

Trinity School

8 Station Road, Foxton, CB22 6SA

Inspection dates

17–18 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- The school does not safeguard pupils adequately. Weaknesses include incomplete records of: safe recruitment checks; child protection training; and the most serious incidents of poor behaviour.
- Pupils make inadequate progress, especially in mathematics, science, and information and communication technology. This is due to weaknesses in assessment and teaching expertise.
- Pupils do not make sufficient progress in reading, writing and spelling. There are no whole-school approaches to these subjects.
- Teaching is inadequate because it does not take account of the needs of each pupil and there is insufficient specialist subject knowledge.
- Behaviour is poor and shows no signs of improving. The use of exclusion has increased and there are occasions where exclusions have not followed required procedures.
- Attendance is too low and has declined.
- There is no whole-school plan for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The curriculum is poor and does not prepare pupils well for when they leave, particularly regarding the opportunity to take GCSEs. Careers education and guidance, work-related learning and vocational studies are inadequate.
- Insufficient progress has been made since the previous inspection. School improvement planning is inadequate and does not provide enough detail to enable effective checking of progress.
- Leaders and managers at all levels are not clear about their responsibilities and there is ineffective monitoring to ensure that jobs are being done.
- Relationships between school leaders and some staff are poor.
- Performance management of staff does not take sufficient account of how well pupils are learning or behaving.
- Governance since the last inspection has been inadequate and has not held staff to account for their performance.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils learn well when work is challenging and matched to their skills and interests.
- Recent work on cyber bullying and the safe use of social media has helped some pupils change the way they use these resources.

Information about this inspection

- This was a no-notice inspection whereby the school was informed of the inspection shortly before the arrival of the inspectors.
- Inspectors visited most classes on each of the school's sites during the inspection. In addition, when making their judgements they looked at pupils' work and data about learning and progress, teachers' assessments, planning and records.
- Discussions took place with the executive headteacher, assistant headteachers, special educational needs co-ordinator, other middle and subject leaders, teachers and support staff. Inspectors also met with the Chair of the Governing Body and with two representatives of the local authority. A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including the school's improvement plan and its monitoring of teaching.
- Twenty nine responses were received from a survey provided to staff by inspectors. Views were gained from discussions with pupils on each school site. There were insufficient responses to Parent View (an online survey) to provide a summary of their views.

Inspection team

Charlie Henry, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Heather Yaxley

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- Trinity School provides education for up to 105 pupils from the whole of Cambridgeshire. The school is situated on three sites in Foxton, Hartford and Wisbech.
- All pupils have statements of special educational needs or education, health and care plans for social, emotional and mental health needs. Some pupils have additional needs, including autistic spectrum disorders and moderate learning difficulties.
- Trinity School opened in September 2012. It was formed from the amalgamation of three learner centres that were formerly managed by the local authority. The executive headteacher leads all three sites with an assistant headteacher in each of the centres. This group, along with the special educational needs co-ordinator and senior business leader, form the school's senior leadership team. At the time of the inspection the Wisbech site (known as the Fenland Centre) had an acting assistant headteacher, pending the appointment of a permanent member of staff.
- A very small number of pupils aged 16-18 years attend the school to complete their Key Stage 4 studies. These pupils' education is provided through off-site provision by Alternative Curriculum Education (ACE) at Peterborough, the National Teaching and Advisory Service commissioned by the Cambridge statutory assessment team, and InterHigh (an online GCSE programme). For the purposes of this inspection, given the very small number involved, the evaluation of these pupils' education is included within that for Key Stage 4 pupils. The alternative provision is also used for a very small group of pupils at Key Stage 4.
- A larger proportion of pupils than average are eligible for the pupil premium. This is additional government funding for groups of pupils who are at risk of underachievement, including those who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority. Most pupils are boys; a smaller than average number are from minority ethnic backgrounds.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Urgently improve the safeguarding of pupils by:
 - ensuring that all members of staff and governors are regularly trained in safeguarding and child protection, and that this training is recorded
 - making sure that all the required safe recruitment checks have been carried out and recorded on the school's single central record
 - completing detailed records about all serious incidents, including where restraint is used, as quickly as possible afterwards and ensure that these records are rigorously monitored by a designated member of the senior leadership team
 - regularly carry out fire evacuation drills and ensure that the recommendations from fire officers' visits are followed up and recorded
 - ensuring that electrical equipment testing is routinely carried out, as expected.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least consistently good and enables all pupils in all subjects to be challenged in their learning and reach their full potential by:
 - eradicating inadequate teaching
 - ensuring that there is appropriate specialist subject expertise to meet the requirements of the

