

# Trinity School

2, Alcores Way, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, PE13 2TQ

## Inspection dates

10–11 March 2016

## Overall effectiveness

**Requires improvement**

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Recently appointed subject leaders have not had time to make the necessary improvements. They have not developed a good understanding of how well pupils are achieving in their subjects.
- High levels of staff turnover resulting from recruitment difficulties, and the increased expectations of leaders, mean that the quality of teaching is too variable. New and temporary staff are still developing their skills to meet these high expectations.
- Pupils make stronger progress in writing and mathematics than in reading. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to read independently and their reading skills are not developed often or well enough.
- In some lessons, because teachers' expectations are too low, the pace of learning slows. In these lessons, the most-able pupils do not make the progress they are capable of.
- Because of the time and attention given to improving the quality of teaching in core subjects, particularly English, mathematics and science, a wider offer of subjects has not been developed. Pupils have a limited choice of subjects to study in Key Stage 4.
- Pupils' attendance is too low. Pupils who receive their education at the school on a full-time basis attend well. However, those who receive one-to-one tuition, alternative provision or who attend local colleges have much higher rates of absence.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has managed the challenge of improving provision at the school's three very different sites with skill and resolve. She has created a strong team of leaders and teachers who work well together. They share responsibility for the school's improvement and are determined to make it happen.
- Members of the interim executive board have provided robust advice and direction. The headteacher has drawn on their expertise wisely to make and sustain improvements.
- Actions taken since the last inspection have improved the quality of teaching. Teachers who have worked closely with leaders have improved the quality of their work very well. An increasing amount of teaching is good and better.
- Systems for monitoring pupils' progress and their behaviour are used well to support them to improve. Pupils say they feel safe at school.
- Staff and pupils say that behaviour is better and the school is happier. Pupils are proud of the changes to their school and try hard to meet the increasingly high expectations set for them.

## Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, learning and assessment to match the quality of the best by ensuring that:
  - all teachers, particularly those who are new or temporary, have high expectations of pupils and plan lessons which interest them and move their learning on quickly
  - teachers challenge the most-able pupils so that they attain the highest standards they are capable of.
- Improve pupils' progress and attainment in reading by:
  - developing the teaching of essential reading skills, particularly in Key Stage 3
  - ensuring pupils are given opportunities to listen to, enjoy and read a range of texts both within and outside of their lessons
  - ensuring that pupils are supported to develop their reading skills in all subject lessons as well as in their English lessons.
- Increase the quality and impact of leadership by:
  - using the monitoring of absence already in place to take rigorous early action, involving wider agencies as necessary, to address pupils' absence
  - monitoring the progress and attendance of pupils educated off-site even more closely and working with the local authority to ensure that all pupils on the school roll can, and do, receive their entitlement to education
  - improving subject leaders' knowledge of pupils' achievement so that they use this to continually develop teaching to ensure that all pupils make consistently good progress.
- Ensure pupils have access to an appropriate range of well-taught subjects from which to make their choices in Year 9.

