

Treloar School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 116636 |
| Local Authority | Hampshire |
| Inspection number | 312351 |
| Inspection dates | 31 March –1 April 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Lynne Kauffman |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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|------------------------------|----------------|
| Boarding provision | |
| Social care URN | |
| Social care inspector | Bridgette Lowe |

The inspection of social care was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

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|---|-----------------------------------|
| Type of school | Special |
| School category | Non-maintained special |
| Age range of pupils | 5–19 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 103 |
| Sixth form | 7 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Michael Del Mar |
| Headteacher | Mr Harry Dicks |
| Date of previous school inspection | 20 September 2004 |
| School address | Upper Froyle Alton GU34 4LA |
| Telephone number | 01420 526400 |
| Fax number | 01420 526426 |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector and a Social Care Inspector.

Description of the school

Treloar School is a mixed, residential school for students with physical disabilities and other complex and sensory needs. It is a non-maintained, multidisciplinary school, which is licensed to accommodate both day students and boarders between the ages of 7-19 years. Most children come from local authorities in the South and South East of England and some come from further afield. All students have physical disabilities, a significant majority have associated learning difficulties, and some students have severe and complex learning and living needs. A small number of students have English as an additional language. At present, the majority of pupils are in Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. All students have a statement of special educational needs. The school has recently gained Physical and Sensory Specialist School Status.

Key for inspection grades

| | |
|---------|--------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding |
| Grade 2 | Good |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate |

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The drive, and fulfilment, of the Treloar's mission statement, 'to create a world where physically disabled young people learn to take control of their lives and dare to dream', makes this an outstanding school.

Teaching and learning are personalised. The carefully tailored, excellent provision meets the individual needs of all students. The recently revised Individual Education Plans (IEP) target well-focused steps, to raising students' achievement and standards. For example, in GCSE physical education (PE) and music, students prepared well for their examinations; they had excellent motivation and used information and communication technology (ICT) to develop their self-assessment and identify what they needed to do to improve. Similarly, excellent support for students in the integrated education classes develops their skills and understanding. Seamless planning integrates the work of care, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, health, and speech and language staff, who support innovative planning that addresses students' difficulties in communication. Treloar School developed the Symbols project, essential to this planning, which has now used as national practice in similar schools. Students' achievement is outstanding and they reach standards that show excellent achievement from different starting points.

The effervescent curriculum and extra-curricular opportunities inspire learners to take up amazing challenges. The 'Every Child Matters' initiative is the backbone of the curriculum and is audited for its impact on learners. In sport, individuals reach almost unexpected goals, such as being talent spotted for specialist coaching for the London Marathon and having their potential recognised for the 2012 Paralympics, following the route of three former students who went to Beijing. The PE department was also involved in Beijing and staff sent back video diaries to school to involve students in this momentous occasion. These enrichments help students to 'dare to dream'.

Excellent care, guidance and support ensure students are safe and nurtured, giving parents complete confidence in the school. Parents were unanimous in their support for the school's work. As one parent, quoted, 'Treloar's in my view is a centre of excellence'.

The senior leadership of the school has recently experienced change. However, now there is stable and dynamic leadership that has succeeded in sharing leadership and management across the whole school. This involves more staff in the decision-making process and in preparing school documents such as the school's self-evaluation, increasing staff motivation and enthusiasm. Excellent governance, through the governors' refined committee structure and visits to the school, make their contribution to strategic development very productive. The Treloar Trust maintains a rigorous overview of the school's development.

The school has maintained a consistent improvement since the previous inspection and has excellent capacity for further improvement. This has been particularly highlighted through its recently gained specialist special schools status and closer cooperation with the college. It is too soon to evaluate the impact of the school's specialism. However, the school's ambition and planning for the future is to establish 'Treloar's Direct', a mobile resource, which will enable them to provide outreach facilities including an assessment centre, a training room, a wheelchair workshop and a therapy room to share their outstanding expertise in physical and sensory work.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 1

The school's sixth form is a new initiative. The excellent programme, launched in 2008, provides a pre-course preparation for students with the potential of gaining entry level to local colleges. Provision has had an immediate, outstanding impact because management has vast experience of teaching post-16 at Treloar College. In collaboration with other senior and teaching staff a thoughtful curriculum has been introduced that prepares them well for the next stage of their education, which does not conflict with future provision sixth form students may experience when they move on to a college. The bespoke programme is based on flexible use of the Equals 'Moving On' programme. It provides excellent experience in life skills, vocational and workplace opportunities that enhance student's personal qualities, and enhances their independent living skills. Curriculum enrichment, with an emphasis on practical activities and planned visits, exposes students to tasks such as shopping for their planned menus and handling money. This is improving their economic understanding. Teaching is excellent because it uses the skills of teaching staff in conjunction with well-informed and effective support staff. Students enjoy their learning and make excellent, small steps progress relative to their earlier achievement. Care guidance and support are outstanding because managers and staff work with students' individual care plans and occupational therapists' assessments, while maintaining a challenge to learners. This exemplary partnership working ensures that each student makes excellent progress.