curriculum

- ensuring accurate assessment of pupils' attainments and progress, including rigorous and regular moderation of teachers' assessments with other schools
- raising expectations and ensuring that teachers take full account of what each pupil already knows and can do so that lessons challenge them
- improving the quality and effectiveness of marking
- ensuring that there is a rigorous and effective approach to teaching reading, writing and spelling across all subjects.

■ Improve pupils' behaviour, including their attendance, by:

- ensuring that the school's behaviour policy is understood thoroughly by pupils, parents and staff, and is consistently implemented
- ensuring that behaviour incidents are routinely analysed so that further improvement can be made in the quality of teaching and support
- increasing attendance through setting ambitious targets, and working closely with the pupils, including for those on part-time programmes, and their parents and other agencies, to achieve these
- reporting attendance patterns and information about behaviour, exclusions and other sanctions, and rewards routinely to governors.

■ Improve the curriculum by:

- ensuring that it is broad, balanced and relevant for each pupil, and prepares them for their next stage of education, employment or training
- providing high quality careers education and guidance, and work-related learning
- planning and implementing provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development to prepare them as well as possible for life in modern day Britain.

■ Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:

- rigorously monitoring important aspects of the school's work, in particular pupils' progress and their behaviour, and the quality of teaching so that leaders and managers have a thorough and accurate understanding of how well each pupil is learning
- ensuring that this information is drawn together to provide an accurate picture of how well the school is improving with respect to ambitious targets set in the improvement plan
- improving the effectiveness of communication of school leaders and managers with other staff so that the policies and developments are implemented consistently and that morale is improved
- ensuring that performance management is rigorous and that targets focus, especially, on improving pupils' progress and behaviour
- ensuring that expectations and responsibilities for leaders and managers at all levels are understood and met to a high standard.

■ Improve governance by ensuring it has full, detailed and accurate information about the school's performance, in particular relating to targets set in the improvement plan, and with which it can hold all leaders and managers to account to provide high quality education.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess and advise how the new governing body can improve this aspect of leadership.

The school should not appoint any newly qualified teachers.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

are inadequate

- The leadership and management of the school at all levels are inadequate. Insufficient progress has been made to improve the quality of education since the last full inspection and the subsequent monitoring inspection. Where weaknesses have been targeted for development, for example in teachers' marking and the quality of assessment, there have not been demonstrable improvements.
- The school improvement plan largely includes the areas of weakness identified by inspectors but remains an inadequate means to track improvement. This is because it does not identify how planned actions are intended to improve pupils' progress and behaviour, and the small steps required towards to achieve the required improvement.
- Monitoring of the school's work is poor. The school's tracking of pupils' progress and their behaviour identifies many areas of concern. However, this information has not been considered alongside leaders' predominantly positive evaluation of the quality of teaching.
- Management roles at all levels are not sufficiently understood and there is ineffective support and challenge to ensure that expectations are met. As a result, school policies are not consistently implemented and there are insufficient checks to ensure that basic school procedures are completed well.
- Performance management is poor. There is not a sufficiently clear and robust link between teachers' and leaders' salary progression and evidence of pupils' progress in their learning and behaviour.
- There has been a very large turnover of staff and there remain poor relationships and disharmony between some staff and school leaders.
- The curriculum is poor and does not consider, prioritise or plan adequately to ensure that each pupil has a broad, balanced and relevant education that will prepare them well for when they leave. There are too few opportunities to gain GCSE qualifications. Variation in the availability of specialist teachers and resources leads to inequality for pupils across the three school sites.
- Careers education and guidance, and work-related learning, including the opportunity to learn vocational subjects, are inadequate.
- There is no whole-school plan for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. While some valuable work has been done on these important aspects, for example on human rights, this has been in response to particular events that have occurred at school, and is not part of a broader plan.
- While the views of parents and carers are sought at pupils' review meetings, these are not brought together to provide an overview. Leaders and managers do not carry out surveys of parents' or carers' views of the school. There is no school council or other means by which the school gathers pupils' views as a whole.
- Concerns about safeguarding were identified during the inspection. These are largely included in a recent safeguarding review that was undertaken by the local authority at the request of the school. There is a plan of action to address most but not all of these concerns.
- School leaders do not make effective use of the pupil premium funding to accelerate the progress of those students it supports, when they are underachieving.
- The local authority has a very detailed and accurate understanding of the school. It has provided a high level of support and challenge, and issued a warning notice following the criticisms of the school's progress at the monitoring inspection in January 2014. It has been instrumental in helping the school recruit new governors and in providing training for the new governing body.

