

# Turnstone House School

## Inspection dates

17–18 September 2013

## Overall effectiveness

**Adequate 3**

Pupils' achievement	Good	2
Pupils' behaviour and personal development	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Quality of curriculum	Good	2
Pupils' welfare, health and safety	Adequate	3
Leadership and management	Adequate	3

## Summary of key findings

### This school is adequate because

- Students' achievements are good including in English and mathematics because of good teaching.
- Students' behave well in school and re-engage well with education following very disrupted previous school experiences.
- Good teaching is supported by thorough knowledge of students' capabilities and learning styles and makes good use of a thorough and flexible curriculum to enable students to achieve well.
- Provision for students' welfare, health and safety is adequate. It is not good because, although the school makes suitable provision to ensure the well-being of the students some elements of staff training need to be brought fully up to date.
- Leadership and management are adequate. The school's leaders have improved the quality of teaching and curriculum and this has enabled students to achieve well in school. However, they have only provided adequate arrangements to promote the welfare, health and safety of the students.

### The school has the following strengths

- Staff are successful in providing a respectful and supportive learning atmosphere that pervades the school and enables most students to achieve as well as they can.
- Excellent purpose-built school buildings, teaching resources and information and communication technology (ICT) equipment are used well to promote students' progress.

### 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 a day's notice. The inspector observed five lessons taught by four different teachers, looked at students' work, and held meetings with the head teacher, the proprietor, staff members and students.
- The inspector looked at the school's documentation including schemes of work, teachers' planning, records of students' progress, monitoring reports of teaching and learning, records of lesson observations and staff appraisal, and staff training records.
- Four questionnaire responses from staff were taken into account but no parents or carers, students or local authority representatives had responded to the on-line Ofsted questionnaires.

## Inspection team

John Gush, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

- Turnstone House is a small special school that provides full-time education for boys and girls aged between eight and 16 years. All of the students reside in residential accommodation provided by the proprietor. The school opened in October 2012 and this is the school's first inspection.
- All but one of the students currently on the school's roll has a statement of special educational needs. Students' main need is behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and all students are looked after.
- Alternative provision is not used by the school.
- The school states that its purpose is 'to provide a therapeutically managed facility that offers a safe, nurturing, caring, positive and protective homely environment that promotes personal growth, development and learning'.

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

- Improve the provision for the welfare health and safety of students so that every possible effort is made to protect them by:
  - ensuring that all staff have the appropriate training and that it is fully up to date.
- Improve students' achievements by:
  - ensuring that all teaching provides a consistently high level of challenge for all students.
- Improve leadership and management and increase its impact on teaching, and on students' achievements and their behaviour by:
  - making better use of the available information about students' academic achievements and their behaviour to identify trends and to ensure staff interventions are used as effectively as possible
  - extending the manner in which staff and students' performance is audited by the proprietors so that they can better hold the school leaders to account.

## Inspection judgements

### Pupils' achievement

**Good**

Students' achievement is good as a result of effective teaching and the successful efforts made by staff to enable individuals to re-engage successfully with education, and to make up ground lost arising from their previous disrupted education. Very effective encouragement and support from teachers, together with good use of a flexible and responsive curriculum, enable students to make good gains in learning over time and to improve their attitude to learning and their behaviour. The students acquire a broad range of knowledge, skills and understanding in all of the subjects taught, particularly literacy and numeracy, where they achieve well.

Students report that they enjoy the lessons and this is reflected in the high quality of the presentation of their work. Well-presented books and folders show careful and thoughtful work as well as evidence of practical work, for example in the areas of hair and beauty and in construction. These achievements, together with college programmes currently in place for some students, are likely to enable a large proportion of the students to make good progression into further education when they leave school.

The good progress that students make in academic subjects represents a significant achievement, given their low starting point on entry to the school. The school has suitable plans to enter students for GCSEs or for Functional Skills Awards based on their individual capabilities. The provision is making a good impact on developing students' personal skills and qualities, particularly their motivation, confidence and ability to form good relationships with staff and to improve their relationships with their peers.