# Inspection judgements

## Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher expects every pupil to make the same progress as their peers in mainstream school. She has been unrelenting in establishing high expectations and in challenging staff to improve their practice. Pupils have been equally challenged to improve their progress and behaviour. Working closely with the assistant headteachers responsible for assessment and behaviour, she has ensured the school has improved sufficiently well to be removed from special measures.
- There are an increasing number of good and better elements in the school's work; staff work well across the three sites to develop a shared understanding of good practice in behaviour management and teaching. This means that the expertise of leaders is improving practice consistently across the school.
- Leaders monitor the quality of teaching accurately. Improvement is evident in the work of staff who have benefited from the programme of training and development in place, and a secure proportion is now good and better. However, changes to staffing have continued; as a result, inconsistencies in the quality of teaching remain.
- Processes for assessing and tracking how well pupils are achieving are accurate and secure. The assistant headteacher at the Fenland site has led the implementation of 'Trinity Levels' across the school to make sure staff, pupils and parents understand how well pupils are doing. Leaders have made sure first of all that pupils' progress in English, mathematics, science and information technology is carefully assessed and monitored. Systems for assessing pupils' progress in other subjects are currently being trialled at the Fenland site.
- Subject leaders are at an early stage in their responsibilities. They are knowledgeable and enthusiastic and work with colleagues across sites, and in other schools, to develop their expertise in improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They do not yet have enough of an overview of pupils' achievement in their subject to direct their support where it is most needed.
- The headteacher has insisted on improving the quality of teaching in the core subjects offered so that as many pupils as possible can achieve five GCSE qualifications. However, this has meant that the breadth of other subjects available for pupils to study in Years 10 and 11 is too narrow. Changes are being made carefully to extend this now that the quality of teaching in the core subjects is good.
- Pupils who are supported through one-to-one tuition off site, or who attend alternative provision, attend less well and make less progress than their peers. The headteacher is currently developing strategies with wider agencies to monitor and support these pupils more effectively. There is early evidence that closer monitoring and work with wider agencies is starting to improve this. There is still a very small number of pupils who do not attend any provision successfully.
- Pupils say they enjoy the way the curriculum is planned because subjects other than English, mathematics and science are taught through themes which make their learning more meaningful. Staff plan for this work across the sites and draw on each other's expertise to make sure the standards expected are high enough. A range of strategies are used to enhance pupils' understanding. For example, pupils had been taken out for a Russian meal, the Fenland common room is themed as a Russian church and in a lively lesson pupils learned the differences between communism and fascism.
- Elements of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning are included in teachers' daily learning plans. As a result, pupils learn about the risks they face, about other cultures and religions and about British values such as tolerance and respect in a meaningful way. Increasingly, pupils demonstrate these values in their behaviour towards each other, and towards staff, in lessons and around school. Coupled with the themed curriculum work, this ensures they understand, and are prepared for, some of the challenges they will face when they move on to the next stage of their education.
- Behaviour is led well; staff and pupils work hard to meet the increasingly high expectations established. Pupils understand the consequences of their actions. Weekly analysis is used to identify and support pupils who are experiencing difficulties in managing their behaviour. Good behaviour is rewarded and pupils appreciate this recognition. The information gathered from monitoring behaviour is also used to help staff manage the most challenging behaviour effectively.
- The extra funding received to support disadvantaged pupils is used well on an entirely personalised basis. Thorough analysis of pupils' needs enables plans to be made for them to receive extra intervention to support their learning and to access a range of wider activities. This enhances their confidence and self-esteem. There is currently no analysis of how successful each different intervention is. As a result, it is difficult for leaders to judge which approaches are the most successful and provide the best value for money.