■ The governance of the school:

- Governance since the last inspection has been inadequate. The governing body has not strategically monitored the work of the school and has not held the staff to account for the improvements that are required or for ensuring that safeguarding requirements are met. There is not a complete record of recruitment information to ensure that all the required checks have been carried out. Records do not show which staff have undertaken child protection training. Records of the use of restraint are incomplete. Fire drills have not been carried out in the recent past, and management responsibility for these is unclear. There is no record of actions taken following visits by fire officers. Routine safety checking of electrical equipment is not consistently carried out. Attendance registers are not completed as they should be and some pupils have been excluded without following required procedures.
- A new governing body has been formed during the last few months, with a new Chair who has substantial experience of education for pupils with special educational needs. This new governing body is working closely with the school's leaders and managers, and the local authority. It has already been instrumental in aspects of improvement, including requesting a local authority safeguarding review and in improving reporting expectations to the governing body by senior leaders.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are inadequate

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is inadequate. There are too many times when their behaviour is poor and records of these occasions do not show a decline since the last inspection. Despite a school target last year for fixed-term exclusions to decrease, the use of this sanction has increased significantly. School leaders agree there have also been occasions where statutory exclusion procedures have not been followed and pupils have been sent home, or asked to stay at home. This is simply unacceptable.
- The behaviour observed by inspectors included times when pupils worked well, showing interest in their work and wanting to learn. However, many lessons visited were punctuated with incidents of disturbance, including pupils talking when the teacher was speaking, an unwillingness to settle down to work, and pupils entering others' lessons. Swearing was commonplace and was generally tackled by staff but, given the frequency of swearing, their efforts are ineffective. Discussions with pupils confirmed this picture of behaviour was typical.
- A new points-based reward system for improving behaviour was introduced from the beginning of the term. It is too soon to see if this is being effective; pupils' records of the points they have gained for good behaviour are not consistent with the logging of incidents of poor behaviour on the school's database. Some pupils liked the new system. However, others told inspectors that it demotivated them to improve since they could fail to meet the target for a day even though they behaved well for much of the time.

Safety

- The school's work to ensure that pupils are safe and secure is inadequate.
- There are unacceptable weaknesses in safeguarding requirements, including evidence that staff recruitment checks have not been carried out for all staff and poor recording of child protection training. There is also inadequate attention to other important aspects for keeping pupils safe, such as regularly carrying out fire evacuation drills.
- School records of the use of restraint show that it is not used often. However, these records are frequently incomplete with important details missing, for example, evidence of whether there has been a discussion with the pupil after the event and if a senior leader has reviewed the incident.
- In discussion, pupils said they felt safe at school. They told inspectors that bullying was not frequent and it was dealt with effectively if they spoke to a member of staff. This bullying tends to involve name calling,

including with a racist nature. Pupils showed some understanding of how to keep safe in modern society, for example, from the risks of cyber bullying. There are examples where the school has acted to tackle issues that have been brought to its attention, for instance the misuse of social media. However, it is not sufficiently proactive to help pupils become more resilient to dangers outside of school, such as from gang culture.

