

Gloucester House, the Tavistock Children's Day Unit

33 Daleham Gardens, London, NW3 5BU

Inspection dates 11–13 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding	1
Pupils' achievement	Outstanding	1
Pupils' behaviour and personal development	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Outstanding	1
Quality of curriculum	Outstanding	1
Pupils' welfare, health and safety	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings

This school is outstanding because

- Pupils achieve extremely well as a result of outstanding teaching. They make rapid progress, particularly in literacy, numeracy and reading, from low starting points on entry to the school.
- Pupils make outstanding progress in their personal development as a result of an exceptionally supportive ethos and excellent pastoral care.
- The outstanding curriculum, with its therapeutic and academic strands, meets the pupils' needs very effectively.
- Teachers have an exceptional knowledge of the needs of each pupil and provide individual learning tasks, which motivate and challenge them to succeed.
- The provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is outstanding and very effectively safeguards the pupils.
- The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. They have ensured that pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching are outstanding.

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 one day's notice.
- The inspector observed eight lessons, most accompanied by the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the unit's leaders, teaching staff and pupils. A range of documentation was examined, including policies, assessment records, curriculum and teachers' plans and risk assessments. The inspector heard pupils read. The views expressed by 10 members of staff survey questionnaires were considered.
- There were too few responses to the parents' questionnaire for an analysis to appear on Parent View, but the inspector spoke to a parent during the inspection.

Inspection team

Jill Bainton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Gloucester House, The Tavistock Children's Day Unit, is an independent special school for boys and girls with exceptionally complex social, emotional and behavioural needs. It provides both a health and education service. It is located close to the Tavistock Clinic in the London Borough of Camden, but serves several neighbouring boroughs.
- All the pupils are funded by a combination of local authority and health service funding and are referred by local authorities. All have a statement of special educational needs. One pupil is in the looked after category. The school is registered for up to 16 pupils aged from five and 12 years and offers a range of integrated provision. There are currently seven pupils, aged eight to 12 years on roll. Most of the pupils have had a very disrupted previous education and not attended school for significant periods of time.
- Its published purpose is to provide stepping- stones towards a long-term, stable education for the pupils. The school is proactive in supporting both the pupils and their families in the next stage of their education.
- The school makes use of a local sports centre for physical education.
- The school was registered in 2007 and was last inspected in November 2010 when it met most of the regulations.
- The school requested a material change to increase the age range from five to 12 years of age to five to 14 years as part of the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Sustain pupils' outstanding achievement by:
 - providing the pupils with more opportunities to be involved in curriculum development so that the learning process better reflects their interests
 - maintaining the focus on developing pupils' writing skills.

Inspection judgements

Pupils' achievement

Outstanding

Pupils' achievement is outstanding, as a result of an exceptionally supportive ethos underpinned by an excellent academic and therapeutic curriculum, outstanding teaching and pastoral care. Almost all pupils make rapid progress from low starting points on entry to the school. There is a strong focus on the improvement of basic skills in literacy and numeracy. When they first come to the school most pupils have histories of very low attendance and a fragmented education due to their severe behavioural and emotional difficulties. The pupils' new-found confidence in learning as a result of their settled time in the school helps the pupils to make sustained progress over time. This is achieved through a school ethos which is based on building very positive working relationships and raising pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence. Pupils' social, emotional and behavioural needs, as well as any identified gaps in their knowledge and skills, are thoroughly assessed on entry to the school using nationally recognised academic and therapeutic systems. This information is then effectively used by staff to meet the specific needs of the pupils as identified in their healthcare and education plans. Over their time at the school the pupils' progress is very carefully monitored and analysed and additional support is given when required.

Pupils arrive at the school with low self-esteem and self-belief in their own abilities. As a result of excellent strategies for managing the pupils' behaviour and planned therapeutic interventions, together with high expectations from all staff that they will succeed, most of the pupils thrive and gain confidence in their own abilities. They rapidly recover from gaps in learning lost in reading, writing and numeracy. They also make very good progress in their speaking, listening and social skills, as small teaching groups provide a secure social structure within which pupils can rebuild trust and confidence. Some of the pupils' attainment remains below the national average, but their high rates of achievement over a relatively short time compares very favourably with national expectations. This outcome equips them very well for the next stage of their education and the school is successful in re-integrating pupils into mainstream education.