- Leaders are keen to involve parents in supporting their children to be successful. Each pupil has a personal learning mentor who works in close collaboration with both pupils and parents. Mentors make home visits with pupils once a term to discuss the progress they are making as well as any concerns. This point of contact makes it easier for parents, staff and pupils to celebrate improvement and to address issues. As a parent said, 'things have totally changed, I have contact at least once a week, and I know and can share when things are going well, as well as when they're not. I can praise my son when he does well'.
- The headteacher has drawn on available advice effectively. The initial improvement plan implemented by the local authority provided advice and support for improving middle leadership and teaching as well as making sure that systems for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school were fit for purpose. The support from the local authority and a national leader in education has been effective in aiding improvement. The headteacher has become more selective about the support and advice she needs. As a result, the systems to lead and manage the school are secure. Senior leaders demonstrate strong capacity to further improve its work.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Members of the interim executive board have used their expertise to thoroughly understand how well the school is doing. The headteacher has drawn on the knowledge of members to monitor and improve teaching and learning, and to develop systems for mentoring pupils. Through the board, the local authority has monitored the progress being made and evaluated the impact of the support it has provided.
  - Members know that levels of pupil absence are unacceptably high. They have shared concerns with the local authority about pupils who are out of school but who remain on the school's register to understand how well these pupils are provided for. In a small number of instances, concerns remain.
  - The interim executive board are confident that pupils' progress is improving as a result of the changes made. They receive regular updates and analyses from the headteacher and members visit the school to assure themselves the evaluation of leaders is accurate. Members understand the quality of staffing at each site and are confident that underperformance is challenged and successful members of staff are rewarded.
  - Members analyse how the pupil premium funding is used to implement personalised programmes of support for individuals. They do not, however, know which of these are most effective or which provide the best value for money.
  - Members have ensured that statutory requirements are met. They have visited the school regularly to monitor the quality of improvement. They have endorsed the quality of the headteacher's leadership which has kept the school stable and moving forward.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Senior leaders maintain a rigorous oversight of information relating to staff, governor, volunteer and contractor suitability to work with children and young people. Child protection and other relevant training records are kept up to date and personnel information is meticulously maintained. The comprehensive record of pupils' absence ensures that follow-up calls can be made if pupils are felt to be at risk. Staff know how to log any concerns they have about pupils' welfare and these are followed up by leaders appropriately.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment** requires improvement

- The quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly since the last inspection. It requires improvement because it is not consistently good across all subjects and classes. Pupils' progress in their books and their response to learning in lessons shows that there is now evidence of outstanding teaching.
- Where teaching is most effective, lessons are interesting and staff challenge pupils to think deeply and carefully. In English lessons at Fenland and Hartford, high expectations and challenging content, managed by confident teachers, result in good progress being made. Pupils discussed comparisons between pieces of work, making their contributions enthusiastically and demonstrating deep understanding of the texts shared by their teacher. A pupil in Year 10 showed excellent recall of the act and scene in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* where two characters fight, drawing detailed comparisons between personalities and their actions.
- Writing, mathematics and science are taught increasingly well, although the changes in staffing do impact on this. At Hartford they have meant that subject teaching responsibilities have been changed to make best use of the strongest teaching. Less focus has been given to the teaching of early reading skills in Key

