

Tumblewood Community School

The Laurels, 4 Hawkeridge Road, Westbury, Wiltshire BA13 4LF

Inspection dates

1–3 December 2015

Overall effectiveness

Good

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have worked tirelessly to bring about significant improvement since the previous inspection. They lead with a determination and an absolute belief that every pupil can succeed.
- The headteacher leads a committed staff team that results in the shared vision of providing high quality education, care and support for all pupils.
- Pupils with a history of extremely challenging behaviour achieve well from their starting points. Creative lesson planning and good teaching successfully meet the needs of all learners.
- Relationships between staff and pupils in school are strong. This helps pupils build trust with adults to help them feel safe and secure.
- The directors play an active role in the school. They challenge and support leaders and staff to improve and have ensured that all independent school standards are met.
- The well-organised therapy provision supports pupils' learning successfully.
- Pupils' behaviour is typically good around school, and in lessons. Strong teamwork between teachers, support staff and therapists ensures that pupils' achievements are valued. As a result, pupils make good progress in their personal and academic achievement during their time at the school.
- The school has developed effective systems for recording and checking pupils' personal and academic progress.
- The school provides high-quality art and music teaching. This is making a positive contribution to building pupils' self-esteem and confidence.
- Staff have a good understanding of their responsibility to keep children safe. The daily 'community meetings' ensure consistency of approach between the school and homes.
- Teachers have high expectations for their pupils. They offer a range of accredited courses to match pupils' aspirations, needs and abilities.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The quality of teaching is not yet outstanding. In some lessons, teachers do not sufficiently challenge pupils to achieve the highest standards.
- Feedback given to teachers by leaders to improve their work is not sufficiently linked to improving pupils' learning and achievement.
- Targets in action plans lack specific and measurable short-term objectives to enable leaders to regularly check and review the school's performance.
- Teachers do not have enough opportunities to develop their range of teaching skills to maximise learning in every lesson.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning further by ensuring that:
 - teachers provide the highest levels of challenge in all lessons to enable pupils to achieve their full potential
 - teachers benefit from further training opportunities to extend their range of teaching skills
 - leaders provide regular feedback to teachers, which is focused on improving pupils' learning and achievement in their lessons.
- Review and refine the school's action plan by:
 - setting out and implementing short-term targets so that leaders and directors can frequently check the school's performance
 - recording the impact of the actions taken and who is responsible for carrying out these checks.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Changes to the leadership team to include a chief executive officer and headteacher of the school have resulted in significant improvement since the previous inspection. They are ambitious for the school and are driving improvements at a fast pace. The quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes are improving quickly because all staff have high expectations for their pupils' achievement and behaviour. This is supporting pupils to make good progress in their academic and personal development.
- The headteacher leads a committed and strong staff team. They are positive about the changes and recognise the impact of these changes in improving all aspects of the school's work. They work together effectively and aspire to excellence in all that they do. Staff morale is high.
- The headteacher is highly visible around the school. She has an in-depth understanding of the complexity of each pupil's needs and supports staff to deliver the best possible outcomes. She has gained their respect, which is supporting the pace of change. Capacity for continued improvement is good.
- Since the previous inspection, school leaders have introduced systems for recording and reporting pupils' progress, attendance and behaviour. Staff carefully analyse pupils' outcomes and progress, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers quickly identify gaps in learning and swiftly provide appropriate support to ensure pupils achieve the best possible outcomes. Strong pastoral support helps pupils come to terms with their life experiences. Pupils say that they enjoy school and attend regularly.
- Leaders ensure that each pupil benefits from a personalised learning programme carefully planned to attend to their complex needs. The school's approach to providing education, therapy and care supports pupils to achieve well and tackles significant gaps in their learning and personal and emotional development. Pupils study a broad range of subjects, strongly focusing on developing key skills in English and mathematics. They learn to be tolerant and respectful of others and develop positive strategies to deal with the significant challenges they face in their lives.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils take part in community activities such as acting as referees in local football matches. High-quality displays around the school and discussions with pupils confirm that they learn about other faiths and develop a respect and understanding of other cultures. This approach fosters good relationships and tackles prejudice and discrimination. The girls recently wrote their own manifestos for election to the school's council, which gave them an understanding of life in modern, democratic Britain.
- School leaders use funding to support disadvantaged pupils effectively. They plan specific activities, and buy appropriate resources to support learning and build pupils' confidence and self-esteem.
- The school offers an increasing range of accredited courses to support pupils' career choices. Teachers plan appropriate but aspirational pathways based on pupils' needs and potential. This enables them to take GCSE examinations and other accredited and nationally recognised courses. Careers advice and guidance are strong. Pupils go on to carefully planned destinations, including appropriate further education settings and, on occasion, university. Consequently, all pupils have an equal chance of succeeding at this school.
- The support for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good. Frequent staff training ensures that all teachers and teaching assistants understand the school's policies and procedures to keep pupils safe. Staff set clear boundaries and implement these effectively. Pupils respond positively to these boundaries and say they feel safe and well supported in school.
- Leaders are proactive in giving regular and detailed information about pupils' academic progress and personal development to parents, placing local authorities and social workers. This helps pupils to feel supported and safe at the school.
- The chief executive officer and headteacher have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The proprietors have focused on improving the school quickly and recognise the pace of change has been slower in the associated children's homes. Leadership of the children's homes has recently changed. Nevertheless, pupils benefit from the good education they get from the school.
- The leadership team has drawn up action plans to improve the education and outcomes for all pupils. However, timescales to achieve these outcomes are too long. Targets do not include planned regular checks to enable leaders and directors to evaluate the difference that their actions are making to the school's performance. It is not always clear who is responsible for checking the impact of actions taken to improve the school.
- The proprietors ensure that the school is well-maintained. Classrooms are welcoming, with examples of pupils' high-quality work on display. They have ensured that all independent school standards are met.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are safe when attending alternative provision. Supervision for pupils is in place