- Attendance is far too low and has declined. In addition, the attendance of a small number of part-time pupils is incorrectly calculated. This leads to a lower overall attendance for the school than is actually recorded. A spot-check on registers showed that a significant number of pupils had neither been recorded as present nor absent for part of the day.
- Actions to improve the attendance of most of the part-time pupils have not been effective.

The quality of teaching is inadequate

- The quality of teaching is not good enough.
- Planning to meet the needs of each learner in the very small classes is weak. This weakness is exacerbated by a lack of reliability in the assessment of pupils' attainment. Teachers do not have a robust and accurate understanding of what pupils already know, understand and can do. Pupils told inspectors about lessons where the work was too easy and they did not learn.
- Teachers' specialist subject knowledge is poor. Over a third of teaching staff are not qualified as teachers. The extent of this shortage varies across the school's sites and includes the core subjects of mathematics and science. There has been a very large change of teaching and support staff since the school opened. In addition to weak subject knowledge, there is insufficient understanding and skill in important teacher competencies, in particular the rigorous and accurate assessment of pupils' attainment and learning, and the use of this information to plan their next steps.
- There are serious shortages in specialist resources and accommodation, for example, for science and for physical education.
- Behaviour management is ineffective. Staff try to encourage pupils to work hard and prevent them from misbehaving; however, their efforts are only successful for brief periods of time. Staff are not yet adhering consistently to the school's new behaviour policy.
- Marking of pupils' work is usually poor. There are few examples where marking is used as an opportunity to extend class teaching by providing guidance for pupils on how they can improve, and then giving them the opportunity to do so.
- Assessment of the pupils' learning is insufficient and inaccurate. There is generally too little work to support the progress that is recorded for each pupil. Furthermore, the record of progress that is included in a pupil's exercise book is not always accurately transferred to the school's centrally held records.
- The effectiveness of teaching assistants is too variable. Where they are most successful they are clear about pupils' intended learning goals and help them to achieve them well. Teachers do not provide enough guidance about their assistants' roles and do not monitor this effectively.

The achievement of pupils is inadequate

- Pupils make inadequate progress and are not prepared well enough for when they leave school. They are not sufficiently challenged to do well.
- Observation of learning in lessons and from scrutiny of their books show that pupils are making too little progress. Some pupils who spoke to inspectors said that they did learn at school but expressed their

frustration that they did not learn more when they were given work that was too easy.

- Pupils' records show they make poor progress across subjects over time, and especially in mathematics, science and information and communication technology. However, data regarding pupils' progress is not robust or reliable and it is therefore not possible to gain an accurate evaluation. Weaknesses in the rigour of moderation of pupils' attainment, teachers' limited specialist subject knowledge and the inaccurate transfer of information onto the school's centrally held record all add to this picture of uncertainty. The school tries to use progress targets, but they are set incorrectly and do not take into account pupils' different starting points.
- Pupils make insufficient progress in their reading, writing and spelling skills. They do not develop these skills through practice and reinforcement across all of their lessons. The frequent use of worksheets adds to this lack of opportunity.
- Low expectations and weaknesses in the curriculum result in very few pupils obtaining GCSEs.
- The weaknesses in achievement apply to all groups of pupils in the school. Pupils who are supported by the pupil premium, boys and girls, those who have different disabilities and special educational needs, those from different ethnic backgrounds, and those attending the different school sites are equally likely to be underachieving.
- Parents' view on the quality of their children's learning is not known since the school does not routinely collect and collate this information.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	137494
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	452409

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	57
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Mephram
Headteacher	James Simon
Date of previous school inspection	22-23 October 2013
Telephone number	01223 712995
Fax number	01945 429176
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