

# Trinity School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131102
<b>Local Authority</b>	Barking and Dagenham
<b>Inspection number</b>	315718
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 July 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Ann Berger HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	239
6th form	37
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Glenda Spencer
<b>Headteacher</b>	Peter McPartland (Acting)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 December 2003
<b>School address</b>	Heathway Dagenham RM10 7SJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8270 1601
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8270 4969

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Trinity is a large, mixed, day school. It caters for a broad range of needs, mainly including pupils with severe learning difficulties, autism spectrum disorder and profound and multiple learning difficulties. Pupils' attainment on entry is very low. Two fifths of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and the ethnic profile has changed over the last three years with a higher proportion of Black African pupils admitted.

The school provides extensive training and development programmes for staff in mainstream schools. A small number of older pupils attend the Living and Learning Centre for 48 weeks per year. This provision is designed for older pupils with autism whose behaviour is exceptionally challenging. During the inspection the deputy headteacher was in charge of the school.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Trinity School is a centre of excellence for the education of pupils with severe learning difficulties and autism. Exceptional leadership permeates the school. The senior team is constantly striving for the best. Energy is focused effectively and efficiently on actions which have a strong impact on the standards the pupils achieve. The phase leaders and those with additional responsibilities support and challenge their teams particularly well and, as a result, the quality of teaching is outstanding. Staff have developed extensive specialist knowledge and understanding of how their pupils learn best. They are endlessly flexible in their teaching styles whilst at the same time having very high expectations. Teachers check constantly to see if the individual is ready for the next step in learning so that just the right levels of challenge are planned.

Targets are exceptionally ambitious and nearly always met. Nevertheless, the deputy headteacher commented, 'management is never satisfied' and the school has rightly identified the need to improve the information systems so that differences in performance across the school can be better analysed.

The pupils make exceptional progress in their academic work as well as their personal development. Particularly notable are their achievements in communication. Most pupils arrive with very limited speech and language skills and nearly all can communicate effectively and make appropriate choices by the time they leave. This is well-illustrated by the parent who said, 'Before, my daughter couldn't say much, now she can say more words and communicate well'.

The pupils' social skills are very limited when they arrive but, through the extremely well developed approaches to securing learning and social skills, this situation has turned around. This is achieved through the very well-structured approaches to teaching these skills. Pupils with autism learn quickly to undertake independent activities for sustained periods of time and are beginning to work with others. Other pupils support and help each other especially well in class. For example, pupils in a Year 9 mathematics lessons waited for each other to answer questions, never calling out the answer. This was not just because they were complying with the rules, but in order not to take away from their peers the pleasure of getting their work right.

Much of the outstanding practice in the school is achieved through the systematic and innovative professional development programme provided for all staff. Everyone knows they will be helped to develop the skills they need for their jobs and extend their own professional aspirations. The in-house training programme is regarded very highly by teachers and support staff from mainstream schools as well as other agencies who are able to benefit from the school's outstanding expertise in teaching pupils with autism.

Considerable efforts are made to develop strong relationships with parents. For example, the school has an innovative and systematic programme to improve the skills of pupils with autism when they are at home. The outstanding success of this programme is being extended to other groups with different needs and ages.

The curriculum is exceptionally good. The range of opportunities is extensive and very well matched the differing needs of the pupils. As a result, the pupils really enjoy their time in school. Exceptional attention is paid to ensuring that all pupils have the opportunity to participate fully in the life of the school and the policies on promoting disability and racial equality are implemented well. There is a very effective programme designed to ensure the

pupils experience the lives of people from other cultures. However, as one teacher said, 'nothing is ever perfect'. There is more to do to ensure lessons reflect the changing cultural mix of the school for example, through using more examples from different cultures as a context for teaching.

There is a strong emphasis on ensuring the pupils remain in good health and this is promoted very well through the outstanding personal, social and health education programme. The school successfully supports the outstanding spiritual development of pupils. This can be seen for example in the reduction of chronic anxiety associated with some special educational needs and the noticeable sense of peace, well-being and safety. By the time the pupils leave, all move to suitable full-time education, training or further specialist provision appropriate to their needs. Many leave with qualifications which exceed all expectations.

