

The Children's Trust School (Formerly The School for Profound Education)

Tadworth Court, Tadworth, KT20 5RU

Inspection dates 11–12 December 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Require improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Require improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Sixth form provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- School leaders, governors and members of the Trust have not checked the work of the school closely enough. Staff have not been held to account or provided with enough training and development to maintain high standards of teaching and achievement.
- Teaching and achievement require improvement. Teachers' assessments of pupils' day-to-day progress are not detailed or evaluative enough and do not contribute to future planning. As a result, some pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- The school's system for recording and monitoring safeguarding incidents is too complicated and unwieldy.
- The sixth form requires improvement. Although there are appropriate adjustments to the curriculum to suit older pupils and to prepare them for their next steps, there are not enough different experiences for students to develop their skills further.
- Governors have not carried out their duties effectively. They have not held school leaders to account for the quality of their work.

The school has the following strengths

- The interim headteacher has clearly identified in a very short time what needs to be done to improve the school.
- Pupil premium funding is spent effectively and has a positive impact on experiences and progress of pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are happy, enjoy being together and have good relationships with staff, who care for them well and ensure their safety.
- Pupils have many opportunities to take part in enrichment and extra-curricular activities that provide them with strong cultural and social experiences.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with half a day's notice. An aligned inspection of the residential provision in the children's homes was carried out at the same time. A separate report on the quality of residential provision is available on the Ofsted website.
- The inspector met with the interim headteacher, the deputy headteacher, a group of teachers, three members of the Governing Body and the chief executive of The Children's Trust.
- The inspector observed teaching in all classes, looked at examples of teachers' planning, annual reviews, examples of assessments and evidence of pupils' progress and experiences.
- There were too few responses to the online Parent View questionnaire to be considered. The inspector met with three parents.
- The inspector took account of staff views and 44 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- At the time of the inspection, the interim headteacher had been in post for three weeks. The previous headteacher left the school in September 2014.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation, including evidence of safeguarding, including safer recruitment, records of referrals to the social worker attached to the school and to local authority children's services.
- The inspector spoke to a representative of Surrey local authority on the telephone.

Inspection team

Janet Pearce, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Children's Trust School, formerly The School for Profound Education, is a smaller-than-average special school. It is part of The Children's Trust, a registered charity.
- The school is established to provide education and care for pupils aged 3 to 19 years with profound and multiple learning difficulties, physical disabilities and complex medical needs, including life-limiting conditions. Many have additional sensory impairments. All pupils have education, health and care plans or statements of special educational needs.
- There are currently 13 pupils in the sixth form.
- Although the school is registered to provide early years education, to date no children requiring early years education have attended the school.
- About one in three pupils are eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for free school meals or who are looked after). There are currently 12 looked after pupils in the school.
- Most pupils are of White British origin, with a small number of pupils from minority ethnic groups.
- Pupils are placed in the school by several local authorities across a wide geographical area.
- The school is open for 48 weeks of the year and provides full-time boarding provision for 26 pupils in three boarding houses on site. The school offers a coordinated site service from doctors, nurses, therapists and care staff.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school does not receive the sport premium funding.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and achievement so that they are consistently good by:
 - assessing pupils' steps of progress in more detail and match activities more closely to what pupils are capable of
 - ensuring that teaching assistants and other adults are used effectively in lessons to promote learning and communication
 - ensuring that there are more opportunities to develop pupils' skills in all the strands of the curriculum
 - providing more able pupils, particularly those in the sixth form, with more opportunities to communicate with each other, work together and develop their social skills.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that school leaders and, where appropriate, governors and members of the Trust:
 - systematically check on the quality of teaching and rates of progress and provide regular feedback for teachers
 - hold all staff to account for their work through rigorous performance management
 - make sure that teachers and teaching assistants are provided with appropriate training in better teaching of pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties
 - strengthen the school's work to keep pupils safe and secure by establishing a more efficient record-keeping system for serious incidents and concerns
 - make the school a high priority in the work of the Trust as a whole and establish a clear direction for all staff, parents and pupils
 - provide more challenging encounters and experiences for sixth form pupils in order to prepare them effectively for the next stage in their lives.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