Stage 3. Additionally, pupils are not taught to use their reading skills well across subjects.

- Teachers plan very carefully for pupils' learning. Themes to support pupils to manage their emotions and behaviour are followed through and relevant opportunities to address spiritual and moral aspects of the planned learning are identified. Occasionally, teachers do not use the full range of information they have to make sure that pupils' needs are fully addressed. As a result, pupils make less progress because their concentration deteriorates.
- Where teaching is good, teachers know which particular literacy and numeracy skills individual pupils are working to improve and check they are using them in their work. This collaborative approach means that most staff continually focus on the weakest aspects of pupils' core skills and help them to improve quickly. However, this good practice, particularly in reading, is not yet well embedded across the school.
- Teaching assistants provide pupils with strong support. They understand pupils' behaviour well and the triggers for it becoming difficult to manage. As a result, they defuse challenges and keep pupils on task with their learning. They encourage pupils to use and develop their own strategies and ideas to answer questions and solve problems. This reduces the reliance some pupils have on extra help and helps them realise their own abilities.
- The best teaching enables pupils to understand how well they are doing during lessons and helps them understand how to move their learning on. Pupils say this helps them learn and keeps them on task. Most teachers mark pupils' work in accordance with school policy. Where this is best, it helps pupils see how well they are doing against their targets and they are given time to improve their work. At times, pupils do not receive enough feedback in lessons to keep them moving on in their learning, so their progress slows.
- Teachers and teaching assistants model good relationships and appropriate ways of speaking and listening to each other. Where expectations are high, pupils learn to moderate their language and to use increasingly complex vocabulary.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Expectations of pupils' behaviour are high. Pupils increasingly show respect for each other's views and ideas. Pupils and adults trust each other and have fun together. At all sites, pupils are expected to take increasing responsibility for their own behaviour and their learning.
- Pupils are increasingly confident in their own ability. Staff work hard to develop pupils' self-esteem and to ensure they believe they can be successful. Pupils spoken to were positive about the difference the school has made to their learning and their lives. For example, a pupil undertaking an extra mathematics lesson said, 'I have caught up with everyone in the world – I am doing just as well as a mainstream person. I used to skip lessons but now I know what I can do'.
- Staff are knowledgeable and vigilant in making sure that the pupils with whom they work are well cared for. Pupils' welfare is a priority and concerns are appropriately logged and followed up. Leaders work well with wider agencies, such as those responsible for looked after children, to ensure vulnerable pupils' learning and personal needs are met.
- Pupils and their families are supported to make decisions about their future and the next stage in their education. Staff attend interviews with pupils as well as introductory days at local colleges so their transition is well supported. However, some pupils say they would benefit from more discussion about future training and careers options before they have to make these important decisions.
- Personal, moral and social education is taught regularly. Pupils learn about a range of world events, internet safety (for example, the impact of using social media inappropriately), what discrimination means and the effects of alcohol. They demonstrate increasing maturity and the ability to reflect on things that influence their lives positively and negatively. Pupils say these opportunities and the support of their learning mentors help them to make better decisions and to manage the challenges they face.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because attendance for a number of pupils is too low. This particularly relates to pupils who attend alternative provision. As a result, they do not make the progress in their learning or in their personal development they are capable of. Leaders take action to address the absence of pupils, and wider agency involvement is sought. However, response takes time and a small number of pupils are not receiving their full statutory entitlement to education.

