

Torwood House School

Independent School

Inspection Report

DCSF Registration Number	801/6007
Unique Reference Number	109341
URN for registered childcare and social care	EY297338
Inspection number	330399
Inspection dates	9 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Jonathan Palk 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.

The inspection of registered provision¹ was conducted under Section 49(2) of the Childcare Act 2006.

This was a light touch inspection (LTI) which focussed 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

Torwood House School, was established in 1915, and includes the separately registered Torwood Lodge Nursery. It operates from 2 listed buildings. The largest of which has been converted to provide facilities for infants from 6 weeks to children aged 6. There are 178 children aged 0 to 4 years old and 80 children of statutory school age; aged 5 to 11. Sixty children are funded under the nursery Scheme. Torwood House School provides an after school and holiday club for children aged 4 to 8. The school is non denominational and non selective. There are currently no pupils with statements for special educational needs. A very small number of children are learning English as an additional language and receive support with their learning. The school was last inspected in November 2005 and the early years provision in January 2006. The school aims *'to provide children with a happy, stimulating and caring environment and build on the sound grounding and highly motivated children's love of discovery and exploration'*.

Evaluation of the school

Torwood House School and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provides a good quality of education and successfully meets its aims. The commitment of staff to the needs of all children underpins the good quality of care which, together with the good curriculum, ensures children and pupils make good progress. Its provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Teaching is good. The school meets all the educational and organisational regulations and has made good improvement since the last inspection.

¹ Schools which provide childcare for children from birth until the term in which they reach their third birthday must register this provision separately with Ofsted.

Quality of education

The good quality curriculum provides interesting learning experiences across the academic, aesthetic and practical areas of learning for children in the EYFS and in years 1 to 6. It encourages excellent personal development, ensuring children and pupils are confident when facing new challenges. In the relatively short time since the last inspection the school has made significant improvements to the buildings in order to provide specialist areas for art and design, cooking, computer skills and for quiet study. The provision for outdoor activity has also been enriched by improved play surfaces and covered areas. Pupils in years 1 to 6 learn French and Spanish which contributes well to their appreciation of other cultures. The leadership of the school responded well to the points for development in the last inspection report. There is now a good balance of individual learning, group and classwork. Planning sets out objectives for the main subject and when the learning is to be evaluated. Specific planning for different ability groups varies between classes, although modifications are made during lessons to ensure good learning by all pupils.

Pupils make good progress in all aspects of their learning. The emphasis given to reading and writing for a purpose and on speaking and listening skills, ensures they have a secure grounding in literacy skills. The linked project work gives pupils practical experiences in applying their reading and writing skills and allows them to make good progress in observation and investigative skills. There is good, additional provision for those with learning difficulties. The individual education plans for pupils with learning difficulties set realistic and achievable targets that are regularly discussed with parents and teachers.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good, enabling all pupils to make good progress. Adults in the EYFS are developing a greater understanding of the development and care requirements for children from birth to five and are using this knowledge to plan effectively. Teachers are skilful at combining good instruction with pupils' natural enthusiasm for learning and exploring ideas. The excellent relationships pupils have with their teachers encourages them to develop independence in their thinking. Teachers take time to explain clearly and they question and probe to ensure that pupils fully understand what they are doing. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory. Teachers know their pupils' very well, and adapt their teaching effectively to meet their needs. The teachers record the results of various termly and annual tests and this ensures they maintain an overview of what pupils have learnt. The school has recently developed a system to bring this information together in order to set challenging targets and help identify better the gaps in pupils' learning. This good work initiated by the headteacher since the last inspection, has been used well to support pupils identified as having learning difficulties. Some potentially useful strategies are being introduced in lessons this year to help address the gaps in some pupils' skills particularly in writing. However, there is insufficient emphasis placed in mathematics lessons on developing mental reasoning and mental strategies and this can limit what some pupils can achieve.

