

# The Tutorial Foundation

Independent special school inspection report

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DCSF registration number 306/6080  
Unique reference number 135670  
Inspection number 341987  
Inspection dates 4–5 November 2009  
Reporting inspector Greg Sorrell

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended.

Age group: 5–16

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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, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.<sup>1</sup>

## Information about the school

The Tutorial Foundation is registered to provide full- and part-time education for up to 20 pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD) aged from five to 16 years; currently there are 19 pupils on roll. Part-time pupils also remain on the registers of their local authority schools in Bromley and Bexley which have placed their pupils here. These pupils' education has been disrupted, mainly as a result of their disruptive or challenging behaviour. The majority of pupils have a statement of special educational need.

The Tutorial Foundation has existed for 30 years as a supplementary school providing tuition for pupils after school and at weekends. This school provision was registered separately in June 2008 to provide full- and part-time education for pupils with special educational needs. It is located in a large house on a residential street in Bromley. The building is shared between the school and the pupils who attend the supplementary provision but the provision for these two groups does not overlap.

The school's mission statement is 'to strive to improve the vocational, economic and social future of our pupils by providing a congenial learning environment and by creating an atmosphere of tolerance and respect for all, where everyone irrespective of ability can realise their potential, make valuable contributions and become responsible citizens of the future'. This is the school's first inspection.

## Evaluation of the school

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. The curriculum, and teaching and assessment, are satisfactory as is the provision made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The pupils' attitudes, attendance and behaviour are satisfactory. Arrangements for their welfare, health and safety, including safeguarding, are satisfactory. The school meets almost all the regulations.

## Quality of education

The quality of education provided is satisfactory and leads to the pupils making satisfactory academic progress. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. The school has

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<sup>1</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga\\_20020032\\_en\\_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162)

produced clear policies and schemes of work to support the academic curriculum, which is based on the National Curriculum. There is a strong and appropriate focus on the improvement of basic skills in literacy and numeracy alongside the development of appropriate behaviour and relationships. As yet, there are too few planned opportunities for art, music and physical education for pupils in Key Stages 1 to 3. However, use is made of a local sports venue for physical activities that are not possible on site.

The provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is good and has clear links to the science curriculum. Links with the local Connexions office support the school's provision of careers education and guidance well. Where appropriate, pupils also access local colleges and businesses for education and work experience, respectively.

The quality of teaching and the assessment of learning is satisfactory. The staff have appropriate subject knowledge. The strongest teaching is typically when pupils are given practical learning activities, for example in science, where pupils investigate the effects of heat on liquids and monitor cooling times under different conditions to establish a fair test. In English, one pupil wrote a reflective essay about relationships and cultural traditions as portrayed in *Vendetta* by Guy de Maupassant. This work was highly relevant to the pupils' own lives within their local community. Relationships between staff and pupils are strong in and out of lessons. There are occasions when adults intervene in pupils' learning too readily, which reduces opportunities for pupils to come to solutions independently. Analysis of pupils' workbooks shows a lack of challenge for some pupils. Worksheets, while relevant, are overused at the expense of practical activities. Time in lessons is not always used to best effect when pupils are required to copy significant amounts of text from textbooks instead of applying their efforts to solving problems.

Relevant staff training on behaviour management has been appropriate and has had a positive impact. The teaching staff serve as good role models as they show the benefits of working collaboratively. All staff are appropriately assertive with pupils when required and this promotes a consistent approach to behaviour management. Teachers' use of assessment is satisfactory and informs lesson planning. The routine use of pupil self-assessment is at an early stage. All pupils benefit from regular oral feedback about their work, although marking sometimes lacks written guidance about how the work may be improved. Assessment within examination courses is rigorous and has been significantly improved in all other subjects with the adoption of computer-assisted assessment procedures. Information gained from this program is used effectively to inform lesson planning and reporting. All pupils in Year 11 take accredited courses at GCSE or Entry level in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and PSHCE.

## Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. In keeping with the school's aims and ethos, the pupils show improved attitudes to learning and the majority attend more frequently than in previous settings. Before attending this school, some pupils have been out of full-time education for extended periods and these pupils particularly appreciate the phased reintroduction to full-time education. Discussions with pupils reveal that they recognise the positive climate fostered by the staff: 'They do well by us and treat us with respect, so we try to do the same.' Although not all pupils respond so well, their behaviour is satisfactory and it is clear that they understand the expectations staff have of them. The rewards and sanctions systems are clearly displayed and are valued by the majority of pupils. Through its attempts to re-engage pupils, the school is helping to prepare them better for their future.

The pupils respond well to the many opportunities to reflect on their behaviour and relationships with others. These include regular counselling sessions and the weekly assembly. They develop a satisfactory understanding of service to others through occasional fund-raising and the responsibilities some have around the school, for example sowing seeds in the garden and supporting younger pupils in their classroom. They believe their views are considered, although there is no school council where they may formally express opinions. Work undertaken through the curriculum gives them a sound understanding of other cultures and public institutions, such as health agencies and the police. Recent studies in PSHCE assist the pupils to stay safe in the community by increasing their awareness of the dangers posed by drugs and alcohol. Smoking remains a health hazard for some pupils and opportunities for all pupils to undertake physical exercise are limited by the premises and the curriculum. However, relevant lessons are provided in relation to sexual health. Some pupils benefit from work experience and part-time attendance at a local college, although there are few planned visits within the local community.

## Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The school's provision for safeguarding the welfare, health and safety of pupils is satisfactory and most regulations are met. The school establishes appropriate education and behaviour support plans and all incidents and accidents are appropriately recorded. Issues of bullying and respect for others are addressed during one-to-one sessions, as well as throughout the curriculum, including PSHCE lessons. Staffing levels are suitable and risk assessments are systematically carried out. Staff meet daily to discuss relevant issues, including an evaluation of pupils' work and behaviour. The proprietors place a high priority on maintaining the building and any damage to the property is repaired immediately. Routine checks on electrical and fire safety equipment are regularly undertaken.

Pupils say they feel safe and attention to their emotional health is continuous, planned well and discussed regularly by all staff and other professionals. The pupils' long-term emotional well-being is supported by regular sessions with a trained counsellor. The recent engagement of an external agency to provide education and guidance in relation to drugs is highly relevant in relation to the school's aim to keep the pupils safe. Although the tuck shop offers exclusively healthy options, there are no other occasions to practise healthy eating. Attention given to preparing the pupils for life after school is good. The working relationships with Connexions, local authorities and external agencies are good and assist the pupils in moving on.

The school safeguards pupils well on a day-to-day basis. All staff receive regular training on child protection and many have appropriate experience in other settings. However, the designated person with lead responsibility has yet to receive the required level of training for that post; suitable training has been booked at the earliest opportunity later in the year. The school has yet to prepare a three-year plan to increase accessibility to the premises and curriculum over time.

### Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school fulfils its responsibilities to ensure that all staff are appropriately checked prior to taking up their appointments. A comprehensive single register is maintained of the checks made.

### School's premises and accommodation

The school's accommodation is on three floors with an adequate number of classrooms that are of suitable size for the numbers on roll. Some classrooms are dedicated to specialist subject teaching, including science and ICT. The provision for primary-aged pupils is located on the top floor while secondary pupils are educated on the ground and first floors. In addition to teaching areas, there are several smaller rooms used for one-to-one tutorials and counselling. The kitchen area is used for socialising during breaks. The school is well maintained and attractively decorated. Some classrooms have attractive displays of pupils' work that celebrate success, but this is not consistent across the school.

The small outdoor area is used well for relaxation and is suitable for the older pupils. However, it is inadequate for the needs of primary-aged pupils. The staff compensate for the lack of space on site by making weekly use of a local school's sports facilities.

### Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school provides parents, carers and referring local authorities with the required information about its work. Responses from these groups indicate that they are satisfied with the work of the school and information received. One wrote, 'I have always found the staff to be available to discuss my child.' Half-termly meetings are held at school where parents are invited to discuss their children's progress. Reports

are provided when required in support of reviews of pupils' statements of special educational needs and for those pupils who are in the care of local authorities. Weekly attendance returns are provided to local authorities. On occasion, some academic reports focus too heavily on pupils' attitudes at the expense of information related to their progress in subject knowledge, skills and understanding. The school has yet to submit an annual account to local authorities in relation to income received and expenditure incurred in respect of pupils funded by those local authorities.

## Procedures for handling complaints

The school has a clear, written complaints procedure that meets all the regulations.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.<sup>2</sup>

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

- provide adequate experience in the following areas of learning: physical, and aesthetic and creative (paragraph 1(2)(a)(ii))
- ensure teaching encourages pupils to apply intellectual, physical and creative efforts and to show interest in their work and to think and learn for themselves (paragraph 1(3)(b))
- ensure lessons contain effective teaching methods and suitable activities are used and that class time is managed wisely (paragraph 1(3)(c)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

- ensure designated staff for safeguarding matters have training at the required level in compliance with DCSF guidance Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education (DCSF-04217-2006)<sup>3</sup> (paragraph 3(2)(b)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises and accommodation (standard 5) and must:

- provide appropriate arrangements for providing outside space for pupils to play safely (paragraph 5(t)).

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<sup>2</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2003/20031910.htm](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2003/20031910.htm)

<sup>3</sup> <http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/Final%206836-SafeGuard.Chd%20bkmk.pdf>

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

- submit an annual account to local authorities, and on request to the Secretary of State, of income received and expenditure incurred in respect of pupils funded by those local authorities (paragraph 6(8)).

In order to comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended, the school should devise a three-year accessibility plan.

## What the school could do to improve further

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

- increase the pupils' experience of the local community
- consider ways to increase pupils' experience and appreciation of healthy lifestyles
- improve classroom displays to the same standard as the best in the school.



Inspection judgement recording form

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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## School details

Name of school	The Tutorial Foundation		
DCSF number	305/6080		
Unique reference number	135670		
Type of school	Special school for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	June 2008		
Age range of pupils	5–16 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 8	Girls: 2	Total: 10
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 8	Girls: 1	Total: 9
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 15	Girls: 0	Total: 15
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 2	Girls: 1	Total: 3
Annual fees (day pupils)	£15,686		
Address of school	76 Freelands Road Bromley Kent BR1 3JR		
Telephone number	020 8460 0181		
Fax number	020 8290 0117		
Email address	admin@thetutorialfoundation.co.uk		
Headteacher	Ms Julia Low		
Proprietors	Ms Julia Low and Ms Karen Turner		
Reporting inspector	Greg Sorrell		
Dates of inspection	4–5 November 2009		