### Pupils' behaviour and personal development

**Good**

Students' behaviour is good and they make good improvement in their personal development. Staff are consistent in how they manage behaviour and students know what is expected of them. Consequently, learning takes place in a positive climate. Staff provide effective support and encouragement and as a result students improve their relationships and social interactions with staff and each other. Attendance is very much improved compared with their previous school experience, and continues to improve during their time in the school. Most attend school regularly and on time. School records, together with comments from family members and carers, indicate an overall improvement in the behaviour of the vast majority students and a marked improvement in their self-esteem and self-confidence. Students say that they feel safe, are supported well by the staff and that bullying is rare. When incidents of bullying or inappropriate behaviour occur, they are dealt with quickly and effectively.

The school makes good provision for the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Staff consistently model respectful relationships and as a result students learn how to respond when they experience social, emotional or behavioural difficulties. The school provides effective support in relation to issues such as substance misuse, sexual health, offending behaviour and mental health. This, together with regular visits from the local police liaison team, helps the students to develop an improved awareness of right and wrong and to be aware of the impact of their behaviour on their own opportunities, as well as on those of others. Events such as a recent Chinese New Year celebration, together with regular input from the personal, social and health education curriculum, provide good opportunities for the students to learn about their own and other cultures and to develop an attitude of respect and tolerance. A good range of community involvement takes place such as the recent art exhibition of students' work in a local art gallery. Students also develop good relations with their local community through regular use of shops, libraries and leisure centres. They also take part in the dog-walking scheme to support the local animal sanctuary. This helps them acquire a suitable understanding of public services and

institutions in the locality. The school has developed a policy to ensure that, whenever it is appropriate to introduce political issues, balanced messages are promoted.

Students' effort and attainment are recorded daily and each student has a range of individually tailored incentives for improvement. This helps them to be more aware of their personal successes and areas for development and provides a valuable motivation for further academic and personal development.

### **Quality of teaching**

**Good**

The quality of teaching is good and it enables students to make good progress in their lessons and during the time that they have been at the school. Lessons are well planned and suitably structured to take account of students' capabilities, although in some lessons teachers do not provide enough challenge to enable all students to achieve their full potential. Teachers know the students' learning styles and adapt their teaching methods to enable the students to take an active part in their lessons; this also helps them to manage the students' behaviour well. Teachers are good at helping students overcome specific barriers to learning, particularly improving the low self-confidence and poor self-esteem that most experience when they start at the school.

Students' abilities are assessed at the beginning of their placement and regularly thereafter. These assessments are used to monitor progress and also to prepare effective and useful individual education and development plans for all students. Activities are well matched to the specific objectives outlined in their plans. Plans take account of personal development as well as academic targets, and most students achieve the targets set for them.

Teachers make good use of their subject and professional knowledge to enthuse and inspire students. They provide useful and appropriate feedback to the students both through marking and through discussion. This praises effort and reinforces the learning achieved and directs students to what they need to do to improve further.

### **Quality of curriculum**

**Good**

The school has developed a good curriculum that effectively motivates the students through its mix of academic subjects and practical and vocational training opportunities. This provides students with the opportunity to work towards nationally accredited qualifications in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) in addition to qualifications in a range of vocational options, including hair and beauty and cooking. The curriculum is based on the National Curriculum and covers all of the required areas of learning, including religious education, and students in Key Stage 3 also study Spanish. The curriculum and the way it is implemented ensures that the requirements of the students' statements of special educational needs are fully met.

Physical education takes place at local leisure facilities and students are encouraged to identify activities that will motivate them. These include horse riding, kayaking, skating and climbing. The provision has a good impact on improving individuals' health and fitness. Regular outings, such as to museums and local places of interest, extend the students' knowledge and interest in their locality and in the world at large.

Students learn how to keep safe and to recognise threats and dangers through the well-designed personal, social and health education programme and through taking part in the school's own independent living skills awards. Cross-curricular links support learning well and make it more meaningful. For example, during a geography lesson exploring aspects of Brazil and the rain forest, students saw an example of the way animals adapt to their environment, something they had studied in a recent science lesson. In addition, literacy skills are reinforced in all lessons. This includes reading practice in relation to unfamiliar words and use of the school's high quality information and communications technology (ICT) equipment to research material for lessons and

to prepare attractive presentations of written work.

