

Trinity College

Moor Lane, Loughborough LE11 1BA

Inspection dates

10 November 2015

Overall outcome

Independent school standards met

Context of the inspection

- The inspection was undertaken at the request of the registration authority for independent schools in order to monitor the progress that the school has made since its last inspection.
- A progress monitoring and emergency inspection was carried on 11 and 12 December 2014 to check the school's implementation of its action plan proposals following a previous emergency inspection that took place on 1 July 2014.
- Following the identification of a number of regulatory failings at the last inspection of December 2014, an action plan was prepared by the school to set out how it intended to address the failures in the relevant part of the independent school standards. The action plan covered most areas but was deemed to require improvement because there was insufficient detail to show how the school would address all of the regulatory failures. As a result, the Department for Education rejected the plan. The school submitted an amended plan at the beginning of the autumn term 2015.
- The inspection was carried out without notice. The inspector met with the interim headteacher of the school and the lead managers at both the main site, which provides for secondary-aged pupils, and the annexe, which provides for primary-aged pupils, to discuss the actions that have taken place since the previous monitoring inspection. The inspector looked at a range of documentation and visited seven lessons across both sites. The inspector spoke to pupils.

Main findings

Part 1 – Quality of education

- The school now meets all of the requirements for this standard.
- The inspection of December 2014 found that a few of the requirements for curriculum, teaching and assessment were not met. Since the interim headteacher commenced work at the school in September 2015, significant work has been undertaken to put in place a revised curriculum and systems of planning and assessment to improve the quality of teaching. This has resulted in a great deal of change and teachers and adults have responded positively in implementing the new approaches.
- The inspection of December 2014 found shortcomings in the curriculum policies and the schemes of work that underpinned them. British values were not promoted effectively. A new curriculum has been designed, which provides a more coherent framework to support the learning and development of pupils of different aptitudes and ages. An overarching teaching and learning policy has been implemented which identifies a suitable range of subjects that are taught in the school. This is underpinned by policies for each subject area. Long- and medium-term plans set out for each subject what is to be taught at Key Stages 2 and 3, and at Key Stage 4, and how these link to the syllabuses for external examinations at GCSE and for Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) qualifications. The medium-term plans for both primary- and secondary-aged pupils clearly show how links are made with literacy, numeracy, and speaking and listening activities. Short-term planning records at both sites show how literacy, numeracy, and speaking and listening skills are incorporated into and developed during lessons.

- The personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum is the main vehicle for the promotion of British values. Displays around the school show that this aspect is now being promoted well.
- The inspection of December 2014 found that pupils did not have enough opportunities to strengthen their skills in communication, literacy and numeracy and apply these to everyday situations and in different subjects. Leaders have ensured that a much sharper focus is placed on the development of pupils' skills in core subjects. Staff have received training on this aspect and are now referencing in medium- and short-term plans how they intend to promote these core skills, irrespective of the main subject matter of the session. Visits to lessons showed that pupils are encouraged to develop their speaking and listening skills and use their wider skills in literacy to support their learning. Additional reading sessions are now planned into the curriculum to support the development of pupils' skills in literacy, which is helping to accelerate pupils' progress in this area.
- The inspection of December 2014 found that teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve were not consistently high enough and that this resulted in a lack of challenge during lessons. Despite engaging pupils, it was deemed that too much time was wasted on tasks that did not challenge pupils to think. Senior leaders have introduced systems that are designed to support adults' use of assessment information in order to plan individual and series of lessons, in pursuit of pupils making at least expected gains in learning. Staff are now in receipt of more detailed information relating to the prior attainment of pupils and their targets. This information has been used to form pen portraits for each pupil so that staff are aware of targets linked to their individual education plans, as well as those linked to literacy and numeracy. Although there is some inconsistency in the use of such information to match activities to meet the needs of pupils, in most cases information is being used to good effect to ensure that pupils are challenged during lessons and over time.
- The inspection of December 2014 found that pupils did not always meet their end-of-year targets and that they made better progress in some subjects than others. A contributory factor was that support staff provided too much help to pupils, which resulted in their becoming passive and not making enough gains in their learning. Teaching assistants and instructors are now using questioning more effectively to challenge pupils and to move learning forward. As a result, more productive use is made of lesson time.
- The inspection of December 2014 found that the checks on teaching by senior leaders resulted in an overly positive view of pupils' progress and outcomes. Senior leaders have introduced a self-evaluation tool for staff, which encourages them to reflect on their practice. The outcomes are then evaluated against the evidence gathered by senior leaders from their monitoring activities to form a view of the quality of teaching and learning. The areas covered are: quality of learning; enjoyment of learning and attitudes; assessment to support learning; and progress and quality of provision. Not only is this helping staff to become more reflective about their work, but there is also a much sharper focus on the extent to which their teaching is having a positive impact on pupils' progress. Senior leaders provide detailed feedback to staff on areas for development and plan subsequent training activities. Senior leaders have established a tracking system that records the outcomes of pupil assessments. As a result, they are now able to track the progress that pupils make against their targets, and hence have a better understanding of the impact of teaching on the attainment and progress of individuals than was the case at the previous inspection.
- The inspection of December 2014 found that while many staff showed patience and understanding when working with pupils who have difficulty in managing their behaviour, the expectations of the school's leaders and other adults were not high enough to ensure that pupils made the best possible progress and achieved qualifications that equipped them to make informed life choices. This was manifest during lessons, which sometimes were disturbed by pupils' outbursts; these unsettled other pupils and prevented them from learning. The implementation of a new behaviour code is helping to create a calmer environment around the

