

# On Track Education Centre Totnes

Parragon Building, Ford Road, Totnes, TQ9 5LQ

## Inspection dates

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' behaviour and personal development	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Quality of teaching	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Quality of curriculum	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' welfare, health and safety	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>

## Summary of key findings

### This school is good

- Students' achievement is good and the vast majority leave the school to continue their education or enter into training and/or employment.
- The processes and procedures to promote and secure students' welfare, health and safety are good. These are reinforced through excellent relationships with external professionals, other agencies, and students' families.
- Good leadership and management ensure teaching is predominately good and that students follow interesting and relevant programmes of study.
- Provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good and it makes a very positive contribution to students' personal development.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Lesson plans are of a good quality and teaching has a clear focus on individual students' learning and behaviour targets. However, they do not always identify opportunities for students to develop speaking, listening, reading and mathematical skills in all subjects and when undertaking off-site activities.
- Leaders and managers can demonstrate that students make good improvements in their personal development and management of their own behaviour. But, the records do not clearly show when this is better than good or precisely how well students develop emotionally and socially from their starting points.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with half a day's notice.
- The inspector observed 10 parts of lessons taught by eight staff; almost all were joint observations with the headteacher. Discussions were held with students, staff and another member of the executive board.
- There were no responses on Parent View. The inspector considered questionnaire feedback from six parents and two local authorities, 12 students and 14 staff.
- The inspector looked at school documents, including data relating to students' progress, and records about behaviour and attendance. She also checked the school's compliance with the independent school regulations.

## Inspection team

Steffi Penny, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The On Track Education Centre Totnes is a small, mixed, day special school. It provides full- or part-time education for students with a variety of special educational needs (with and without a statement of special educational needs) who cannot access full-time, mainstream education. Students have often experienced long episodes of interrupted education leading to poor attendance, refusal to participate in previous placements, low self-esteem and low levels of achievement.
- The school is located in an industrial estate in Totnes. It occupies three industrial units and also offers off-site alternative outreach services in community-run bases at Axminster, Newton Abbot, Tiverton, Tavistock and Plymouth.
- The school is registered for 32 full-time students aged between 11 and 19 years. Currently, 43 students are on the school roll, all with a statement of special educational needs, aged from 13 to 19 years, of whom 12 are post-16, with 29 attending full time and 14 attending part time.
- The school is in the ownership of On Track Education Services Ltd, a not-for-profit company. The company owns five similar establishments in other parts of the country. Students have their places funded by their local authorities or care providers and generally come from homes in the south of England. The school opened in November 2005 and was last inspected in May 2010.
- The main aims are for young people to: experience positive achievement and success; acquire diverse skills and knowledge; and to develop a positive desire to learn. The school provides individual programmes which seek to build on students' particular interests and knowledge.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of all teaching and the curriculum to outstanding by making sure that all teachers use students' literacy and numeracy targets when planning all lessons and activities on- and off-site so that students build upon and appreciate the need for these skills.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management to outstanding by ensuring that precise records are kept of students' emotional and social development and the progress made in the management of their own behaviour.

## Inspection judgements

### Pupils' achievement

**Good**

Students' achievement is good. Lesson observations and students' records show that most make good progress in their lessons. Sometimes progress is excellent and where this happens it is a reflection of the finely tuned curriculum and high quality of teaching. Occasionally, progress is hampered because the student is not emotionally ready to learn or becomes distressed during a lesson and has to take an unplanned break. Staff work hard to ensure that these occasions are minimised and that the learning of other students is not disrupted.

Literacy and numeracy are a fundamental part of each student's programme and because of this they all make good progress in developing their speaking, listening, reading and mathematical skills. However, staff do not target these skills in all lessons or activities and this means that students sometimes miss opportunities to demonstrate them in real-life situations.

Those students who have the highest attendance at their planned sessions achieve the best. There is no discernible difference between the achievements of male, female, full-time or part-time students. Students who are in the care of the local authority do as well as others because of the way the school works to meet the individual needs and interests of every student.

A range of appropriate work experience and careers advice, as well as leavers' plans, successfully help to prepare students for their next steps. As a consequence, the vast majority of students are either engaged in education, training and/or employment when they leave school. Virtually all students gain a good range of externally accredited courses, such as GCSEs or their equivalence.

### Pupils' behaviour and personal development

**Good**

Students' behaviour and personal development are good. Students make at least good progress in overcoming their behavioural, emotional and social difficulties as demonstrated by case studies. In the lessons observed students' behaviour, attitudes to learning, social interactions and relationships with each other and staff were good. Attendance for the vast majority of students improves over time although there are some dips due to external influences such as when changing foster carer or moving home. Punctuality to lessons is a relative weakness as students do not always start their lessons promptly. Sometimes this is due to their own lack of urgency and emotional insecurities, at the start of the day it is too frequently due to transportation issues.