require improvement

- School leaders, governors and members of the Trust have not monitored the work of the school closely enough over the last two years. The school has been operating in isolation and not enough has been done to sustain good teaching and learning or hold staff to account for the quality of their work. As a result, the school has declined in performance, and is no longer good.
- Staff have received mandatory training from across the Trust in care and therapy for pupils, but there has been too little training in developing teaching skills. Where some staff have undertaken research, their findings and good practice have not been systematically shared across the school.
- Senior leaders and governors have not monitored the quality of teaching and learning effectively. Until very recently, school leaders have not ensured that teachers are set appropriate targets in order to progress through the pay scales.
- The interim headteacher has brought stability, provided a sense of clear direction, supported the deputy headteacher and boosted staff morale in a very short time. She has accurately identified what needs to be done to improve teaching and increase pupils' rates of progress and development. All staff who spoke to the inspector said that since the interim headteacher took up her post, they have felt more positive. They respect her expertise, appreciate her receptive and thoughtful approach and welcome her frequent visits to lessons.
- The deputy headteacher and a group of middle leaders took on some key roles during the previous headteacher's absence and acted effectively to provide short-term support for teaching, transitions, assessment and keeping pupils safe and secure. Their expertise, teamwork and positive outlook prevented the school from further decline.
- The specialist curriculum of the school is helpfully designed to develop pupils' communication, sensory awareness and social skills. The curriculum is divided into five distinct areas, with accompanying assessment points broken down into appropriately small steps, which shape pupils' targets. However, because teaching has not been monitored effectively, developments in assessing pupils against the key steps in the curriculum have stalled, leading to slower progress for some pupils.
- The pupil premium is used effectively to provide extra experiences for eligible pupils, and school leaders are able to point to improvements for individual pupils as a result of the spending, demonstrating a strong commitment to equality of opportunity within the school.
- The school does not receive any funding from the sport premium. However, physical activities and opportunities for physical movement, including hydrotherapy and rebound therapy, are woven well throughout the timetable, supporting pupils with motor control, coordination and associated health benefits where appropriate to their needs. Additional opportunities such as sailing and horse-riding are also provided to promote health and well-being.
- The school ensures equality of opportunity by making sure that pupils have a broad range of experiences that they otherwise would have difficulty accessing. Pupils share art classes with pupils from a local primary school. The range of activities, including regular celebrations and events calendared throughout the year, in addition to visits from artists, poets and representatives from different faiths, ensure that pupils are exposed to the wider world and its experiences, contributing well to their spiritual, moral, cultural and social development.
- Pupils are provided with opportunities to take part in presentations and shows and meet visitors. There are regular visits to the theatre and trips to the garden centre. These real-life encounters help to prepare pupils well for the next stage in their lives in modern Britain.
- Transitions are handled well, with pupils prepared effectively for changes in their programmes or moves to other schools and new residential placements when they are older.
- The care of pupils in the school is supported well by health and social care professionals from the local authority. However, the school has not sought support from local authorities or other external services in order to improve the quality of teaching or leadership in the school.
- Most parents are happy with the quality of care their children receive in the school. However, a few express concerns about the frequency of communication from school and also about the quality of teaching.
- Safeguarding meets statutory requirements. Pupils are safe in the school and risks to their health and well-being are minimised because staff make sure they take action if they have any concerns about pupils. Staff's safeguarding training is up to date, as is the training of the senior designated staff for child

protection and safeguarding. Concerns are passed on to the relevant agencies and the school benefits from the expertise, care and accountability of the on-site social worker and health care staff.