school. Pupils are beginning to accept the moral code that underpins the school's new 'rights and responsibilities' approach to ensuring positive behaviour. In the large majority of lessons visited, pupils' behaviour was calm and settled, with secure and often positive relationships with adults being evident. Nevertheless, on a few occasions, the behaviour of a few of the most vulnerable pupils presents a challenge to staff. This results in little learning taking place during the session. Senior leaders have introduced the ASDAN 'Life skills challenge and preparation for adulthood programme' as part of the curriculum. The courses are helping to support pupils' understanding of finance as well as to raise expectations of what they can achieve and make them aware of the life choices that are available to them.

Part 3 – The welfare, health and safety of pupils

- The school now meets all of the requirements for this standard.
- The inspection of December 2014 found that the school's implementation of its behaviour policy in relation to the recording of serious incidents did not meet requirements. Serious incidents were not recorded in enough detail, including the sanction that had been applied. This obstructed any detailed analysis of the patterns of behaviour of individual pupils in order to inform a strategy for improvement. A new behaviour code has been introduced and is displayed in each classroom. This is based upon the rights and responsibilities of individuals and acts as a reminder to pupils of the expectation that they behave well, and where they choose not to, as a starting point for discussion. The new behaviour code has a clear system of rewards and sanctions. The pastoral leaders at each site are now keeping detailed records of positive and of unruly behaviour. Where behaviour gives cause for concern, a detailed investigation takes place as to what has occurred and the sanctions that are applied. Through the implementation of this more robust system, a closer eye is kept on pupils' behaviour and the extent to which they are working towards reaching their behavioural targets. The large majority of pupils observed during visits to classrooms and around school behaved appropriately. A few of the most vulnerable pupils demonstrated challenging behaviours, which the staff responded to, following the procedures that are set out in the policy.
- The inspection of December 2014 found that a significant number of secondary-aged pupils were allowed to smoke up to three cigarettes a day on the school premise, under the supervision of staff. It was also found that, while the school had ensured that pupils did not carry cigarettes or lighters around the school, the school was not undertaking enough work in relation to staff training and development in the delivery of smoking prevention activities. The school has now revised its policy on this aspect, taking into account recommendations from the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) report of February 2010 relating to smoking prevention in schools. As a result, information about the dangers of smoking are integrated into the curriculum, with commercially produced materials underlining the dangers prominently placed around the main school site. In addition, anti-smoking activities have been introduced to reduce the number of pupils who smoke. This has had some success. However, a few pupils still smoke at assigned times of the school day, supervised by staff.
- The inspection of December 2014 found that while the school's anti-bullying strategy and policy were being implemented, the aspect relating to eliminating homophobia and the use of homophobic language had yet to be effective. This was reflected in the frequent use of homophobic and sexually referenced language. Displays at both sites are prominent in promoting an understanding of the inappropriate use of language in relation to homophobia. As a result, the use of such language has reduced. If it does occur, it is addressed immediately by staff. Nevertheless, on more than a few occasions, a few of the most vulnerable pupils at the secondary site were heard by the inspector to use highly inappropriate language when talking to each other and when addressing staff. While this was tackled by staff, leaders acknowledge the need for such language to be eliminated from the culture of the school.