Effectiveness of boarding provision

Grade: 1

The quality of the boarding provision at Treloar School is outstanding. All aspects of the boarding provision and care are maintained to an exceptionally high standard. The school's strong leadership, management and holistic approach, provide an environment in which students' welfare is promoted and protected whilst enjoying and achieving greater independence. There were no recommendations made at the previous boarding welfare inspection in March 2008. The school continues to meet and exceed the National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools with continuing development and vision to improve support and care offered to students. The promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding. A full time chaplain is available for pastoral and spiritual care of students, their families and staff irrespective of age, ability, gender, ethnicity, learning difficulty, disability or beliefs. Boarders reported being 'happy at the school', 'staff are caring and fantastic', and 'we enjoy being with friends'.

Extensive health care plans, underpinned by clear policies and procedures ensure students' health and well-being is promoted to a high degree. The school has an impressive medical centre with a team of nurses who provide 24-hour cover for the students. Students' health is enhanced by the school's commitment to healthy eating and the provision of nutritious and varied meals. Mealtimes are generally well-managed social occasions. However, staff and students communicated their unhappiness at the current dining arrangements. The closure of one of the dining areas has resulted in older students being less independent at meal times, with a reduction in space and opportunities for students to have free access the servery area. Boarders reported the increase in noise levels within the dining area, creating a less comfortable dining experience.

The school's personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum covers the subject of healthy lifestyles and this is fully supported in practice by the residential staff. Staff support

students, encompassing an holistic approach to PSHE, in their emotional physical and moral development.

There are clear and comprehensive systems in place, which aim to protect students, and ensure appropriate responses in safeguarding areas, such as child protection, anti-bullying and health and safety. Students are safeguarded by staff who are trained in a wide range of disciplines to ensure their needs are fully met. Boarders reported feeling safe at the school and highlighted a range of staff they could go to for support. The open culture of the school promotes opportunities for students to voice concerns and feel they are heard. Communication and collaboration across care and education settings is extremely good and students receive excellent levels of individual support across all areas of the school.

Students benefit from personalised programmes of therapy input, tailored to meet their assessed needs. Concise and well-written plans include individual care plans, Individual Education plans and therapy plans, to address specific areas of need, including those related to health. Regular reviews of the placement take place, which include the views and opinions of the students and their parents. These ensure that the placement continues to meet the student's needs. Regular, valued contact with parents ensures students welfare is enhanced, their progress shared and their achievements celebrated. Provision of on-site therapy is a fundamental characteristic of the school. Students' welfare is promoted through the school's resident multi disciplinary teams, such as occupational therapists, speech and language therapists and physiotherapists who work coherently in partnership with the residential staff. Comprehensive procedures are in place, which ensure that transitions are well planned and support students in moving to new placements. Behaviour is extremely good due to effective whole school behaviour management. Boarders report behaviour guidelines are clearly known and fair.

Health and safety has high regard across the school and boarding site. Comprehensive and revised risk assessments are completed for identified hazards. There is appropriate protection for boarders from fire safety hazards. The school has safe recruitment and selection procedures to vet all staff working with boarders to ensure their suitability.

The boarding units are furnished with the latest equipment to enable students to take an increasing amount of responsibility for their own health and hygiene, and become as independent as possible whilst living at Treloar School. Students benefit from spacious, appropriately furnished and well decorated sleeping accommodation. They are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms and the communal areas. Many examples of their art and craft work and personal photographs are displayed which enhance the ethos of the provision.

There are very good numbers of dedicated and experienced staff on duty to meet the needs of the boarders. Each boarding house has its own care manager, and dedicated care co-ordinators responsible for the day-to-day welfare of students. The extensive arrangements in place for managing, supervising and training staff ensure best possible outcomes for boarders. A committed senior team in the boarding provision ably demonstrate leadership skills, plus overseeing staff and their continued development.

Governors of the school play a very active role at Treloar School and carry out extensive monitoring on behalf of the school. They undertake continued development and self-evaluation of the boarding provision to ensure that boarding students achieve their potential in a very caring and positive environment.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use the school's outreach, in particular the 'Treloar's Direct' mobile resource, so the school's multi-disciplinary expertise is made available to the wider community through the specialist schools status for physical and sensory development.

What must be done to secure future improvement in care?

