

# Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Taunton Deane Partnership College

Byron Road, Taunton, Somerset TA1 2JD

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Inspection dates:

11 and 12 February 2025

## **Outcome**

Taunton Deane Partnership College has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Taunton Deane Partnership College is ambitious for the wide range of pupils who attend the school, most of whom have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Whether accessing short sessions in the hospital or forest school or attending for a longer period at one of the main bases, staff are determined to help pupils succeed. Most pupils do well at the school. Some are supported to stay in mainstream school while others are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Most pupils enjoy coming to the school. Pupils recognise how the school helps them to stay safe. Regular opportunities to talk about issues such as vaping and knife crime help pupils learn how to look after themselves. The school creates an environment where pupils are supported to behave well and try new things.

Parents and carers value the school. They appreciate the range of opportunities and the support that they get from staff. Parents are particularly pleased with the way the school helps their children to improve their social skills, making them more confident and able to get along better with others. Parents say the school really knows their children. This helps their children to thrive.

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

Most pupils have either SEND or significant gaps in their learning. Many pupils have also struggled to meet the behaviour expectations in their previous schools. To address these needs, the school has developed a broad curriculum that combines academic study with opportunities to re-engage with school life.

Primary pupils learn phonics and practise their reading, mathematics and writing every day. Regular sessions provide opportunities for pupils to practise building friendships and getting on with other people. The success of this approach can be seen in the improvements to pupils' work in books and the projects that they are able to complete together. As a result, primary pupils are becoming confident readers, writers and mathematicians.

For secondary pupils, the academic curriculum is targeted to address the gaps in learning. Activities build pupils' confidence and help to prepare them for when they leave the school. Many sessions are intended to give pupils the skills that they need to re-engage with school life. The school recognises that learning new behaviour is a task, just like learning to read or write. However, activities are not sufficiently well targeted to ensure that all pupils learn the skills they need to positively re-engage with school life.

The support for pupils with SEND is strong. Staff work closely with pupils to identify any additional needs that they have. This information is used well to ensure that the right support is in place as soon as pupils start in school. Although information is gathered about many aspects of reading, the school does not routinely check that older pupils have the phonics knowledge that they need to read and write fluently. This prevents some pupils from becoming confident readers and writers.

Pupils' safety and well-being are given a high priority. The school has very thorough procedures in place to deal with behaviour issues. When necessary, it liaises with other services to ensure that pupils are safe. The school has a clear strategic approach to improving pupil's attendance based on a finely tuned understanding of the individual circumstances of each pupil. This is resulting in improved attendance for most pupils.

Most pupils are well-prepared for the next stage in their education. Pupils' personal development places a strong emphasis on educating pupils about the immediate risks in their daily lives, giving them the knowledge they need to make informed decisions. Careers education and work-related learning help pupils to understand the requirements of the jobs and courses that they would like to pursue.

Leaders are determined to further improve the school. The management committee have a good understanding of the challenges facing the school. They value the improvements achieved so far. Most staff enjoy working in the school and feel well supported.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The re-engagement curriculum is not delivered consistently well across the school. This is because the most important information that pupils need to learn has not been identified. Consequently, not all pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education. The school should identify and sequence this knowledge so that pupils know more, remember more and can do more over time.
- The school does not have a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics for older pupils. This means that some pupils do not develop the secure knowledge they need to read and write well. The school should ensure that all pupils gain this phonics knowledge and become accurate and confident readers and writers.

## 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 good 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in December 2019.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	134699
<b>Local authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	10344582
<b>Type of school</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>School category</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	59
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Local authority
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kim Lawrence
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.tauntondeanepartnershipcollege.org">www.tauntondeanepartnershipcollege.org</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	3 and 4 December 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Taunton Deane Partnership College is located on five sites. The Deane Discovery Centre caters for pupils in key stages 1 and 2. The Holway centre caters for pupils in key stages 3 and 4. Otterhead Forest School provides alternative provision. A hospital education unit is based at Musgrove Park Hospital in Taunton. The Northfields Education Centre is an outreach base for small-group and one to one work.
- The school uses Otterhead Forest School to provide alternative provision for some pupils.
- All pupils have SEND. Many pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school provides online education and support for pupils who are not able to attend the school in person due their medical or personal needs.
- The school provides outreach support to primary and secondary schools in the Taunton area.

## 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.
- 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.
- The Deane Discovery Centre, the Holway Centre, Otterhead Forest School and the hospital education unit were visited by inspectors. At the time of the inspection no pupils were on site at the Northfields Education Centre.
- During the inspection, the lead inspector spoke to parents on the phone to gather their views.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and four members of the management committee. Inspectors also met with a representative from the local authority.

### **Inspection teams**

Phil Minns, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Stephen Lee

Ofsted Inspector

Hester Millsop

Ofsted Inspector

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