

Inspection of Tor View School

Kilworthy Road, Tavistock, Devon PL19 0JN

Inspection dates: 27 to 29 February 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Outstanding**

Personal development **Outstanding**

Leadership and management **Outstanding**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils shine at this happy and effective school. They feel valued and safe because staff understand their needs and how to meet them. Staff promote positive relationships very effectively. They secure a holistic view of pupils' needs and challenges. This helps ensure that pupils benefit from tailored, personalised programmes of study. However, occasionally, the curriculum doesn't help pupils to learn enough about the world around them. Nevertheless, pupils make rapid and extensive gains in their personal development and behaviour.

Pupils' behaviour is transformed at the school. Staff are highly skilled and know how to support pupils with their needs. They follow the school's approach to promoting positive, appropriate behaviour diligently. As a result, pupils learn to value their place in their school and wider community. Lessons are calm and purposeful. Pupils take pride in their work and attend regularly. They try hard in lessons because they are keen to please staff, who care about them.

Everyone gets on very well together. Leaders ensure that the whole community have high expectations of pupils. Parents and carers praise the school. Some say it has transformed their children's lives.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Tor View School is a haven for pupils with communication and interaction challenges. The school benefits from extensive expertise and committed staff. Leaders, including governors, use everything at their disposal to identify what is going well and where improvements are needed. Staff are very positive. They share the school's ambition. Staff believe their well-being is considered all the time. As a result, the school is a harmonious and effective place.

The school engages with the wider community very effectively. Pupils, parents and carers work collaboratively with the school to plan provision. For example, the school has worked successfully with its community to ensure that pupils' attendance is well above average. Parents say that their children are supported exceptionally well. Many rightly recognise the difference made to their child's holistic development and self-confidence. One parent said, 'It is a very special school for very special pupils, if only all special schools were like this!'

The school's highly specialised curriculum is designed carefully and effectively. It is particularly strong in English and mathematics, how it promotes pupils' personal development and meets pupils' communication and interaction needs. Staff ensure that pupils' holistic needs are assessed as soon as they arrive. Appropriate pathways and interventions are identified and secured. Strong links between education and therapy staff ensure that pupils benefit from targeted, individualised programmes of study. As a result, pupils learn to communicate, read and socialise with increasingly effective results.

The school rightly recognises that more now needs to be done to identify the key knowledge they want pupils to remember. Occasionally, the curriculum is overly focused on meeting pupils' needs or aiming towards their longer-term education, health and care plan targets. This means that sometimes, teachers do not give enough attention to the knowledge they want pupils to remember over time. Where this is the case, the progress that pupils make through the curriculum is slowed. Nevertheless, pupils do well overall. Pupils go on to attain increasingly ambitious qualifications and outcomes. They secure well-considered placements when they leave the school.

The promotion of pupils' personal development is exceptional. Curriculum enhancements have preparation for adulthood at their core. Careers advice is woven carefully into pupils' individual pathways. Pupils benefit from carefully considered and rich experiences of their local and wider community. This includes regular and relevant work experience. Pupils discuss relationships, beliefs and values through personal, social and health education lessons regularly. Carefully planned opportunities allow pupils to develop independence, self-awareness and self-confidence. Pupils learn to secure positive relationships with their peers as well as staff. As a result, pupils are very well prepared to experience improved outcomes as adults. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Although the curriculum is well designed and effective in many areas, sometimes a lack of focus on key knowledge limits pupils' understanding of the world around them. The school should develop the curriculum design further so that sequences of learning better enable pupils to know and remember the essential knowledge they need.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

School details

Unique reference number	145549
DfE registration number	878/6072
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10286458
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	7 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	26
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Aspris Children's Services Ltd
Chair	John Anderson
Headteacher	John Gordon
Annual fees (day pupils)	£93,637 to £120,150
Telephone number	01822 618515
Website	www.aspriscs.co.uk/find-a-location/tor-view-school-devon
Email address	TorviewSchool@aspriscs.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 April to 2 May 2019

Information about this school

- All pupils at Tor View School have special educational needs and/or disabilities and an education, health and care plan. Most pupils have a primary need of communication and interaction difficulties, although the school does cater for other needs, including pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school does not use alternative provisions.
- The school is registered to admit up to 30 pupils.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with leaders, including the headteacher, deputy headteacher and special educational needs coordinator. They met with welfare staff, therapists and a selection of teaching staff.
- Inspectors met with one of the operations directors and governance lead, who is also the chair of the governing body. They also met the chief operating officer from Aspris Children's Services, who is also the chair of the proprietor board.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, personal, social and health education and communication and interaction provision. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and free-text responses. They also considered responses to the staff survey.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including leaders' evaluations, the school improvement plan, documents relating to governance, the independent

school standards and information about the school's curriculum.

Inspection team

Matthew Barnes, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Gill Hickling

Ofsted Inspector

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