Pupils' behaviour and personal development

Outstanding

Pupils make outstanding progress in their behaviour and personal development, which can be seen in their good attendance, enjoyment of learning and outstanding achievement. They join the school after experiencing difficulties at their previous settings and non attendance as a consequence of their challenging behaviour. They begin to thrive in the calm and nurturing environment where staff act as excellent role models, treat them with consideration and kindness and by establishing firm boundaries. The pupils respond by attending school and improving their behaviour. One young pupil volunteered the view that, 'This is a specialist school to help you sort out your difficulties...I am being helped with mine.' The pupils are assisted to do this through the therapeutic aspects of the curriculum and excellent pastoral care. Whilst at the school, pupils learn to express their emotions in a socially acceptable way and their behaviour overall is good. Staff are very skilful in de-escalating outbursts of unacceptable behaviour. When they do occur, staff manage them extremely effectively, so that individuals are quickly re-engaged in learning and minimum disruption is caused to others. Pupils understand what constitutes bullying and any instances are swiftly dealt with by staff in an appropriate manner.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well through the ethos of the school, which is based on establishing relationships of mutual respect. Pupils develop trusting relationships with staff and have daily opportunities to reflect on the way their behaviour affects their own work and that of other pupils. In religious education they learn about different world religions and celebrate festivals, with the Chinese New Year being the most recent. They learn about public institutions and services through lessons in personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE). They exercise democracy by expressing their views in weekly

student council and community meetings, which they help to lead and record the minutes. Through these activities, pupils feel that they have a voice in the running of the school and their suggestions are taken seriously. They develop an awareness of the local community through using the sports facilities and educational visits. The school has no political affiliation and leaders ensure that when controversial and political issues are considered, steps have been taken to offer a balanced presentation of opposing views. Racial harmony is effectively promoted through regular cultural celebrations and pupils have frequent opportunities to learn about different cultures.

Quality of teaching

Outstanding

The quality of teaching is outstanding enabling the pupils to make excellent and sustained progress according to their varying starting points. Lessons are consistently at least good and often outstanding. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent; lessons are often infused with good humour and staff are consistently courteous. The lessons are well planned to meet the specific needs of the pupils, with some of the teaching being with individuals, but mostly group lessons take place. Staff are excellent at engaging the pupils, encouraging them to see the value of learning and to believe that they can succeed in their learning tasks. They set the pupils challenging targets, which are carefully devised to meet their learning and behavioural needs. These are discussed with pupils before each lesson and then learning is evaluated at the end. During lessons, staff are positive but realistic in their feedback to the pupils concerning their progress and attainment. This helps the pupils to gain a clear picture of the progress they are making and how they can improve their work and behaviour.

They are aware of the National Curriculum levels at which they are working, which help them to identify successful learning and any gaps in their knowledge. Pupils are given sufficient time to complete tasks and if they need a short break to help with their powers of concentration, then this is negotiated. Pupils respond by behaving well on the whole and taking an active role in their lessons. They are rewarded for both their behaviour and achievement at the end of the day, with a 'stamps and targets' session. Pupils themselves help to decide how many of each of these rewards that they deserve and are encouraged to self-evaluate and reflect on their behaviour if it has affected their learning. Staff work extremely well together at all levels and very well-informed teaching assistants bring valuable skills to the classrooms. There is an atmosphere of purposeful learning in the classrooms, which is permeated with a sense of fun and good humour. For example, in a dance lesson where the pupils were learning street dance, both staff and pupils joined in very good humouredly in a 'dance off'.

Reading is given a high priority with both individual and group reading sessions and the pupils are making consistently good or better progress in acquiring basic skills and gaining a love of reading. Pupils are improving their writing skills and the school has identified that this is an area it now wishes to develop even further.

Staff use a range of resources well, including interactive whiteboards and computers, to ensure that learning is interesting and enjoyable. Pupils' work is well marked and the pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their work. Assessment systems are very thorough and methodical so that teachers know how well the pupils are doing and what they need to do to improve. They share this information very regularly with pupils, especially ideas about improving reading, spelling and numeracy. These assessments form the basis of detailed individual healthcare and education plans. The teachers' very thorough knowledge of the varied learning styles and personalities of each pupil results in high expectations of what they can achieve and ensures that each pupil is working at a level which ensures success.

