Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Tor View School

Clod Lane, Haslingden, Rossendale, Lancashire BB4 6LR

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 February 2025

Outcome

Tor View School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Samantha Dillon. This school is part of The Sea View Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Angela Holdsworth, MBE, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Martyn Jones. There is also an executive headteacher, Louise Parish, who is responsible for this school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Tor View School are caring, compassionate and kind-hearted. They thrive at this school. Staff help pupils to understand that there are no limits to what they can achieve. Pupils are wonderful ambassadors for the school. This shows in the way that they talk about the positive impact that the school has had on their growth as a young person. They benefit from a calm and purposeful environment. Pupils are happy at this school.

All the pupils at this school have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school prioritises the development of pupils' communication, sensory and emotional needs. Pupils respond exceptionally well to the very high aspirations that the school has for their achievement and wider development.

The school ensures that pupils access an extensive range of experiences that make a powerful contribution to their development. Pupils enjoy the opportunities that they have to discover new talents and interests. They gain confidence when they perform in the school's 'Face Me' theatre productions and at 'Tor View's got talent'. As school counsellors, playground leaders and employees at the school café, pupils become responsible members of the school community. Enterprise opportunities enable pupils to run a business and to become financially savvy.

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

Collectively, trustees, governors and the school have created an environment where pupils are welcomed and valued as individuals. From the early years to Year 14, pupils take pride in learning the broad and ambitious curriculum that the school has designed. The school tailors its well-designed curriculum to the specific needs of each pupil with care and precision. Children in the early years make a strong and purposeful start to their time at the school. Older pupils achieve awards and qualifications that prepare them well for their next steps. These include further education, employment with training and independent living.

The school builds an understanding of each pupil's additional needs with a high level of diligence and expertise. It provides staff with comprehensive information that enables them to tailor learning activities so that pupils progress through their developmental milestones with success. Once pupils achieve these milestones, the school does not allow them to rest on their targets and it constantly seeks to increase the level of expectation and aspiration that it has for its pupils.

Staff use their strong subject knowledge to make effective checks on what pupils know and can do. They assist pupils to address any gaps that they may have in their learning which helps pupils to build up their basic skills with confidence. Pupils value the contribution that staff make to getting them ready to tackle more complex learning.

Pupils value opportunities to visit mainstream lessons in local schools where they build strong friendships and a secure understanding of a broad range of subjects. Pupils recall their learning vividly. The intensive support centre provides pupils with a safe space in which skilled and trusted adults help them to engage with learning where they may have found this difficult in the past. This facility provides pupils with a precious opportunity to succeed in their education.

The school prioritises the development of pupils' reading and communication skills. Children in the early years develop their early language by joining in with stories, songs and rhymes. Pupils with communication needs receive focused support. This includes the use of sign language, visual aids and modern technology. As a result, pupils learn how to articulate their thoughts and feelings to others with confidence. Pupils at the early stages of learning to read receive the effective help that they need to develop their phonics knowledge. They read from books that are well matched to the sounds they already know. This helps these pupils to become confident and fluent readers.

Pupils have a positive appetite for learning. The school provides nuanced support to pupils so that they quickly learn how to manage their own behaviour. This helps pupils to make the most of all that the school provides for them. The school's close work with parents and carers helps to remove any barriers that prevent pupils from attending school. As a result, pupils attend school regularly.

The school's personal development provision prepares pupils extremely well for adulthood. For example, pupils learn about healthy relationships and how to care for their

physical and mental health. Trips to places of interest, such as major cities, enhance pupils' understanding of the subjects that they study. Pupils benefit from independent careers advice and a personalised programme of careers education which includes work experience that is well-matched to their interests and aspirations.

Staff have an overwhelmingly positive view of the school. The extensive package of training that staff receive helps them to carry out their roles with a high degree of satisfaction and effectiveness. This supports their well-being.

Parents hold the school in high regard. They are effusive about the contribution that the school makes to their children's development. Several parents told inspectors that the school had unlocked their child's potential so that they were now able to enjoy family time together such as meals out and visits to places in the local community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be outstanding for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Tor View Specialist Learning Community to be outstanding for overall effectiveness in December 2013.

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.

Further information

You can search for published performance information about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the definition of children in need of help and protection; pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's pupil premium funding (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	143879
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10348360
Type of school	Special
School category	Academy special converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	259
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	57
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Martyn Jones
CEO of the trust	Angela Holdsworth MBE
Headteacher	Samantha Dillon (Headteacher) Louise Parrish (Executive headteacher)
Website	http://torview.org/
Dates of previous inspection	3 and 4 December 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- All pupils at the school have an education, health and care plan (EHCP).
- The school provides for pupils with a wide range of SEND, including complex needs. This includes autism, specific learning difficulties, moderate learning difficulties, and social and speech, language and communication needs. Some pupils have severe learning difficulties, hearing and visual impairments or physical disabilities.
- The school has a pan-authority intensive support centre. This centre provides specialist support for 12 pupils aged between 11 and 19 who may have been permanently

excluded from other specialist provision. At the time of this inspection, there were 11 pupils on roll at the intensive support centre.

- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- 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 visited a sample of lessons, including to the intensive support centre, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the CEO of the trust, the deputy CEO and executive headteacher, the headteacher and other senior leaders.
- The lead inspector held meetings with members of the trust and the governing body, including the chair of governors. He also spoke with representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors met with leaders to discuss SEND, the curriculum, assessment, pupils' behaviour and attitudes, the school's pupil premium strategy and the provision for pupils' personal development.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. Inspectors gathered the views of staff and pupils throughout the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being.

Inspection team

Andy Cunningham, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Tracy Beaty	Ofsted Inspector

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