and staff check for potential risks. The pupils attend regularly and behave well due to the support they receive.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The directors have an unshakeable belief that every pupil can succeed. They provide a secure and safe environment and have appointed leaders who are driving school improvement and implementing their vision.
- The directors are in the school frequently. They meet with leaders each week and support and challenge leaders equally from a position of knowledge and understanding. They check the school's performance and know where teaching is strong and where training and support is being implemented. They check that resources for disadvantaged pupils are being used effectively.
- The arrangements for checking the performance of staff are in place. Directors set targets linked to pupils' outcomes. However, the link to pay and progression is less well established.
- The directors check pupils' welfare, health and safety assiduously. They have ensured that all welfare, health and safety policies are up to date and check that they are being implemented effectively.
- Tight financial resources are carefully managed. The school premises and resources are of appropriate quality and support pupils to learn and achieve well in their academic and personal development.

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff receive regular training in recognising and acting on signs of risk and harm. The directors and leaders ensure that staff recruited to the school are properly and thoroughly checked. All safeguarding policies have been carefully reviewed and now meet current statutory guidelines, including the school's response to their 'Prevent' (government advice to schools to have due regard to the need to identify signs of extremism and radicalism) duty. Staff teach the girls to keep themselves safe through the school's detailed personal, social, health and citizenship programme of studies.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- The quality of teaching and learning is good. Leaders have sharply focused on improving teaching to ensure that pupils' outcomes are good, particularly in English and mathematics. Teachers continually strive to plan tasks which interest and engage the pupils and specifically focus on their individual needs. Most pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Staff create a positive learning environment in classrooms and around the school. They take great care to display pupils' work to boost their confidence and self-esteem. For example, high-quality art work was on display in one classroom. In the science and mathematics classrooms, key vocabulary on the walls was being used to support learning, particularly for those taking GCSE examinations.
- Teachers plan work across the curriculum to develop key skills in reading, writing and mathematics. For example, pupils wrote moving war poems based on their work in history. During the inspection, pupils were busy designing a new logo for the school. This work captures pupils' interests and promotes a sense of belonging where achievement is possible, often for the first time in their school career. This is having a positive impact on developing pupils' positive attitudes to learning.
- Teachers and therapists set detailed aspirational learning targets to help pupils secure small steps in their learning, personal development and behaviour. The headteacher leads weekly meetings to review pupils' progress. She checks the quality of teaching and learning regularly. However, feedback given to teachers is not always specifically linked to improving pupils' learning. Feedback is more generalised, with less emphasis on improving pupils' individual achievement.
- Staff provide ongoing specific verbal feedback to pupils in lessons. This effectively guides and encourages them to improve their work. Teachers also provide written interventions to tackle misconceptions once pupils are assessed as able to accept and act on advice given.
- Teachers check pupils' learning and progress each term. They quickly identify gaps in skills and understanding and provide good quality support. As a result, pupils begin to catch up quickly, often from very low starting points. This is borne out by teachers' monitoring records and work in books.