Quality of curriculum

Outstanding

The quality of the curriculum is outstanding and ensures pupils can make sustained progress over time. It has a strong impact on the pupils' learning and achievement. The curriculum covers all the

areas of learning required by the independent school regulations, and also includes French and religious education. It is well planned and based on National Curriculum guidance. It is composed of both academic and therapeutic strands, which enable the pupils to make exceptional progress in their personal development. The curriculum is suitably adapted to meet each pupil's individual academic and therapeutic needs, focusing on literacy, numeracy and developing scientific and technological skills. A key feature of the curriculum is the integrated education and clinical provision, which is seamless. Clinical provision, for example, in the form of intensive individual psychotherapy, cognitive behaviour therapy, therapeutic group work, speech and language and occupational therapy and parent and family work, is fully integrated into each pupil's timetable. It is made clear to parents and carers that their role in the learning process is to help support the development of their child and they are expected to take an active role. The multi-disciplinary team of both education and therapeutic clinical services work very closely together and are able to adapt immediately to pupils' changing needs. Home visits are an important factor in keeping pupils and families engaged in the holistic development and progress of each pupil, which enable them to maintain their good attendance at school. Nurture sessions help the pupils to develop their play and communication skills. Personal, social, health and cultural education (PSHCE) is taught separately and permeates the whole curriculum and is central to promoting the pupils' outstanding personal development. Regular physical education is conducted both on site and at a local sports centre. The school has identified that it now wishes to involve the pupils more in planned curricular developments to reflect their interests more fully.

A range of curriculum related visits to the local library and shops, Hampstead Heath, museums, galleries, equine therapy and a residential four-day visit to the New Forest further enhances the curriculum.

Pupils' welfare, health and safety

Outstanding

Provision for the pupils' welfare, health and safety is outstanding owing to the school's rigorous procedures and strong commitment to keeping the pupils safe. All the independent school regulations are met. There are clear and detailed school policies and procedures, which are implemented effectively and consistently by staff and include effective procedures for tackling and eliminating bullying. An annual review of school policies and procedures is conducted. Senior staff have undertaken the required training for child protection and all other staff have been trained to a high standard. The policies relating to pupils' welfare are clear and up to date and include child protection, anti-bullying, behaviour, and health and safety.

All the required checks are made on staff to ensure their suitability to work with children and the information is recorded on the required single central register of staff appointments. A number of staff are trained in safer recruitment and all the necessary checks are made prior to appointment. The school works very effectively with other agencies that have roles in relation to child protection. The pupils feel safe because they are extremely well cared for by staff who know them very well individually and treat them as part of the inclusive school community. Staff have received training at the appropriate level in fire safety and first aid, with both nurses and doctors on site, and any accidents and incidents are methodically recorded. There is excellent attention given to the health and safety and security of the pupils. Detailed risk assessments are undertaken for activities both on and off site. The admission and attendance registers meet the regulations. Pupils are encouraged to take regular exercise through the planned physical education programme, regular outdoor play and to eat healthily.

Leadership and management

Outstanding

The leadership and management are outstanding and enable the pupils to learn and achieve very well. The Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust is the proprietor. It delegates the responsibility to run the school through its Department of Child and Adolescent Mental Health. The headteacher reports directly to this department, which, together with the headteacher, has

ensured that all the statutory regulations for independent schools are met. The headteacher and senior staff are highly ambitious for the pupils and what they can achieve. This strong drive helps to promote the school's success. There are robust policies and procedures in place to safeguard the pupils' welfare, health and safety. The excellent quality of the curriculum and teaching enables the pupils to make very good progress in the short time they have been at the school. Leaders know the school very well and through detailed self-evaluation have identified how they wish to move the school forward. The comprehensive school development plan focuses on maintaining and continually improving the provision and gives clear direction to the school. Staff questionnaires show morale is very high.

The premises and accommodation are suitable and safe for learning and have been upgraded to a good standard. They now include a medical room, which meets the regulations. Parents, carers and local authorities receive all the required information and are kept very well informed through regular reports and reviews. One placing authority responded very positively on hearing of the inspection and commented on how well the school works with both the authority and with parents and carers. The school had conducted a parental survey in November 2013 and the response was very positive. A parent commented most favourably during a visit to the school, confirming how well his son had settled at the school, the considerable progress he had made in a short time and how the staff really understood and supported him. There is an appropriate complaints procedure.

The school's application to change the age range from five to 12 years of age to five to 14 years was approved by the DfE during the inspection.

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 the quality of education has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	135167
Inspection number	364299
DfE registration number	202/6401

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.

Type of school	Independent special school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5–12 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	7
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	The Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust
Chair	Ms Angela Greatly
Headteacher	Ms Nell Nicholson
Date of previous school inspection	4–5 November 2010
Annual fees (day pupils)	£81,000
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