There are excellent relationships between students and staff and behaviour is well managed in school. Students' personal keyworkers, along with teachers, play an enormous part in helping the young people develop an improved awareness and tolerance of other cultures and faiths. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is helping them to be well prepared for life in modern, multicultural, democratic British society. Through seamless therapy and counselling students gain in confidence and self-esteem; developing independence. Tolerance and harmony between students sometimes get frayed and requires adults to intervene or take action. Well-staffed, small classes mean that, when a challenging behaviour incident occurs, there is always an adult around to help defuse the situation. This does not involve restraining students but does mean that on occasions students are given a fixed, day exclusion from school.

### Quality of teaching

**Good**

The quality of teaching is good. In all the lessons seen staff consistently used the school's reward system to reinforce appropriate behaviour. Encouragement and clear feedback by staff enable students to reach challenging targets and gain externally verified accreditation and qualifications. Regular assessment of students' progress and the monitoring of teaching and learning ensure that

learning plans are fit for purpose. Lesson plans follow a common format and provide a good basis for learning and assessment for the subject being taught. Not enough emphasis is placed on maximising students' literacy and numeracy skills by referring to their targets in reading, writing and mathematics in all lessons or activity plans.

Since the previous inspection, resources have been increased, particularly for practical work. Students make effective use of computers, for example by using internet research and by preparing presentations.

### **Quality of curriculum**

**Good**

The quality of the curriculum is good. Each student has a personalised programme that is specifically tailored to their needs and interests, while at the same time providing a broad and balanced education. Students are encouraged to make choices about what they will learn and what examinations they will undertake. This enables students to develop independence and resilience. The programmes are reviewed regularly and are adapted in response to a student's changing needs. The flexibility of the provision and the involvement of students in the planning of it result in increased attendance, enjoyment and achievement. The personal, social, citizenship and health education is meticulously planned to make sure that all students have a good awareness of cultures and faiths different from their own. It also contains units on personal finance, work-related learning, life and social skills. This and the close working with external careers guidance advisers ensure that students have a successful transition into further education, employment and/or training.

### **Pupils' welfare, health and safety**

**Good**

The provision for students' welfare, health and safety is good. There is a very high staff-to-student ratio and students are well supervised at all times. Students indicate that they are increasingly aware of the implications of their actions and that they want to change the way that they behave. Some of them find making these changes very hard and occasionally they can be unkind to each other. Records of bullying or poor behaviour are carefully recorded and suitable sanctions imposed, when needed.

Effective risk assessments are carried out covering all areas of the premises and activities off site. The range of policies relating to fire safety, health and safety, bullying, discipline and first aid meet the needs of the students exceptionally well.

All the required checks on the suitability of staff have been completed effectively. All checks are recorded appropriately in a single central record. All staff are trained to the appropriate levels in child protection and to support those students who have the most challenging needs. There are excellent relationships with other schools, professionals and students' families that help ensure students and their families are helped when in times of crisis.

### **Leadership and management**

**Good**

The quality of leadership and management is good. Senior leaders have an accurate and up-to-date knowledge of the strengths of the school's provision and the areas that require improvement. They use this information wisely as a focus for future developments and training of staff. Staff work as a harmonious team with a shared passion and drive to provide the very best education for all the students who are taught at the school. For example, students' academic progress is very carefully assessed and tracked. Students' progress is assessed half-termly for evidence of an increase in National Curriculum sub-levels. The graphical display enables everyone to see the rate of progress each student is making in each subject. This information is then successfully used to determine trends and to ensure where progress is not fast enough so that other interventions are

then put into place to accelerate learning. However, the school does not have the same quality of evidence to demonstrate students' progress in their emotional and social development or when students' progress in the management of their own behaviour is better than good.

The main site buildings are clean and tidy. They provide a good range of specialist facilities and there is now a small dedicated outside area for students to use that is safe and secure. The premises used for the outreach work ensure that the buildings meet health and safety requirements and that there are other people around when staff are working one-to-one with students. Senior leaders, staff and students appreciate that it would be even better if students were taught in dedicated rooms.

All of the required information is provided, or made available, to parents, carers and others including termly written reports on the progress of their child. The complaints procedure complies fully with the requirements. The headteacher and the trustees have ensured that all of the regulations for independent schools have been met.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of education and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of education that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of education it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and/or the quality of education has serious weaknesses.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	131715
<b>Inspection number</b>	422731
<b>DfE registration number</b>	878/6060

This inspection was carried out 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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Independent Secondary Special School
<b>School status</b>	Independent School
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	29
<b>Number of part time pupils</b>	14
<b>Proprietor</b>	On Track Education Services Ltd
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Jan Grayson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jane Cox
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12–13 May 2010
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£22,560–£33,600 dependent on student needs
<b>Telephone number</b>	01803 866 462
<b>Fax number</b>	01803 866 462
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