

Talbot House School

Independent School

Inspection Report

DCSF Registration Number	8376005
Unique Reference Number	113941
URN for registered childcare	EY256384
Inspection number	329546
Inspection dates	12 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Linda Kelsey HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005). The inspection of childcare was conducted under Section 49(2) of the Childcare Act 2006.

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, in order to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

This was a light touch inspection (LTI) which focused principally on the quality of education provided by the school; its provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and the improvements the school has made since its last inspection.

Information about the school

The school opened in 1969 and is situated in a residential area of Bournemouth. It aims to provide a caring and happy atmosphere where all pupils can thrive and achieve their full potential. It caters for pupils from the ages of three to 11 years old in two large detached houses. There are currently 142 pupils on roll, including 3 who attend part-time. The school was last inspected in May 2004.

Evaluation of the school

This is a good school where the majority of pupils achieve high academic levels and all pupils are happy and confident learners. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and they take part in a number of local community and fund raising events. Most pupils gain places at their first choice of school by the time they are 11 years old and parents are happy about what the school is able to provide for their children. The school provides a challenging and wide ranging curriculum including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which is well taught and prepares children well for the next stage of education. The school is conscientious in ensuring that pupils are healthy and happy. However, at times and in certain ways during the school day, pupils are not given enough opportunities to exercise their independence and make choices based on the skills and knowledge they acquire. Although space is at a minimum there are enough classrooms and information and communication technology (ICT) suite and library as well as outside areas for learning and playing outdoors. The school meets all but two of the regulatory requirements.

Quality of education

The quality of the education is good. The curriculum is good because the school ensures that all areas of learning are covered well and include a wide range of subjects. Pupils study a musical instrument and a modern foreign language in addition to the other subjects. Activities for learning are planned well and are appropriately challenging for most of the pupils, most of the time. There is a wide range of extra curricular activities and clubs both after school and within the timetable so that pupils go on visits and use the local community for sports.

Specialist teaching takes place in a number of subjects such as science, physical education (PE), music and French. Pupils do not always know what their individual targets are and although most make good progress some do not because they do not have highly individualised work programmes that challenge and motivate them.

Teaching and assessment are good overall. One lesson was outstanding when pupils were challenged well through good questioning and guidance on how to write a story plot. Marking and assessing of work is thorough and teachers are knowledgeable and well prepared for lessons. Resources and materials are organised and good use is made of the interactive white board by teachers in the classroom. Most pupils work on similar tasks which enables teachers to support those that experience difficulties. However, this limits the opportunities of the brightest in the class to develop independence in learning, have opportunities to solve more challenging problems and to be able to access difficult work more quickly. Harder tasks are reserved for when pupils have finished the set tasks for the whole class. This is because some teachers are not making enough use of the wealth of assessment information to carefully analyse and individualise the learning. Pupils are assessed regularly and teachers keep good on-going records of their progress which they use to plan for whole class teaching activities. Lessons are generally formal and focus on developing skills in literacy and numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). The school does this very well so that by the end of pupils' time at the school they are able to gain places at local grammar schools.

Most pupils who start Year 1 have high ability and all pupils achieve at least the national expectation by the age of 7 with a good proportion achieving the higher levels of work. Strengths are in reading, writing and ICT skills. Work is neat and well presented. There are some good examples of artwork around the school and pupils are keen to learn musical instruments and play them in school assemblies.

By the age of 11 pupils achieve well with the majority reaching at least national expectations and a good proportion achieve the higher levels. However, because of the high ability of most pupils, the good starting points both from the EYFS and Key Stage 1, and the lack of challenge for some of the most able pupils at the school, not all who could, do get the highest levels of achievement at Key Stage 2.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Behaviour is outstanding and pupils work well together and encourage and support each other throughout their work. Their wide range of achievements and positive attitudes are recognised in a celebration assembly held once a week. Pupils are involved in a range of fund raising activities, such as their remarkable success in collecting a record number of yellow pages for recycling each year. The school has close links with a range of local, national and world wide bodies, which are developed through visits, visitors, events both at school and in the local and wider communities, such as singing in local old peoples' homes, working with local police and other emergency services, as well as numerous charities. This ensures that they have a good understanding and tolerance of their place in society.