- The system of recording safeguarding incidents is designed to enable easier sharing of information across the Trust. However, it is not clear who exactly is responsible for reviewing actions to keep pupils safe and well for particular incidents, and the accompanying paperwork is not kept to hand to enable school leaders to oversee practice and procedures.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The work of the governing body requires improvement. Until very recently, governors were unclear about their purpose, roles and responsibilities and where these fit in with the broader aims of the Trust.
 - Governors rightly acknowledge that they have not monitored standards in the school systematically, including information about pupils' progress. They are able to make limited evaluations of the quality of teaching, based on information provided by the deputy headteacher, but they do not know enough about how teachers' performance is managed or whether staff are deservedly rewarded for the work they do.
 - Governors have a sound understanding of how the pupil premium funding is being spent and are able to give a detailed account of its impact on eligible pupils' progress and experience.
 - Governors carry out their statutory duties to safeguard pupils seriously. There is thorough discussion of serious incidents across the whole site at regular points in the meeting schedule. However, governors were not aware that the school's record-keeping related to safeguarding was not as efficient as it should be because they were not checking closely enough.
 - Governors are aware of weaknesses in their understanding of school governance and recently have taken steps to strengthen the expertise of the governing body with the appointment of more experienced education governors.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. A positive atmosphere permeates the whole school because staff care deeply about pupils' well-being, respect their dignity and genuinely enjoy working with them.
- Pupils have good relationships with staff and look to their assistants and teachers to help them. Pupils are extremely resilient; they persist in trying hard to communicate and respond to staff. It is heartening to see some pupils begin a lesson in a remote or sleepy state, but through effort and persistence, express choices and in a few cases vocalise their pleasure in the lesson and their achievement.
- Pupils attend well where possible and enjoy school. The school takes all appropriate steps to maintain pupils' education if they are absent for medical care or if they are unwell.
- Pupils are occasionally visibly anxious or frustrated, but this is managed well by staff. Appropriate focuses on giving pupils choices and developing their abilities to show preferences help to alleviate any discomfort. In a few cases, pupils are not given enough time or opportunity to respond to adults' praise or comments on their learning.
- A few pupils have formed strong bonds with each other, fostered through established routines and class groupings. However, for some pupils who are capable of doing so, not enough is done to capitalise on their drive to socialise.
- Pupils who are able to vocalise are encouraged to laugh and smile, which creates a happy and vibrant atmosphere in and out of lessons.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. Pupils are kept safe because they are surrounded by teams that are vigilant and alert to the slightest change in their behaviour, well-being and security. Teachers and teaching assistants promote positive attitudes to learning. Most ensure that they carry out quiet checks if a pupil is becoming anxious, uncomfortable or at risk of harming themselves through any repetitive movements. However, the school's system for recording and tracking serious incidents or concerns is overly complicated.
- The school uses an electronic system for recording safeguarding concerns or incidents and the accompanying actions. Social workers and clinical staff are able to view information and check that they have been dealt with effectively. A senior leader monitors the system weekly and ensures that actions are followed up appropriately. However, sometimes there is a delay in formally recording incidents, because

