

Inspection of On Track Education – Totnes

Parragon Building, Ford Road, Totnes, Devon TQ9 5LQ

Inspection dates: 8 and 10 November 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Sixth-form provision	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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Does the school meet the independent school standards?	Yes
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What is it like to attend this school?

Strong, trusting relationships between staff and pupils form the foundation for success at On Track Education – Totnes. The unique nature of each pupil is fully understood.

Pupils arriving at the school have had a challenging journey. They have had a turbulent education experience, so arrive with gaps in their learning. The school provides pupils with a fresh start. Pupils begin to enjoy attending school. They have time to settle in and gradually increase their time at school. Due to the support they receive, pupils attend school more than they did in their previous settings. This helps them to close the gaps in their education and supports many of them in successfully moving on to a suitable college course.

Staff listen carefully to the pupils. Pupils have confidence in the adults that work with them. They feel safe. Staff are alert for any signs of bullying and use the school's agreed systems to manage pupils' behaviour consistently. Most parents and carers praise the nurture and support staff give their children. One stated, 'My child is now a different person since being at this school.'

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

All pupils, including students in the post-16 provision, have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They have experienced a disrupted education. As a result, they join the school with gaps in their learning. The proprietor and headteacher are ambitious for the pupils. They share a commitment to helping the pupils make up for time lost in education. To achieve this, leaders create individualised learning programmes for each pupil.

Leaders have established an effective admissions process that helps staff understand each pupil's needs and how best to meet these. Teachers use assessment well when new pupils arrive to check what they already know and can do. Staff then carefully design each pupil's learning programme to meet their needs and close gaps in their knowledge and skills.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils. Leaders have constructed a carefully considered curriculum. This blends academic provision with support for social and emotional development. There is a structured curriculum in place for each subject. Pupils work towards meaningful qualifications in all subjects. Teachers skilfully match pupils' learning to their interests. This helps to keep pupils engaged in learning. However, teachers record their assessment of pupils' progress in several different ways. As a result, subject leaders do not always have a complete picture of how well each pupil is covering and learning the full curriculum in their subject.

Students in the school's post-16 provision follow bespoke programmes of study. Staff match these programmes to the needs of each student well. There is a strong focus on preparing students to move on successfully to the next stage of their education.

Leaders ensure reading has high priority in the school. Pupils who struggle to read when they join the school have support from specially trained staff. This helps them grow into confident readers. Leaders devote time during the week to reading. Staff and pupils read together. Pupils have access to a wide range of high-quality books and magazines. This helps them find something to read that interests them.

Pupils' personal development lies at the heart of the school's work. All staff place a high priority on building strong, trusting relationships with pupils. This helps staff to understand the needs of each pupil. Experienced staff carefully assess the social and emotional needs of pupils. Pupils receive the support they need to understand their feelings and how this may affect their behaviour. As a result, pupils show improving levels of self-control and are generally respectful towards each other. They learn strategies that help them to manage their anxieties successfully.

The caring relationships which staff build with pupils help maintain a purposeful learning environment. Staff manage behaviour calmly and consistently. This approach contributes positively to pupils' learning. Sometimes pupils' behaviour is challenging but staff deal with it well. The procedures and routines that leaders have established promote good behaviour. Pupils' confidence increases as they spend more time at school.

The school's personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme is well-considered. Pupils learn about British values, such as the importance of respect for others. They also learn about healthy relationships. Across the curriculum, teachers carefully match learning to targets in pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Leaders ensure that dedicated curriculum time is provided for pupils to learn about relationships and sex education (RSE). The proprietor has ensured that staff have consulted with parents about the school's RSE policy.

Pupils and post-16 students receive individual, independent careers advice. This supports them in making decisions about their futures. Furthermore, PSHE lessons help pupils to think about the future. Teachers encourage pupils to think about careers and the qualifications they need. Staff support pupils and students effectively in moving on to local colleges for the next stage of their education.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They value leaders' consideration of staff workload. In addition, staff appreciate the training opportunities offered.

The proprietor has a clear understanding of their responsibilities. There is a structure for checking the quality of the school's work and holding leaders to account. The proprietor ensures that the school meets the independent school standards. The school's website provides parents with the required information. This includes the school's safeguarding policy and complaints procedure. The school site is safe because staff rigorously follow health and safety policies and procedures. The proprietor ensures that the school complies with the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The culture of safeguarding at the school is strong. Leaders ensure staff receive up-to-date safeguarding training. Each member of staff knows what they need to look out for and what actions to take to help keep pupils safe.

Leaders' systems to share information with others who work with pupils are effective. Leaders monitor safeguarding and behaviour information closely to identify any emerging patterns.

The proprietor undertakes all the required recruitment checks. This ensures that they appoint appropriate adults to work with pupils.

Pupils learn how to manage risks associated with online activities as well as physical relationships.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Curriculum leaders are new to their roles. They are still developing the assessment system used to ensure pupils cover and learn all aspects of their subject. As a result, leaders do not know if pupils are covering and learning the full curriculum. Senior leaders need to provide curriculum leaders with the support necessary to fully embed the assessment system so that coverage of the curriculum and pupils' learning in all subjects are fully understood.

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	131715
DfE registration number	878/6060
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10239787
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	37
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	5
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	On Track Education Services Limited
Chair	Jane Cox
Headteacher	Joel McIlven
Annual fees (day pupils)	£39,615 to £64,277
Telephone number	01803 866462
Website	www.ontrackededucation.com
Email address	totnes@ontrackededucation.com
Date of previous inspection	3 to 5 July 2018

Information about this school

- The school is operated by On Track Education Services Limited. The proprietor has seven other schools.
- The school is located on two sites:
 - Parragon Building, Ford Road, Totnes, Devon, TQ9 5LQ
 - Roborough House, Seale Hayne, Newton Abbott, Devon, TQ12 6NQ.
- The school caters for pupils who have a range of SEND, including social, emotional and mental health difficulties. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- All pupils are placed at the school through their local authority. Pupils come from Devon, Torbay, Plymouth and Cornwall.
- The school's previous standard inspection was in July 2018. At that time, all aspects of the school's work were judged good and all the independent school standards were met.
- The school's current headteacher was appointed in September 2022.
- There is no governing body.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, and other members of staff. The lead inspector met with a director who represented the proprietor and spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science and PSHE. 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 samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector toured both of the school sites to check that all the independent school standards relating to the premises were met.

- The inspectors reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding. The inspectors also spoke with staff to understand how they keep pupils safe and reviewed the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.
- Inspectors took note of the responses received on Ofsted Parent View and considered the results of the Ofsted staff survey. Inspectors also spoke to some parents on the telephone and at the school. Inspectors met with pupils as well.

Inspection team

Mark Burgess, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Non Davies

Ofsted Inspector

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