- Teaching consistently uses questioning to encourage pupils to order their thoughts and think deeply. For example, the teacher challenged the most-able pupils in science to learn to use specific scientific vocabulary in their discussions. These pupils are on track to achieve a GCSE in this subject. However, on occasion, teachers do not expect enough of pupils or challenge them sufficiently. Teachers lack training opportunities to fully develop their teaching skills to ensure that all pupils make the best possible progress.
- Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils' learning and personal development. Pupils

learn to trust them, and act on the verbal feedback given. Some teaching assistants also work in the children's homes, providing continuity of expectations and some consistency of approach between home and school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils build trusting and positive relationships with staff. This supports pupils to settle quickly and learn to manage their anxious behaviours.
- In lessons, teachers encourage pupils to join in discussions and respond to their instructions. Many find this challenging. However, staff use consistent approaches to manage episodes of challenging behaviour when they occur. Physical restraint is used as a last resort. Records show incidents reduce over time in most cases. However, this good practice is not yet evident in the children's homes. Leaders agree incidents of physical restraint are far less frequent in school.
- All staff are trained to recognise signs of harm and abuse. They act quickly to deal with concerns. Daily 'community meetings' ensure good communication between school and care staff. Pupils are encouraged to discuss their behaviours and personal worries and concerns. They slowly begin to take responsibility for their own behaviour and understand that bullying is not tolerated. Pupils have a good understanding of keeping safe online. However, leaders recognise the potential for increased risks involved when pupils return to their homes.
- Leaders give pupils' welfare, health and safety a high priority. Records confirm staff treat injuries appropriately and carry out regular fire drills. Staff evaluate the individual risks for each pupil to ensure that they are safe at school and on trips or college placements.
- Attendance is rigorously recorded and monitored. Pupils say that they like being at school and their education is important to help them achieve their goals. One parent stated, 'my child has come on leaps and bounds in education'. Social workers confirm this view. Parents and social workers appreciate the information provided by the school to check pupils' progress, improvements in behaviour and attendance.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The headteacher monitors pupils' behaviour and attendance closely to identify patterns and triggers for lapses when they occur. Records confirm a reduction in incidents over time, although 'spikes' appear when pupils face particularly challenging times. The school's positive reward scheme serves to promote good behaviour. The girls are highly motivated to achieve the rewards on offer. This encourages them to behave well and experience achievement and success.
- Pupils respond well to the structure of the school day. Lessons start promptly and clear routines are in place. Staff explain any changes to the normal routine and give pupils an opportunity to question and discuss new arrangements. This helps to reduce pupils' anxious behaviour and provide a safe and secure learning environment.
- Break- and lunchtimes are happy and sociable occasions. High levels of supervision ensure that pupils engage in play and physical activity. They return to their houses for a home-cooked lunch. This provides an opportunity for pupils to discuss their day with their key worker, build relationships with each other and develop positive social skills.
- Pupils who attend alternative provision are well supervised by staff from the school to ensure that they behave appropriately and achieve their vocational qualifications.