Students benefit from the range of work experience that the school is developing, including working with a local Rivers Warden, in a carpentry workshop and in a fashion and design company. The experiences that they gain, coupled with the very effective careers advice provided, ensure that all students have the opportunity to work towards appropriate courses that are linked to their aspirations, when they leave the school.

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

### **Adequate**

The provision the school makes for students' welfare, health and safety is adequate. It is not good because, although the school provides a safe and nurturing learning environment, which the students enjoy and appreciate and all staff have completed basic child protection training, some aspects of staff training have not yet been fully completed by all staff.

Nonetheless the provision is characterised by a high level of commitment to students' well-being and care. A range of effective policies has been produced and they are implemented consistently for the benefit of the students' welfare. For example, behaviour management is a very high priority in view of the emotional and social difficulties students experience in their lives. The policy is centred on a philosophy that there are 'no limits' to the potential of the personal development and achievement of each student, and the school seeks to encourage a sense of self-worth and to promote self-discipline. It makes effective use of a 'restorative' approach that helps students to become aware of the impact of their behaviours on others. Together with the consistent and effective support and guidance provided by the staff, this results in appropriate behaviour being the norm in school and bullying being rare.

Staff recruitment is carried out in a thorough and careful manner, and the required single central register is correctly maintained. All staff are trained in fire safety and first aid. Fire safety is effectively promoted. Fire drills are routinely carried out in school and fire-fighting equipment is subject to regular inspection. Portable equipment is suitably checked by a competent person and outcomes of the checks are formally recorded.

Students report that they feel safe in school and that they receive good support and guidance, which they value. Supervision in school is provided in a good-humoured manner, which students appreciate. This is demonstrated in the respectful relationships between students and staff, and in the confidence the students have in the support and guidance that they receive. Risk assessments, including those for visits outside school, are thorough. Results are formally recorded and action taken where necessary.

Students are very well supported to adopt a healthy lifestyle. This covers not only an awareness of the importance of eating and exercising well but also sex and relationships education, together with the importance of keeping safe when using social networking sites.

### **Leadership and management**

### **Adequate**

The leadership and management of the school are adequate. They are not good or better because the school's leaders have failed to ensure that all staff have fully completed their training.

The vision of a 'no limits' approach for the development and improvement of students' outcomes is strongly promoted by the school's leaders, and is shared and understood throughout the school community. Thorough and accurate self-evaluation is carried out by the headteacher and informs effective school improvement and development planning, which has enabled the school to continue to improve student outcomes. The management of staff performance, and in particular the effective observation of teaching and learning, has contributed to improved student learning and achievement.

The proprietors visit the school regularly and provide effective and valued support for the school leaders and their team. They are aware that extending and enhancing the use of data that summarises students' achievements and their behaviour more effectively would enhance the staff's capacity to pin-point their interventions and so help students' academic and personal development. In addition they are also aware that a more formalised adoption of audit procedures would provide them with a fuller understanding of the performance of students and staff and enable them to hold the school leaders to account in a more effective manner.

All students, including those who are looked after by the local authority, benefit from a very effective schedule of meetings involving both school and residential staff together with local authorities, parents and carers, and other relevant agencies where issues concerning their progress and well-being are carefully considered. The meetings are productive and beneficial.

The proprietors have provided the school with excellent buildings and facilities including classrooms, which are light and airy, and well resourced. They are well cared for and maintained. Inspiring examples of students' work contribute to providing an effective and stimulating learning environment.

All of the required information is provided or is made available to parents, carers and others through the proprietor's website and the school's extensive parent information pack. The complaints procedure meets regulatory requirements and is correctly implemented.

All the regulations for independent schools are 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>	138880
<b>Inspection number</b>	422837
<b>DfE registration number</b>	926/6009

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>	Special school
<b>School status</b>	Independent School
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	8-16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	4
<b>Number of part time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Specialist Education Services Ltd
<b>Chair</b>	Steve Lord
<b>Headteacher</b>	Louise Somner
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	First inspection

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013