- The inspection of December 2014 found that the health and safety policy had not been updated to inform practice in relation to meeting fire safety regulations. This has now been remedied. Fire drills have been undertaken and fire extinguishers have recently been checked. The school has deployed an external consultant to provide advice on health and safety matters to ensure that the school is compliant. Visits to both sites revealed that the premises and accommodation are maintained in a good state and that there were no obvious health and safety risks posed to pupils. Health and safety are discussed daily during the staff briefing so that any emerging issues can be raised immediately with the site manager, in pursuit of securing a quick resolution.
- The inspection of December 2014 found that there were potential risks associated with the locking of doors from the inside, thus preventing access in the case of emergency. This has now been remedied. The old locks have been removed and replaced with a type that results in ease of access into and out of each classroom and base area.
- The inspection of December 2014 found that the arrangements for maintaining attendance registers did not meet regulations. This was because the school did not have the relevant information relating to pupils' dates of births and home addresses, and because a proportion of pupils who did not attend school had their absence marked as authorised, while not receiving education. This has now been remedied. Attendance registers at both sites are now maintained appropriately. Relevant information relating to the date of birth, home address and contact details of each pupil is recorded. The correct codes are used to denote when a pupil is absent and the reason why. The pastoral leaders at both sites keep a close eye on the attendance of individual pupils in order to identify any trends and patterns. As a result, they follow up any non-attendance straight away.

Part 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

- The school now meets all of the requirements for this standard.
- The inspection of December 2014 found that the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils were not compliant with requirements. This was because the required vetting checks on staff were not undertaken prior to their commencing employment at the school. The checks that were not undertaken related to: the identity of staff; their right to work in the United Kingdom; and whether they had been barred from working with children. This has now been remedied. All staff, as well as the proprietors and directors of the parent company, have undertaken the required checks on their suitability. This is recorded on the school's single central register of checks.
- The inspection of December 2014 found that not all of the information found in the employment records of staff matched what was recorded on the single central register. During this inspection, scrutiny of a sample of staff employment files showed that the relevant information was present on the register.
- The inspection of December 2014 found that the school had not taken appropriate action in relation to meeting the requirements of the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009. This was because the specific checks on staff working with pupils under the age of eight had not been made. This has been remedied. All staff, irrespective of whether they work with primary-aged children in the annexe or not, have undertaken these checks on their suitability.

Inspection team

David Carter, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about this school

- Trinity College is a small, independent special school for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. All of the current pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. The school opened in 2007 and is registered for 30 boys and girls between the ages of seven and 16 years. It is situated on two sites. There are 21 secondary-aged pupils on the school roll who are taught at the main site. Four primary-aged pupils are taught at the annexe. There are significantly more boys than girls attending the school. There are three Year 12 pupils who are educated at the school. The school is only registered to educate pupil from the ages of seven to 16 years.
- Ownership of the school was transferred to Horizon Care and Education during 2013. An interim headteacher took up post on 1 September 2015 to replace his predecessor, who was in post for two years. The school was last fully inspected by Ofsted on 29 January 2014.
- There have been significant increases in staffing during the past year in response to the increased behavioural needs of pupils joining the school.

School details

Unique reference number	1351218
Inspection number	10007398
DfE registration number	6025

This inspection was conducted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008.

Type of school	Special school for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	7–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	25
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Mr Paul Callander
Headteacher	Mr Giora Berman
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 December 2014
Annual fees (day pupils)	£975 to £2,000 per week
Telephone number	01509 218906
Fax number	01509 218907
Email address	trinityhead@horizoncare.co.uk

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