

Trinity School

Condercum road, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE4 8XJ

Inspection dates

21–22 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Teaching is good because staff make sure lessons are tailor-made to meet the needs of each pupil. Class sizes are very small and pupils get intensive support that removes barriers to learning.
- Pupils who attend the school have a history of disruptive behaviour but at Trinity they enjoy learning and their behaviour is excellent.
- Most pupils who join the school have fallen behind in the basic skills. They are put back on the right track and their reading, writing and mathematics quickly improve.
- Pupils develop good skills, knowledge and understanding in lessons. The number of pupils gaining qualifications at the end of Year 11 has risen and standards in SATS tests in Year 6 are better than at the time of the previous inspection.
- The new construction, motor vehicle and hairdressing facilities are used well by older pupils who develop good work-related skills.
- The executive headteacher and governors have appointed some excellent new staff. In particular, the deputy and assistant headteachers are driving forward the quality of teaching.
- Parents are extremely happy with the school. Many say that it has turned their children's lives around and made a huge difference to their future prospects.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not give pupils enough time to think or write about complex ideas.
- There are too few subjects at GCSE level. As a result, pupils do not always get the qualifications of which they are capable and some of the work is a bit too easy.
- Governors do not have sufficient oversight of the quality of teaching. They need to check that additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is always spent on areas of greatest need.
- Parents do not get enough support to help their children with their homework.

Information about this inspection

- This was a no-notice inspection whereby the school was informed of the inspection shortly before the arrival of the inspectors. Inspectors visited both school sites.
- Twenty-nine lessons were observed; inspectors observed almost all the teachers. Ten lessons were seen jointly with senior leaders of the school.
- Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, the deputy and assistant headteachers, a group of staff and three members of the governing body. A telephone discussion was held with a representative of the local authority.
- The wider views of staff were obtained through the questionnaire completed by 35 of them. Pupils' views were gained in a meeting and informal discussions around the school. The views of parents were obtained from the 72 responses to the Parent View survey, the six parents who talked to inspectors and the school's own surveys.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan, information on pupils' progress, documents used by leaders to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching, governing body documentation and records relating to attendance, behaviour and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Andrew Johnson, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Pauline Pitman

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Trinity school has two sites about five miles apart. The Deneview site in Gosforth is for pupils in Key Stage 2 and Years 7, 8 and 9. The building was substantially refurbished two years ago and a third site was closed. Oakfield College was built in 2010 and is on Condercum road. It provides for pupils in Years 9, 10 and 11. Currently one pupil attends alternative provision for one day a week to supplement the curriculum offered at the school. The school does not enter pupils early for GCSE examinations. It did not reach government floor standards in 2011.
- Pupils are placed at the school if they are deemed to be emotionally, socially or behaviourally too vulnerable to thrive in a mainstream school. Many have additional needs in relation to autistic spectrum disorders, cognitive ability, and speech and language difficulties. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs or are about to be statemented.
- The large majority of pupils are boys and are of White British heritage. The proportion known to be eligible for the pupil premium (extra money provided to schools by the government for pupils looked after by the local authority and for those eligible for free school meals) is well above the national average.
- The governing body is considering whether to adopt academy status.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the number of pupils who get grades A* to C at GCSE, by:
 - widening the range of subjects offered at GCSE or equivalent qualifications
 - making sure that pupils are given more time in lessons to think and develop their ideas
 - giving pupils more opportunities to produce longer pieces of writing in lessons.
- Give parents more support to help them help their children learn, by:
 - making sure parents understand what homework has been set and what is expected of pupils
 - encouraging parents and children to make more use of the facilities at the school after the end of formal lessons
 - encourage more parents to read with their children, particularly the younger ones, and develop the use of the school library.
- Develop the skills of governors so that they are in a good position to hold leaders to account, by making sure they:
 - have a more challenging approach to self-evaluation evidence about the quality of teaching
 - know precisely how the funding received to support disadvantaged children is spent and what impact this has on improving outcomes
 - take advantage of more external support to enhance their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- The school's information about pupils' progress shows that over time it has improved. Now, all groups make at least the progress expected given their starting points and many do better than that. The rate of progress in lessons has increased because of improved teaching.
- Younger pupils make good progress in mathematics, reading and writing. This is particularly important because almost all of them enter the school with levels well below those expected for their age. National test results of pupils Key Stage 2 and examination results at Key Stage 4 have improved substantially, but remain well below average.
- There are no differences in the progress made by disadvantaged pupils and their peers. Pupils make the best progress when they are set ambitious targets and they feel challenged by their work. In a few cases, particularly in the upper school, the activities set by teachers and courses pupils follow are too easy.
- Older pupils make good progress in a range of practical vocational subjects and many go on to further education or training. They develop much more confidence in themselves and are able to make and keep friends. Pupils, especially the younger ones, have a great pride in their school.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved and is usually good. On frequent occasions, it is outstanding. This improved picture is the result of the new impetus brought about by the appointment of new leaders.
- Most teachers set challenging targets for learning based upon their knowledge of pupils' individual capabilities. They closely monitor how well pupils are learning and quickly intervene if progress is not good. Staff ask probing questions to assess what pupils understand and provide support or further incentives to move them on.
- Teachers constantly try to stimulate interest and enjoyment amongst pupils. Although this ensures pupils are permanently 'on-task' and do not have time to misbehave, it also limits some pupils' ability to work independently and develop more extended writing skills.
- The school has correctly identified that better use of homework would enable more pupils to catch up. Parents need more support and guidance to help their children learn. Less than half of the 72 parents who replied to Parent View thought that appropriate homework was set.
- However, almost all the parents who responded to Parent View thought their children are taught well. Pupils praise their teachers and are proud of their schoolwork. Examination of pupils' exercise books shows that marking is done well and that useful comments point pupils in the right direction.
- Teaching assistants provide very valuable support to teachers and pupils and make sure any behaviour problems are quickly nipped in the bud. Good support helps pupils catch up in reading, writing and mathematics.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The school is a welcoming, orderly place and pupils feel very safe. They move around the school in a sensible and friendly way. There are a few incidents of poor behaviour that relate to the pupils' special educational needs. These become less frequent when they settle into the school routine.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to Parent View felt that the school made sure that children are well behaved and that any rare incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively. In all the lessons observed by inspectors, behaviour was impeccable.
- The school's behaviour policy is applied very consistently by staff and pupils are very clear about