Outcomes for pupils are good

- Pupils join the school at different times of the year, with skills and knowledge which are typically well below average for their age. They display severe social, emotional and mental health needs which have resulted in pupils missing large chunks of their education. Most are initially reluctant to engage in learning and become distressed if asked to comply with instructions. However, due to strong pastoral support and personalised learning and therapeutic programmes, pupils settle in well. They make good progress from their starting points.

- Work in books confirms that pupils learn English and mathematical skills over time at the school. They study courses which are appropriate for their ages and capabilities. For example, the most-able pupils are accessing similar work in mathematics to that of their peers in mainstream education. The school ensures that all pupils gain accreditation in English, mathematics, science, and information and communication technology. This is enabling them to move onto the next stage of their education or training.
- Nearly all pupils make at least expected progress and an increasing proportion make good progress from their starting points in a range of subjects. Once settled, the most-able pupils make rapid progress, which enables them to catch up with their mainstream peers in the core subjects. In Years 10 and 11, these pupils take GCSE examinations, increasing their opportunities to access further education and training.
- The funding for disadvantaged pupils is carefully targeted to provide additional learning opportunities and resources. This funding helps pupils gain qualifications in vocational subjects to prepare them for potential chosen careers.
- The achievement of pupils attending alternative provision is good. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are on track to gain qualifications because they are motivated and interested in the courses provided.
- All pupils study a broad range of subjects. These include opportunities to gain qualifications in art and craft and music. During the inspection, pupils demonstrated progress over time in improving their skills in playing the piano and singing to a high standard.
- Students with special educational needs make good progress. Teaching assistants skilfully support pupils to focus on their work to ensure that they achieve the targets set for them.
- Pupils develop a love of reading and use the new library to choose books from a range of authors. Pupils needing support receive daily one-to-one teaching to develop their understanding of letters and sounds. This enables them to make rapid progress from their starting points.

School details

Unique reference number	132775
Inspection number	10006330
DfE registration number	865/6034

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, 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	Special School
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	9–18 years
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	11
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Sue Hortop and John Kearney
Headteacher	Jennifer Lewis
Annual fees (day pupils)	£66,924
Telephone number	01373 824466
Website	www.tumblewood.community.org.uk
Email address	Jennifer.lewis@tumblewood.org
Date of previous inspection	22–23 May 2012

Information about this school

- Tumblewood Community School is an independent special school and therapeutic community for girls with severe emotional, social and mental health difficulties. The school opened on its current site in November 2000. Nearly all the pupils live in four children's homes on the same site as the school. These homes are also owned by the same proprietors as the school.
- The chief executive officer and headteacher are new in post since the previous inspection.
- The school is registered for 15 pupils aged nine to 18.
- There are currently no pupils in the sixth form.
- The school was last inspected in May 2012, when it was judged to be good. At that time, the school met the independent school standards. However, the school did not comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
- Almost all pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- The proprietors, who are the company representatives, have responsibility for the governance of the school.
- A small number of pupils attend alternative provision at Springfields Academy in Calne for one half day a week. They take part in vocational courses, which include hair and beauty and catering.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons taught by staff and looked at pupils' work, teachers' planning and information about pupils' progress with the headteacher. In addition, the inspector undertook a focused learning walk, visiting each class to observe teaching and learning, talk with pupils and look at work in pupils' books.
- The inspector held meetings with the proprietors, senior leaders and teaching staff. Informal discussions were held with pupils throughout the inspection to seek their views. The inspector also spoke with staff from the children's homes and social workers who were in school at the time of the inspection.
- Records relating to behaviour, attendance, bullying and safeguarding were examined. School policies and school documentation were also examined.
- The inspector took account of seven staff questionnaires.
- There were too few responses to the online Parent View questionnaire for these to be published.

Inspection team

Catherine Leahy, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email 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 and as part of the inspection.

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, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

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 and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, 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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2016