Parents were unanimous in their praise of the school. They commented how well they were involved in their children's education which is summed up in the words of one family. 'This is a friendly, welcoming school that is willing to address any issues in a professional and respectful fashion'. Pupils too are pleased with the help they get from their teachers.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Staff provide very good role models. Children and pupils are treated with sensitivity and respect by all the adults and this promotes their self-worth, respect and awareness of others. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. The positive rewards such as house points and numerous responsibilities promotes pupils' understanding of right and wrong and helps them to manage their own behaviour towards others. There is much good social development through the many opportunities to play together, share their work and when out on the many visits. As a result they have very positive attitudes towards school and are respectful and courteous. The active school council has had an impressive impact on improvements to the provision that benefits all pupils. A particularly strong feature is the open manner in which they discuss improvements with the proprietor. The pupils value this and these arrangements have a significant impact on pupils' personal development. Attendance is similar to most schools although there is no unauthorised absence, as result of well managed systems

The school is harmonious and the pupils share their experiences and values from their own cultures with impressive ease. Cultural awareness is promoted well through the curriculum which provides them with a good understanding of both their own and other cultures and respect for the beliefs and life styles of others. Pupils acquire a good sense of community through participating in celebrations, thematic work and welcoming visitors from the local community. However, the headteacher has aspirations to develop this aspect of personal development further this year. Pupils develop as self assured and confident individuals, enjoy their learning and are well prepared for the next phase in their education.

Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety

The school provides a good level of welfare, health and safety for its pupils. There are many excellent features in this aspect of the schools provision. In particular, the unwavering attention given to the pastoral needs of the children and pupils demonstrates the commitment that places the child at the heart of the school. Pupils are taught to keep safe and healthy as part of their personal, social and health education. They are encouraged to bring healthy food such as fruit to school for snacks at their break times and are keen to do so. They enjoy healthy food, as well as active play. There is no bullying, and no cause for the school to invoke sanctions for serious breaches of discipline. Minor matters are dealt with sensibly. There is currently one designated child protection officer, which is not considered adequate for a school that is spread across two sites. The school has already booked training to increase the number of adults trained in matters relating to safeguarding.

All contracted staff and volunteers have the necessary enhanced CRB checks and the school is implementing more stringent checks when using agency staff. There are good systems to ensure pupils feel safe and pupils say they feel safe in school. The excellent relationships they have built up with their teachers, means they always have someone to confide in if required.

Security around the two sites and fire safety are given a very high priority. The school has responded well to the last inspection report, in producing and implementing a good action plan to fulfil its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act 2002.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

The provision for the learning and development of children from 0 to 5 years is good. There are some outstanding features, including the personal development and well-being of the children. All six areas of learning and development are covered in the planning and children's learning and development is carefully observed and recorded to show the progress they make towards the early learning goals (ELGs). Most children make good progress towards the ELGs in relation to their starting points. Children play well both together and on their own. Relationships are very positive at all levels and children from different backgrounds and cultures play well together.

There is a positive learning atmosphere in all the rooms, which are attractive and welcoming environments. Staff are good role models and take time to spend with each child, valuing them as individuals. The environment both indoors and outside is highly conducive to learning. The staff give appropriate emphasis to developing the children's communication, language, literacy and mathematical skills. There is a good balance between adult led and child-initiated activities and the wide range of resources are accessible to the children. Parents are pleased with the provision with one commenting, 'it is brilliant'. The children are well cared for in a safe environment; healthy eating is encouraged through the wholesome food provided. The managers set high standards and monitor the provision in their age range well. Currently staff liaise well within each age group. They now need to extend this to cover all aspects of the EYFS planning to ensure clear progression of learning and development across the whole stage.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005
- The school's registered provision for childcare meets the requirements of the Childcare Act 2006.

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- Further develop the school's management systems to improve co-ordination of the provision across the EYFS
- Continue to develop the use of assessment information to inform the teaching of pupils with differing abilities.

Inspection Judgement Recording Form

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

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

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

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

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

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

School details

Name of school	Torwood House School		
DCSF number	801/6007		
Unique reference number	109341		
EY URN (for registered childcare only)	EY297338		
Type of school	Primary with nursery and baby department		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1915		
Age range of pupils	2-10		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 127	Girls: 106	Total: 233
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 12	Girls: 13	Total: 25
Number of pupils aged 0-3 in registered childcare provision	Boys: 67	Girls: 62	Total: 129
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£1525		
Annual fees (childcare)	£1525		
Address of school	29 Durdham Park Redland Bristol BS6 6XE		
Telephone number	01179736620		
Fax number	01179735620		
Email address	emailus@torwoodhouse.bristol.sch.uk		
Headteacher	Mrs Dionne Seagrove		
Proprietor	Mrs Samantha Packer		
Reporting inspector	Jonathan Palk HMI		
Dates of inspection	9 September 2008		