- The standards of pupils' behaviour have improved significantly since the last inspection. The start of the day is calm and business like. Pupils are very effectively helped by their personal learning mentors to think about things that have caused them upset and to focus on the day ahead in school. The zero tolerance approach to mobile phones, unsuitable food and energy drinks has been effective in supporting this.
- This improved behaviour continues throughout the day. Pupils behave positively and are a delight to talk to in lessons and around school. They show pride in their school and in their work. Incidents of challenging behaviour have declined significantly because systems for managing behaviour are known and understood by all staff and pupils. Logs of inappropriate behaviour are kept and action taken to de-escalate challenging behaviour when it occurs. Levels of exclusion resulting from unacceptable behaviour have been high but there is an evident decline in the number and seriousness of these.
- Rewards and sanctions are used effectively. Pupils are keen to earn rewards; equally, they understand the implications if they do not meet the high standards expected of them. In a small number of instances, teachers give rewards too readily and pupils are not clear why they have received them.
- Pupils pay much greater attention to their learning. Work in their books, particularly where teaching is effective, shows they have increasing pride in what they are achieving and are making more effort to present their work well. Cross-curricular themed work is now presented carefully. This work is much more reflective of pupils' abilities and interests than that seen at the first monitoring inspection.

## Outcomes for pupils

## require improvement

- Standards in pupils' literacy and numeracy work have improved markedly since the previous inspection. The higher expectations set by the headteacher have resulted in an increasing proportion of pupils making similar progress in writing and mathematics to that expected of their peers in mainstream schools. Progress in reading lags behind this because there have been fewer opportunities in the school day, and across subjects, for skills to be taught and reinforced.
- Many pupils start at the school with standards of attainment well below those expected for their age. Until recently, they have made too little progress and have achieved qualifications that did not adequately reflect their abilities because of low expectations. These expectations have improved considerably. In 2015, all pupils entered for GCSE examinations achieved pass grades. For most, this demonstrated good levels of catch-up from their starting points. Students entered for Level 1 and Level 2 functional skills qualifications achieved these. All pupils receiving education at one of the three sites did, however, gain a college place for further education and training.
- Tracking information now shows that pupils are making accelerating progress because teaching is better. Expectations are higher and pupils demonstrate greater pride as well as increasing skills in their work. All pupils in Year 10 and 11 are on track to gain GCSE qualifications in English, mathematics, science and art, and all pupils entered for BTEC qualifications in information and communication technology, humanities and food technology are on track to be successful. There is still a difference between the achievement of pupils who attend one of the three school sites which is higher than that of pupils who attend college courses.
- Leaders have set challenging targets for pupils in every year group. Analysis shows that pupils who have been at the school for longer periods of time are making good progress. Pupils who are newer make less progress until they have settled and become accustomed to the expectations and demands made of them.
- Disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to their peers in school because they are supported well through personalised programmes which are specifically designed to meet their needs.
- Outcomes achieved by pupils who attend courses at other local colleges are improving more slowly than those of pupils at the school. The attendance of these pupils is lower and their achievement is less positive. Leaders are currently developing ways to support and monitor these pupils more carefully.
- Pupils in the school now show higher levels of self-esteem and confidence as learners. They show greater pride in their work and demonstrate a desire to be successful. They enjoy learning and benefit from an increasing range of subjects on offer as well as positive relationships with their teachers. As a result of this and the practical transition support they receive, the majority are well prepared for the next stage in their education.



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	137494
<b>Local authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10009956

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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	52
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Susan Howe
<b>Acting headteacher</b>	Diane Stygal
<b>Telephone number</b>	01954 583235
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.trinityschools.co.uk/">www.trinityschools.co.uk/</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:office@trinity.cambridgeshire.sch.uk">office@trinity.cambridgeshire.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	17–18 September 2014

## Information about this school

- Trinity School is a special school which provides for pupils who have a statement of special educational need or an education, health and care plan for social, emotional and mental health needs. Some pupils have additional needs, including autistic spectrum disorders and moderate learning difficulties.
- The school opened in September 2012. It was formed by the amalgamation of three learner centres that were formerly managed by the local authority. The acting headteacher leads over all three sites with an assistant headteacher in place at the Fenland and Foxton sites.
- Pupils attend other provision at Peterborough Regional College, Huntingdon Regional College and Cambridge Regional College as well as The College of West Anglia in order to access courses not available at Trinity School.
- 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.
- An above average proportion of pupils are looked after by the local authority.
- The acting headteacher has been in position since the previous headteacher left in the autumn term 2014. The assistant headteachers have been appointed since that time. There has been a high rate of staff turnover in the period since the last inspection; however, staffing is now more stable at the Fenland and Foxton sites.
- Arrangements are in place for the school to become an academy sponsored by the Tri-borough Alternative Provision Multi Academy Trust (TBAP) on 1 July 2016.

## Information about this inspection

- The school was last inspected in September 2014 and was judged to require special measures because leaders and governors were not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvements. Since September 2014, the school has received four monitoring inspections, the fourth being this inspection. This inspection began under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. At the end of the first day, it converted to become an inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. Evidence from the first three monitoring visits was used to inform the judgements on this inspection.
- Inspectors observed lessons at all three sites. All the lesson observations were undertaken with the headteacher or the assistant headteacher from the Fenland site. During the observations, inspectors scrutinised pupils' books and spoke to pupils about their learning and behaviour.
- Inspectors observed pupils throughout the school day, as they arrived at school, between lessons and during the lunch break.
- Meetings were held with the acting headteacher, the assistant headteachers, a group of staff, the English subject leader and the leader responsible for monitoring teaching and learning. Inspectors also met with two groups of pupils, the lead responsible for child protection, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board and the senior local authority adviser. The lead inspector spoke to two parents by telephone. There were insufficient responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, to be able to take them into account.
- Inspectors scrutinised safeguarding procedures and documentation, analysis of pupils' learning and progress, leaders' monitoring of the school's work and school development planning. They looked at records of staff training, child protection procedures and records of behaviour management.

## Inspection team

Prue Rayner, lead inspector  
Vanessa Love

Her Majesty's Inspector  
Ofsted Inspector



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