- Review and implement a system to ensure the dining room arrangements do not unnecessarily diminish students' opportunity for independence [NMS 2.6]

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Standards for the majority of students on entry are below national averages because of their complex special educational needs; however, a few are at or above national averages. Achievement is outstanding because of the intertwined planning and support between care staff, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, medical staff and teachers that focus on building each student's confidence and self-awareness. One student reported being challenged to improve and achieve better targets, 'I am now supported to develop and use my mind to learn and achieve'. Recently reviewed IEPs are set by the multi-disciplinary team. The team focus on individual student's care plan and speech and language therapists', occupational therapists and physiotherapists' assessments as well as National Curriculum and external examination criteria, where appropriate. Baseline assessment is developing well and reviewed within the first weeks of the new term. Targets are appropriate and carefully tracked across departments. All IEPs are realistic, yet challenging to ensure each student reaches their potential. Meticulous tracking of individual students accurately measures progress and informs future targets. Value-added scores show a trend that has kept the school in the top five percent of similar schools. The most vulnerable learners and those from ethnic minority groups make similar progress to their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school is calm because students feel safe, confident and understand what is expected of them. Personal development and well-being are outstanding and are always planned within the constraints of students' health and disability need. Healthy lifestyles are promoted through high profile work between care, health and education. Students make decisions and enjoy practical life skills such as cooking through courses such as the ASDAN Challenges. Sport skills, such as boccia are high profile and lead to students representing the school in regional and national competitions. Relationships are exemplary. Excellent social skills, within individual student's health constraints, are well developed through communal activities such as Personal Physical Development (PPD). One parent commented 'I cannot fault Treloar in any way. They have changed my son's life for the better'. Attendance is related to student's medical conditions; day students attend well because as they said, 'we love school'. Students take up responsibility such as class representatives, which builds up self-esteem. All students know the behaviour policy and were keen to point out there was no bullying in school. Students' spiritual, moral and social development are outstanding. They show care and compassion for each other and are well supported by the school's Chaplin. Thinking and reflection are part of the close communication between students and their key worker. Cultural understanding is good and staff ensure that students experience different lifestyles and beliefs. There is a strong 'family

feel' in the school community and many opportunities to explore the wider world, especially in Key Stage 4. Students have varying understanding of economic well-being, including through practical mathematics activities. Students' excellent personal qualities are boosted by transition plans, enterprise activities, life skills and work with Connexions. Work-related experiences and independence are a developing focus resulting from the school's specialist status award.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teachers, support staff and therapists know the students very well, enabling them to plan interesting well-paced lessons that challenge at all levels. It is typical of the school's modesty that senior leaders judge teaching and learning as good, with outstanding features, when in fact the outcomes show that over time teaching is outstanding. The staff are constantly looking for ways to improve lessons and are aware that there are variations in the quality of teaching. However, there is a seamless collaboration between the teaching and non-teaching staff, which consolidates learning and enables achievement to be outstanding. Students like their teachers and enjoy their lessons. Expectations of lesson planning are clear and there is zero tolerance for inappropriate behaviour. All teachers plan for personalised learning and have very clear pen portraits about each student to ensure their specific needs are met. There is a fun element in all lessons, which builds up students' love of learning. Thoughtful and regular recording of progress evaluates the match to students' IEPs. The multidisciplinary approach to learning has used innovative 'mind mapping' with parents to help them see their child's progress in the context of wider aspirations, and the next steps. This technique plus the home schoolbook enables parents to pursue their child's education at home. Assessment is precise through individual learning targets that students understand. The Symbols project enables all students to have access and involvement in their assessment. Staff vary in their confidence to use data to influence planning. Care, therapy and medical services are central to the learning process. The rehab-engineering service has revolutionised the use of ICT equipment. This team works across the school and is proud of its rapid response to problems that restrict the learning of specific students. Regular monitoring of teaching and learning is highlighting strengths and areas of development for all staff. The excellent, well-targeted CPD programme addresses staff development needs. The Trust Training and Development Manager works closely with a senior teacher ensuring a high quality programme is available to all staff, and good practice is shared.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Pupils enjoy an excellent curriculum and further enrichment, which are very effectively adapted to their needs. For example, the integrated curriculum provides excellent opportunities for students that are more vulnerable. The curriculum is broad, balanced, and rigorously monitored against the Every Child Matters outcomes. Personal, social, health, and citizenship education, are strong elements of the curriculum and have a significant impact on students' outstanding achievement. There is a wide range of activities outside of the classroom, which provide additional excellent community experience and preparation on how to react safely in a range of situations. PPD sessions on four days per week give students an opportunity for social as well as physical development. Sport and music have a pivotal place in the curriculum; their discipline and challenge not only raise students' self-confidence and self-esteem, but also their performance techniques. Visits from media personalities and royalty raise the profile of the