the consequences of poor behaviour. They are keen to do well and value the rewards they are given.

- Teachers and teaching assistants are expert at calming down potentially difficult situations. Where necessary pupils leave lessons to discuss what is upsetting them and they are then quickly reintegrated so they do not lose ground.
- Attendance levels are greatly improved, but there are still a hard-core of pupils who are persistently absent. In the main, these are the pupils who are referred to the school in Year 10 or 11, many of whom have developed an entrenched habit of non-attendance. The school is doing all it can to address this issue and optimising the help it receives from partner support agencies.

The leadership and management are good

- The executive headteacher has made some very good appointments to the leadership team and teaching staff. He has delegated responsibility and accountability to other members of the leadership team and they have risen to the challenge. He is very ambitious for the future and wants the school to be outstanding by the time of the next inspection.
- The most impressive improvement so far has been to the quality of teaching. There are high expectations of both staff and pupils. Although the school does not directly take into account the 'Teachers Standards', strong links are made between the quality of teaching, progress and pay.
- The additional funding provided for disadvantaged pupils in the form of the pupil premium is used to provide very effective additional support and keep class sizes small. The progress made by disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils is as good as, if not better than, their peers.
- The school's self-evaluation provides a detailed and accurate analysis of the position of the school. It is based upon an extensive analysis of accurate data about pupils' progress. Targets for pupils' progress are usually ambitious, although the curriculum is still a little restricted and does not provide older pupils with enough GCSE or equivalent options.
- Leaders have widened the range of vocational courses, with the introduction of construction, motor vehicle and hairdressing, preparing many older pupils more effectively for the next stage of their education. Partnerships with alternative providers, social services, the youth offending team and the Connexions service provide useful support for pupils, particularly when they leave the school. The local authority provides appropriate support to the school.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors ensure that statutory responsibilities are met in relation to the training and recruitment of staff. Governors do not have a good enough understanding of the quality of teaching and the ways in which staff development activities are used to drive improvement. They are very supportive of the executive headteacher and know that he uses appraisal and salary progression as effective levers to drive up standards. However, they do not have a sufficient understanding of how pupil premium funding is used to overcome barriers to learning.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	131766
Local authority	Newcastle-upon-Tyne
Inspection number	402508

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	124
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Peacock
Headteacher	Bill Curley
Date of previous school inspection	3 March 2010
Telephone number	0191 2986950
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