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 1**

The sixth form provision was weaker than the rest of the school at the last inspection in 2003. This is no longer the case and the pupils now make outstanding progress and enjoy their learning. Excellent teaching and a relevant and motivating curriculum prepares them very well for their adult lives. The vocational curriculum provides particularly good opportunities to develop independent living skills. All pupils make excellent progress in their personal development, gaining confidence and self-esteem through their successes.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

Even an outstanding school has areas which can be improved. The school agrees and already has plans to:

- Adapt teaching activities to better reflect the changing ethnic profile of the school
- Review the target setting system to provide information about the progress of pupils across the school in a more useful form.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 1**

All pupils make outstanding progress from a very low starting point. Most arrive with virtually no language and often are unable to stand. Over time their difficulties are addressed systematically and they are able to achieve very high standards. The wide range of qualifications attained is a testament to the focus on achieving as much as possible. There are no differences between the achievements of different groups of pupils.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 1**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. This can be seen in the harmonious relationships and the good role modelling of care, respect and support shown by staff. Pupils enjoy their learning. Virtually all parents reinforced this in their response to the questionnaire. Attendance is good, though somewhat limited by the extensive medical needs of some of the pupils.

Pupils' behaviour is exceptionally well managed and many pupils who struggle to acquire basic learning skills are helped to concentrate and follow routines. Behaviour plans are very consistently implemented and pupils feel very secure and safe.

The school council is active with a strong voice influencing developments such as the School Development Plan and practical changes such as more provision of drinking water. Pupils also make a positive contribution to the world beyond the school as can be seen, for example, in the substantial money raised through 'Jeans for Genes' and 'Red Nose' day.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 1**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

Pupils in all phases exceed their targets because teaching, classroom support and the range of high quality resources are excellent. Teachers' excellent subject and special needs expertise enable confident, engaging and precise planning to meet individual needs. Teachers and co-educators working together as equal partners strengthens learning opportunities in many lessons.

Pupils experience exciting and inventive teaching, which promotes their independence and social skills, with dramatic impact on their progress. Similarly, excellent resources and one-to-one sessions challenge pupils with English as a second language to communicate in and understand English.

The professional development arrangements for staff are inspiring. A co-educator explained, 'I have been inspired to become a fully fledged teacher because of the encouragement and training I get'.

Effective tracking, detailed record keeping in progress files and a dialogue with parents through the home-link book ensure that teachers know precisely what pupils can do and they use this information very well to plan their next steps of progress.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 1**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

An outstanding curriculum has been developed which is regularly reviewed and enhanced. Every opportunity is taken to improve communication, independence and social skills through the full range of subjects offered. Specialist adaptations are made for pupils and very careful attention is paid to the groupings of pupils to ensure they benefit from the curriculum and classroom environment that best meets their needs.

There is a wide range of curriculum enrichment outside the classroom through links with other schools, visits and residential activities, including some very ambitious trips abroad.

## Care, guidance and support

**Grade: 1**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

Efficient, rigorous and robust procedures for risk assessments, safeguarding and health and safety ensure that pupils learn in a safe and secure environment, which respects their personal dignity and helps them develop the skills of communication, social interaction and growing independence.

Careers guidance and work experience opportunities are of a high quality. All pupils leaving at the end of Year 11 either go on to full time training or education. Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for life beyond school. One parent perhaps summed this, 'without their help my son would not have made this progress'.

## Leadership and management

**Grade: 1**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

Staff work very well together showing leadership within their areas of responsibility and alongside the many other professionals involved with the pupils. For example, good personal education plans (PEPs) for looked after pupils ensure that their needs are well met. The school has rightly identified that coordination, by the local authority, of the timing of PEP reviews with the pupil's special educational needs annual review could be more efficient and secure better attendance from the full range of external colleagues.

The senior team has extensive quality assurance systems and, as a result, it knows the school very well. The team's patience and commitment to the pupils mean that no stone is left unturned and any weaknesses are dealt with swiftly and rigorously. The day to day running of the school is exceptional. A parent confirmed the inspectors' views in commenting, 'The staff are very kind, calm and organised. Everything is well thought out and structured. I am very happy and my son is happy'.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The attendance of learners	2	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	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

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

<sup>1</sup> Grade 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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	
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	

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

13 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Trinity School, Dagenham, RM10 7SJ

Thank you for talking to us.

Your school is great.

You all learn and behave very well. The adults do a fantastic job.

Keep working hard.

Ann Berger HMI