details need to be inputted electronically. In addition, referrals and notes from staff are not systematically kept together with the electronic records, which leads to some inefficiency and delay when reviewing incidents.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good. In some cases, teachers do not build upon the previous achievements of pupils because they do not assess their small steps of progress closely enough or in sufficient detail.
- Some teachers and assistants do not vary their interactions with pupils in order to maximise learning. In some classes, the teacher and teaching assistants adopt a quiet approach, missing opportunities to stimulate those pupils who respond better to more demonstrative and physical approaches to communication. Some activities are overly repetitive, and although secure and predictable, do not stretch pupils or provide any surprises that could move them on to the next step. In a few cases, teachers miss opportunities to extend pupils' learning through effective use of the available assistive technology.
- In more successful lessons, pupils are given more intense sensory experiences with more direct and dynamic communication to stimulate their responses. For example, pupils were clearly interested and showed more complex emotional reactions when exploring the interesting textures of shaving foam, pasta, artificial snow and rice. The teacher and teaching assistants moved pupils through the different sensory experiences at an appropriate pace, and made the most of the opportunity to mirror and repeat pupils' reactions, so that their responses were affirmed and remembered.
- In a few lessons, pupils have to wait too long for their turn to respond or work directly with the teacher and have nothing to do and very little interaction with adults or each other. Sometimes opportunities to learn and communicate are missed when there are changes in routine or when pupils have to leave lessons for a short time for personal and medical care because there are not clear cues or communication about what is happening to them.
- Pupils are grouped in mixed classes, according to their ages and key stages. Each class is taught by one class teacher, with high numbers of teaching assistants, medical staff and therapists. However, teaching assistants are not used consistently well. It is not clear enough in teachers' planning or in the delivery of lessons what role the other adults play in lessons, including that of volunteers. In a few cases, assistants are not given clear guidance about how to promote learning and communication, particularly when pupils have to wait for their turns to respond.
- The school benefits from resources such as the sensory room, a hydrotherapy pool, a trampoline and some eye-gaze technology. However, some rooms are not well decorated or adapted well enough to support pupils with complex needs.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- As a result of their profound and multiple learning difficulties and complex additional needs, pupils' attainment at all stages of their education remains significantly below that of pupils in mainstream and most other special schools. Most pupils make progress in their communication skills, for example, indicating preference and choice through use of switches, eye gaze, responsive toys and vocalisation in some cases. However, not enough is done to build on these steps and make use of pupils' preferences in extending their learning and experiences.
- Annual reviews of pupils' targets, in line with the special educational needs code of practice, provide comprehensive information about pupils' needs and their overall progress, including the impact of specific therapies. However, information about pupils' progress is not gathered systematically or frequently enough between annual reviews, so the school is not able to provide detailed evidence of pupils' achievements over time.
- There are inconsistencies in the recording of pupils' small steps in lessons. Teachers are expected to monitor progress against the points in the specialist curriculum, but the notes on lessons are very variable. It is also not clear how the teacher uses these notes to inform planning for the next lesson or who is monitoring their quality and impact. In some lessons observed during the inspection, details about pupils' day-to-day progress were missing or not up to date.
- According to the available records, there is little difference in the achievement of different groups. Disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium benefit from the additional opportunities provided and, as a result, do at least as well, if not better than other pupils. There are no significant differences in the achievement of boys and girls or minority ethnic groups.
- Teachers promote pupils' cognitive skills and word memory by use of song and repetition of pupils'

names. Teachers routinely review at the end of lessons how well pupils have done, particularly when they have been working one-to-one with an assistant. However, in a few cases, the teachers and teaching assistants talk about the pupils while side-by-side with them as if they are not present, without involving pupils in the assessment or praising them directly for their successes.

- Pupils' work is recorded in 'learning journals' and it is encouraging to see the range of activities offered, including art, music and cookery, through photographs, comments and examples of painting. However, there is no expectation of how the learning journals should be presented. Some are not tidily kept and do not reflect a sense of pride in the achievements of the pupils. They also do not provide a clear sense of how pupils are progressing against their targets through the curriculum, which is a missed opportunity to build upon pupils' successes.

The sixth form provision

requires improvement

- Teaching, achievement and leadership and management in the sixth form require improvement. There are weaknesses in assessment, teaching and use of additional adults in lessons that are similar to those seen elsewhere in the school.
- In a few cases, pupils in the sixth form are making better progress and learning more because the teacher is providing more challenging activities and more opportunities to stretch pupils' socialisation skills beyond preference and choice. For example, pupils take part in a circle activity when they are encouraged to communicate with each other more overtly, through vocalisation, eye contact and smiling.
- Pupils follow a curriculum which is suitable for their starting points and abilities. There are further opportunities for pupils to follow accredited courses, which helps to prepare them for the next steps in their lives.
- Pupils have opportunities to take part in enrichment activities that are challenging, such as the Duke of Edinburgh programme. Pupils also take part in work experience on site, such as working in the café at the Cedar Hall. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to extend their work experience outside the school site and encounter people and activities outside the Trust.
- Pupils in the sixth form behave well and are safe. In a few cases, not enough account is taken of age-appropriate activities and topics, particularly for those pupils who are working at a higher level.

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	134902
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	448036

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Special
School category	Non-maintained special
Age range of pupils	3–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	36
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	13
Number of boarders on roll	23
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Tracey
Headteacher	Pam Walden (Interim)
Date of previous school inspection	28–29 February 2012
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