Pupils would like to be more consulted about the school although they clearly enjoy their education, attend well and in both written replies and conversation pupils expressed nothing but praise. One pupil wrote, 'The school has prepared me well this year. I have a great time.' There is currently no school council as a way of consulting their views and seeking their suggestions.

Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety

The safeguarding of pupils' welfare, health and safety is good. All staff are qualified and checked for their suitability to work with children. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools Award and encourages pupils to eat fruit and drink water or juice throughout most of the day, although there is no water available to drink with their lunch. The school does a lot of work on health and safety but it does not give the pupils opportunity to make their own choices at lunch times. This limits their ability to practise what they learn. Pupils say they feel safe and are taught about a range of safety issues. The school also works closely with all the emergency services so that pupils may learn about a wide range of safety aspects which might affect them.

The school ensures close partnership with parents and keeps them fully informed, although it does not provide parents, prospective parents and others the details of its academic performance gauged against the national picture. Current parents are given information on an individual basis at parents' evening. The accommodation and grounds are small and do have some restrictions although good use is made of available space both indoors and outdoors. Assembly and lunch have to be conducted in the Year 1 classrooms. At lunch time all Year 1 pupils have to relocate to other classes while their rooms are used as a dining hall, restricting access to important areas of learning and resources.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision in the EYFS is good. The curriculum is well matched to the needs of the children and follows the six key areas of learning. Sessions are focused on teaching literacy and numeracy but also include elements from other learning areas and these are based around a topic or theme. The good curriculum encompasses both indoor and outdoor activities and space is used well.

The personal development and well-being in EYFS is good. Children are encouraged to be confident and independent. Teachers encourage children to share, be polite and be well behaved and all children demonstrated the capacity to empathise with each other, able to listen to and share their views.

Teaching in the EYFS is good and teachers ensure all children are monitored and assessed on a daily basis. The EYFS profiles are used in conjunction with the school's own record and assessment materials and this ensures an accurate picture of children's development and needs. Scrutiny of these profiles and discussion with staff during lesson observation, demonstrates that children achieve well in EYFS and,

whilst achievement on entry is generally at nationally expected levels, children generally leave the EYFS with above average achievement.

The leadership is good and the system ensures clear and careful monitoring of all aspects of the provision; the two co-ordinators work closely together to ensure a smooth and effective transition between the nursery and reception classes.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005, with the exception of those listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the curriculum and teaching (standard 1) and must:

- establish ways to challenge the learning of all the most able pupils so that they all consistently achieve the good progress of which they are capable (paragraph 1(3)(d)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information for parents, carers and others (standard 6) and must:

- make clear to parents, prospective parents and others that particulars of academic performance of the pupils at the school are available on request (paragraph 6(2)(i)).

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider:

- including more menu options at lunch time and make water available so that all pupils can make their own healthy lunch time choices
- reviewing the use of the Year 1 classrooms as a dining room so that these pupils are not re-located to less suitable classrooms for part of their education.

Inspection Judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		√		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		√		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		√		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		√		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		√		
The behaviour of pupils	√			

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		√		
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The quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage provision

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?		√		
How well do children achieve in the Early Years Foundation Stage relative to their starting points and capabilities?		√		
How good are the personal development and well-being of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?		√		
What is the quality of welfare, health and safety of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?		√		
How effectively is the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?		√		
What is the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage including, where relevant, the quality of childcare?		√		

School details

Name of school	Talbot House School		
DCSF number	8376005		
Unique reference number	113941		
EY URN	EY256384		
Type of school	Primary		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1969		
Age range of pupils	3-11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 71	Girls: 68	Total: 139
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 2	Girls: 1	Total: 3
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2250 - £4287		
Address of school	8 Firs Glen Road		
	Winton		
	Bournemouth		
	Dorset		
	BH9 2LR		
Telephone number	01202510348		
Email address	headteacher.talbot@ntlworld.com		
Headteacher	Mrs C Oosthuizen		
Proprietor	Mr and Mrs Broadway		
Reporting inspector	Linda Kelsey HMI		
Dates of inspection	12 November 2008		