

Inspection of The Surrey Teaching Centre

Tadworth Court, Tadworth, Surrey KT20 5RU

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since March 2012. The school received an ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Act in September 2016 and in October 2021.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school's culture is one of kindness, respect and inclusion. Pupils are firmly at the centre of all that the school does. Their safety and well-being are paramount in the school's work.

Staff combine high expectations with great skill, care, patience and warm good humour. The strength of relationships created between staff and pupils is a key element in helping pupils to feel settled and secure. Pupils' excellent behaviour reflects the school's success in helping them to rediscover an interest in learning and the motivation to succeed. Pupils achieve exceptionally well during their time in the school and are thoroughly prepared for the next stage of their education.

Education at The Surrey Teaching Centre is designed in consultation with pupils. From the moment pupils arrive, they are encouraged to express opinions and to give their views, which are acknowledged and valued. It is routine, for instance, for staff to ask pupils if they would like help before giving it, and to give pupils notice that they are about to adjust a piece of equipment, and the reasons why, so that pupils are not taken by surprise. One parent commented: 'Thank you for allowing my child to have a voice after a traumatic event. He feels safe, happy and well informed.'

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

Staff are expert in teaching pupils with brain injury. They assess pupils' needs when they join the school with great sensitivity and insight, working closely with medical specialists and parents and carers, as well as with the pupils themselves, to identify the best way forward. Staff assess pupils' responses continuously, carefully tailoring activities and support according to pupils' needs and progress. Strong teamwork between staff and therapists ensures that lessons and activities progress purposefully and seamlessly.

The school recognises the substantial trauma caused by brain injury and the significant personal adjustments that pupils and their families will make during the journey of rehabilitation, with academic and personal development given equal weight. All pupils are taught strategies to help them to recognise their feelings and to manage their own behaviour. This support makes an important contribution to pupils' personal and emotional well-being at a crucial time in their development.

Leaders have taken great care to review and redesign the curriculum since the previous inspection so that it focuses precisely on what each pupil needs to learn and the skills they need to develop in readiness for the next stage of their education. English and mathematics are given a suitably high priority in the curriculum.

Staff are incredibly skilled in teaching reading, and there are numerous striking examples of success in pupils regaining lost reading skills. English and mathematics are supplemented by a range of subjects that are carefully selected according to

pupils' interests, abilities, and, for sixth-form students, the qualification programmes they intend to study in the future. The wider curriculum includes consideration of key aspects of world religions, such as festivals and celebrations, to develop pupils' awareness of different faiths and beliefs.

Progress can take many different forms according to each pupil's unique circumstances and can sometimes take the form of tiny steps forward. However, collectively, these small steps of progress represent a significant leap in preparing pupils for the future. Encouraging pupils to re-engage with learning is central to the school's work. The school's success is clear in pupils' interest and engagement during lessons and in their regular attendance.

Well-established and highly effective transition arrangements support pupils into and out of the school. High-quality careers advice provides pupils with reliable guidance about future options and potential routes to help them to identify and secure their ambitions.

Leaders are aspirational for the school and have been instrumental in securing improvements since the previous inspection. Staff well-being is an important element of the school's work, with the same care and respect evident between members of staff as that between adults and pupils. The outcomes of Ofsted's staff survey were wholly positive. The governing body represents valuable expertise and skills. Governors are rightly proud of developments in the school since the previous inspection, but are not complacent. They share leaders' incredibly high ambitions for the school's future.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the

school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	134108
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10240276
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	2 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	17
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Sue Christian
Headteacher	Becky Heaton
Website	www.tadworthcourt.surrey.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 October 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Pupil referrals to the school are made by The Children's Trust, a charity that supports children with acquired brain injury and their families. The length of placement varies according to pupils' needs. Most placements are for six to eight weeks. Placements may run across a school holiday. As The Children's Trust is a national charity, pupils in the school may come from anywhere in the United Kingdom.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher and other members of staff during the inspection.
- The lead inspector met with two members of the management committee, including the chair. She also met with a local authority representative.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, and personal, social and health education. Deep dives included visiting lessons, looking at pupils' work and talking with leaders, teachers and pupils about how teaching in these subjects builds pupils' knowledge over time.
- Inspectors met with a group of pupils to gather their views of the school. They also spoke with pupils in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors assessed the school's culture of safeguarding throughout the inspection. The lead inspector reviewed a wide range of safeguarding documents and records. She also checked the single central record.
- The views of staff, parents and pupils were gathered through a range of sources, including Ofsted's surveys and the school's own surveys, as well as discussions with inspectors.

Inspection team

Julie Sackett, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lesley Fisher-Pink

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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