appropriate, in local colleges which support individual interests and aptitudes. Tables completed by students in woodwork provide them with symbols of their achievement and raise their self-esteem and self-confidence. They are encouraged to distinguish right from wrong through the consistent approach to behaviour management used by staff. Behaviour is good. Improvements in behaviour and students' developing social skills are monitored well. The school has clear strategies for addressing any issues relating to unacceptable behaviour both in school and through supervision by school staff for those on outside college courses and visits.

While students contribute to the wider community by collecting money for charities and have attended local Armistice celebrations, they have insufficient opportunities to contribute to the local community. Students develop a broad knowledge of public institutions and services in England through citizenship and visits, including to the army base at Basingbourne and to the original studio and home of the artist Henry Moore. They are encouraged to be tolerant and to live in harmony with people of other cultures, and develop their knowledge of democracy and protest through PSHE lessons. They learn about world religions in humanities and are encouraged to develop a respect for other cultures, for example through cookery lessons when they cook and taste French dishes.

## **Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

The quality of welfare, health and safety is good. The arrangements for safeguarding and promoting students' welfare at school are firmly established in line with national guidance. All the required policies are in place, including those for the promotion of good behaviour, the prevention of bullying, and health and safety. Supervision is good, including for ensuring students' safety and care when on school visits and courses. Where appropriate, key members of staff are identified in policies, including in relation to child protection and first aid, and staff have appropriate training. Detailed records are maintained of all incidents and sanctions, including exclusions. Checks relating to fire safety are completed by specialist consultants employed by the school's parent company, and records of risk assessments and fire drills are appropriately maintained. Admissions and attendance records are kept appropriately and there are good procedures for following up non-attendance.

## **Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors**

All the required checks on staff and others associated with the school are undertaken and recorded appropriately in a single central register.

## **Premises and accommodation at the school**

The premises and accommodation are suitable and have been improved recently with the addition of workshops for practical lessons and new washrooms and toilets, including disabled provision. Suitable facilities are available for students who may be ill. All classrooms are of appropriate size for the numbers of students using them and learning opportunities are enhanced by separate specialist accommodation for art, science, information and communication technology (ICT), woodwork, mechanics and cookery. The provision for cookery is hygienic. Good off-site provision is made for the wide range of sports. Systems to ensure security are appropriate and the fabric of the buildings is maintained in good order. There is ample space to support ease of movement around the building and, if necessary, its evacuation in an emergency. All furniture is in good condition and appropriate to its use, and there is suitable outdoor space for play.

## **Provision of information**

The school provides parents and carers with all the required information in the school prospectus or on its website, including clear details of policies and procedures relating to safeguarding children. Reports to parents at the end of each term provide well detailed information about students' progress both academically and personally. The school provides placing authorities with appropriate information relating to students they have placed, including those with statements of special educational needs.

## **Manner in which complaints are to be handled**

Policies and procedures relating to the handling of complaints are appropriate and are provided to parents and carers.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

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

## **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 a marking policy to guide consistent practice in relation to written feedback on students' work.
- Improve opportunities for students to contribute to community life.

## 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

<b>School status</b>	Independent		
<b>Type of school</b>	S162a		
<b>Date school opened</b>	September 2006		
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–17		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed		
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 18	Girls: 2	Total: 20
<b>Number on roll (part-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
<b>Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs</b>	Boys: 8	Girls: 1	Total: 9
<b>Number of pupils who are looked after</b>	Boys: 2	Girls: 0	Total: 2
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£16,500 – £33,600		
<b>Address of school</b>	Enterprise House, Old Field Lane, Wisbech, PE13 2RJ		
<b>Telephone number</b>	01945 580898		
<b>Email address</b>	sclaydon@ontrackededucation.com		
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sharon Claydon		
<b>Proprietor</b>	On Track Education Services Limited		

**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.**



12 November 2012

Dear Students

**Inspection of On Track Training Centre, Wisbech, PE13 2RJ**

As you know I visited the school last week to undertake an inspection of the educational provision. Such inspections are required by the government to check that all independent schools meet the Independent School regulations. In addition, I checked to see what improvements have been made since the last inspection.

Thank you very much helping me with the inspection. The views you shared with me in our discussions were most helpful. You told me that you appreciate the support provided by staff and that you enjoy the new workshops and refurbished facilities for cooking.

I am pleased to say that the school fully continues to meet all the requirements for registration as an independent school. The inspection found that:

- the school provides you with a wide range of outstanding learning opportunities designed to meet your individual needs
- teaching is good and your progress is checked carefully, although the written comments made on your work could be improved
- your personal development is good but you do not have enough opportunities to be involved in the local community
- the school takes good care of you, supporting you in developing your confidence and improving your behaviour
- the reports provided for your parents and carers at the end of each term contain helpful information.

Finally, I would like to say how hard I think your teachers and other staff work to support you and to wish you well in your future lives.

Yours sincerely

Michael Thirkell  
Lead inspector