exciting curriculum. ICT, an area for development in the previous inspection, is now strong. All students have their own PC and the improvement in equipment, such as switches, has enhanced learning for those who find communication difficult.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school's care, guidance and support are outstanding. Teaching staff demonstrate excellent commitment and similarly care staff are intrinsically involved in all guidance and support. External evaluation data shows all students, including those with English as an additional language, are reaching their targets. Academic guidance is accurate and helping all students to improve. Precise tracking is in place and is being refined with a new programme to clarify target setting. Risk assessment is secure. An effective child protection policy is understood by staff and its implementation monitored by the care manager. The single central record is accurate and comprehensive. Annual reviews and IEPs involve students and parents very well in their review and target setting. External evaluation of students' levels, by the Durham Project, is used alongside the school's newly adopted system of assessment to refine target setting. This system is at an early stage of implementation and does not suit all subjects. PE staff are usefully developing their own assessment system within the specialist status provision. The Every Child Matters audit highlights good examples of economic well being through practical application of skills and personal qualities.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher shows exemplary leadership through his outstanding commitment to his staff and pupils. He has developed a more outward facing approach to both the school's professional and parent community. His determination to maintain the highest standards of care, teaching and learning inspires all staff and parents. An outstanding management team, with a positive mix of experience and new ideas, support the headteacher's vision. An excellent team of senior teachers has focused on specific tasks to take the school forward; for example coordinating the specialist status, leading the sixth form and leading continuing professional development. Distribution of management across education, care, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and health, including speech and language has inspired middle managers to take responsibility for their departments. This structure has motivated staff to enjoy a leadership role in their area. Recently, senior managers have identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the school's development. They are beginning to use this information to good effect. Staff were fully consulted and feel involved and valued for their contribution. This has a significant beneficial effect on students' achievements. This information has contributed to a more structured and targeted school development plan and has involved more staff in decision-making.

Communication within the school is excellent and many parents praise the opportunity to become more involved in their child's education. For example through the 'mind mapping' activity used at parents' meetings; here, parents' aspirations are raised as they can see the possible progress for their child. Community cohesion is outstanding, with links established with the immediate community and throughout the county. Nationally innovative practice developed by Treloar's has been adopted by other similar schools, (the Symbols Project for example), and the school also has strong international links. The school's succinct analysis and evaluation of community cohesion informs future planning.

Governors provide excellent, sensitive, yet challenging, support to the school. Their refined committee structure and increasing involvement with the school's self-evaluation provides them with a clear insight into the school's strengths and areas for development. The General Purposes Committee monitors the school's budget and has taken decisive strategic action to reduce the school's deficit. The Trust has a special role in guiding the school through its links with the governors who serve on both bodies.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

| | | |
|---|----------------|-------|
| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall | 16-19 |
|---|----------------|-------|

Overall effectiveness

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 1 | 1 |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes | NA |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being? | 1 | 1 |
| The effectiveness of boarding provision | 1 | |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | 1 | 1 |

Achievement and standards

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| How well do learners achieve? | 1 | 1 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 | 3 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 1 | 1 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress | 1 | |

¹Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Personal development and well-being

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 1 | 1 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 1 | |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 1 | |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 1 | |
| The extent to which learners enjoy their education | 1 | |
| The attendance of learners | 2 | |
| The behaviour of learners | 1 | |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 1 | |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 1 | |

The quality of provision

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs? | 1 | 1 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 1 | 1 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 1 | 1 |

Leadership and management

| | | |
|--|-----|-----|
| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 1 | 1 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 1 | |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 1 | |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 1 | 1 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated | 1 | |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion? | 1 | |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money | 1 | |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 1 | |
| Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements? | Yes | Yes |
| Does this school require special measures? | No | |
| Does this school require a notice to improve? | No | |

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

27 April 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of Treloar School, Alton, GU34 4LA

You may remember that recently we visited your school to see how you were getting on with your studies. Thank you so much for making us feel so welcome, we really enjoyed the time with you and seeing the wonderful examples of your work around the school. We agree with you and your parents that Treloar is an outstanding school. At lunchtime, we had a lovely discussion with your head boy and head girl about all the different activities that go on in school. They told us about your visits to places of interest such as the Houses of Parliament for the Citizenship course, and the chance to take part in a boccia championship in Birmingham; you certainly have a busy time at school.

The excellent work of your teachers, care and therapy staff makes sure that you all enjoy school and make excellent progress. Sport, music, art and drama seem to be particularly popular subjects. We were pleased to hear that you felt safe and that there was always someone to listen to you, if you were worried. Those of you who are boarding students have made your rooms very cosy and comfortable and your boarding provision is outstanding. Many of you explained how happy you were living at Treloar.

While we were in school, we asked your teachers to look at two areas, one that could improve and one that was a celebration of all your hard work. We understood what you meant about the dining area and how the restricted space hindered your independence and we know that action is being taken about this problem immediately. We also hope the 'Treloar Direct' bus can be used to share your experiences with other schools so they can enjoy a similar happy experience in their school life.

Best wishes to you all.

Yours faithfully

Lynne Kauffman

Lead Inspector