

Inspection of Turner Free School

Tile Kiln Lane, Cheriton, Folkestone CT19 4PB

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 December 2022

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| The quality of education | Good |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
| Personal development | Good |
| Leadership and management | Good |
| Previous inspection grade | Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this well-managed, calm and orderly school. They feel safe and everyone treats each other respectfully. Staff know pupils well and have high expectations of them. Pupils live up to these expectations, concentrating and working hard in class.

At breaktime and lunchtime, pupils socialise and behave well. They enthuse about 'family dining', where pupils organise dinner tables and sit together with staff. Bullying is not tolerated in this school community. Pupils are taught regularly about how to resolve conflicts, and they know the staff who they can talk to if they have worries. Pupils relish being part of the school council, where they can have a say on school issues.

Pupils are keen to be involved in extra-curricular activities. Last year, leaders introduced the 'Turner 25'. This initiative aims to ensure that pupils complete five community-based activities each year over their time at the school. For example, pupils cleaned up the local area in a litter pick. Sports clubs are especially popular with pupils. Many attend netball and football clubs, while others enjoy an increasing range of activities, including African drumming and science clubs.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders, trustees and governors are ambitious for all pupils. The COVID-19 pandemic presented leaders with significant challenges that resulted in some of their plans being disrupted. For example, pupils were taught in temporary buildings, with limited facilities for longer than was originally planned. Nevertheless, leaders have designed an ambitious and broad curriculum, and the proportion of pupils studying the English Baccalaureate subjects is increasing.

Pupils achieve well in most subjects because leaders have selected and organised the important knowledge that pupils need to know carefully. However, in design and technology (DT) and computing, leaders have not organised learning precisely enough. Consequently, pupils do not deepen their knowledge as well as they could.

Teachers use their expert knowledge to explain subject matter clearly and design interesting activities for pupils. Teachers set demanding work that often develops pupils' reading and oracy skills. Staff identify pupils' needs accurately. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve as well as their peers in almost all subjects because well-trained staff provide strong support and teachers adapt the curriculum successfully. However, in physical education (PE), teachers' adaptations to the curriculum are not effective enough in ensuring that pupils with SEND achieve consistently well.

Leaders have made reading a priority. The weakest readers are supported effectively by well-informed staff. Teachers use assessment well to respond to gaps that pupils

have in their learning. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong and this supports pupils to develop positive attitudes to learning.

Pupils behave sensibly. This helps them to remember and understand what they are taught. The small proportion of pupils who sometimes misbehave are supported increasingly well by staff. Leaders' strategies to improve pupils' attendance and reduce suspensions are effective.

Leaders support pupils' personal development well. Leaders design well-crafted personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education lessons, assemblies and tutor-time activities to ensure that pupils learn about consent, healthy relationships and making positive choices. Pupils' mental health is a key priority for leaders. Pupils are positive about the well-thought-through careers programme, where they are informed about a wide range of career options available to them.

Staff feel valued and well supported by leaders. The trust organises an extensive range of training for staff. Teachers also benefit from working with colleagues within the trust on areas such as moderation of work and sharing what works well. Leaders, trustees and governors prioritise staff well-being and workload. Staff appreciate this and feel that leaders support and develop them well.

Trustees and governors are skilled, knowledgeable and extremely well-informed about the school's standards. Consequently, they hold leaders to account very effectively. Trustees and governors are ambitious for the school and work well alongside leaders in developing the strategy for further school improvement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong safeguarding culture. They provide high-quality training that ensures staff are knowledgeable and vigilant in identifying and reporting concerns that they have about pupils. Leaders ensure that safeguarding records are well organised and that checks on the suitability of staff are completed rigorously.

Leaders ensure that pupils receive closely matched support from external agencies when it is necessary. Pupils learn about how to recognise risks and ways to keep themselves safe in PSHE and through assemblies.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum in DT and computing is not as well thought through as in other subjects. This means that pupils have gaps in their knowledge in these subjects.

Leaders should ensure that they have precisely identified how pupils' learning should build over time in all subjects.

- The PE curriculum is not adapted well enough to meet the needs of some pupils. A small number of pupils with SEND do not develop their knowledge and skills as well as they could. Leaders need to ensure that teachers understand how to adapt the PE curriculum effectively.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 145923 |
| Local authority | Kent |
| Inspection number | 10241580 |
| Type of school | Modern (non-selective) |
| School category | Academy free school |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 18 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 840 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Michael Buchanan |
| Headteacher | Kristina Yates |
| Website | www.turnerfreeschool.org |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- The school opened in September 2018 as part of the Turner Schools academy trust.
- A small proportion of pupils attend alternative provision at Folkestone Academy.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the executive headteacher, the head of school, senior leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, the chief executive officer of the trust, governors and trustees.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, history, PE and DT. This meant that in each subject, inspectors met with subject leaders, talked to pupils, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff from meetings with groups of staff and from the 64 staff who responded to Ofsted's confidential questionnaire.
- Inspectors evaluated the school's safeguarding culture by reviewing safeguarding records, including the central record of recruitment checks on staff, scrutinising the school's website and policies and talking to staff, governors, trustees and pupils.
- Inspectors considered the views of pupils from meetings and informal conversations and from the 96 pupils who responded to Ofsted's confidential questionnaire.
- Inspectors considered the views of the 174 parents who responded to the confidential Ofsted parental questionnaire and the 154 parents who provided free-text comments.

Inspection team

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Harry Ingham, lead inspector | His Majesty's Inspector |
| Helen Middleton | Ofsted Inspector |
| Julia Mortimore | Ofsted Inspector |
| Ed Mather | His Majesty's Inspector |

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