

# Wings East

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Alan Lemon
Social care inspector	Christy Wannop

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## Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.<sup>1, 2</sup>

An inspection of the care provision was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 having regard to the national minimum standards for children's homes. This inspection took place at the same time but the full report is published separately on Ofsted's website and should be read in conjunction with this report which covers the educational registration of the school.

## Information about the school

Wings East was opened in January 2010 as an independent special school and also as a children's home by the proprietor, Wings Education Ltd. This is the school's first inspection although the children's home was last inspected in June 2010.

The school occupies a converted stately home set in extensive parkland. The children's home is adjacent to the school in new purpose-built accommodation. The school is registered for 34 boys and girls aged 11 to 16 years. There are 26 currently on roll made up of 12 boys and 14 girls, all of who are accommodated in the children's home. Most students have a statement of special educational needs identifying behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The large majority are looked after by their local authorities and those on roll have been placed at Wings East by 13 local authorities across England.

Wings East aims to create a centre of excellence for the education, care and personal development of students with emotional, behavioural and social difficulties.

## Evaluation of the school

The quality of education is satisfactory, as are the curriculum, teaching and assessment. Students make sound progress, and their behaviour and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Students' welfare, health and safety are satisfactory and safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. The school is making good progress towards achieving its aims and it meets all of the Independent School Standards. The overall effectiveness of boarding is satisfactory.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga\\_20020032\\_en\\_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162)

<sup>2</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga\\_20050018\\_en\\_15#sch8](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8)

## Quality of education

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is the school's aim to create an ethos matching that of a maintained secondary school and the curriculum reflects an emphasis on academic study and examinations. It offers the full range of the National Curriculum in Years 7 to 9 and a wide choice of GCSE courses in Years 10 and 11. Students are expected to approach learning with the seriousness and commitment of any student of the same age. This has a good effect on attitudes to learning; the broad curriculum offered is seen by students as a genuine opportunity to make progress and achieve and this goes a long way towards removing the barriers to learning put up by their behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.

All of the subjects and examinations taught are supported with adequate schemes of work and syllabi; GCSE course requirements are well understood. Some subjects are more fully implemented than others in terms of their relevance and interest to students and this reflects different amounts of expertise informing subject leadership. Work and activities in English, history, geography and food technology are planned well and they engage and challenge students. Other subjects do so to a lesser degree and science is weak because the investigative, experimental aspects of learning are not being implemented to good effect. Students' views on what works well and not so well in the curriculum closely match inspection findings.

Students are also enthused by the work and activities offered in personal, social and health education, citing discussions around relationships, racism, bullying and healthy lifestyle as engaging and valuable. Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning, taught in Years 7 to 9, helps these students explore the difficulties that confront them and contributes significantly to their personal development.

Classroom work is enriched by a good variety of extra activities such as ice-skating, swimming, art and cookery as well as kayaking and horse-riding. After school each day, boarders enjoy these enriching activities and well-structured leisure routines. They are kept busy and not bored, and there is a strong sense of fun in many of the staff's relationships and interactions with children.

Teaching and assessment are satisfactory. The mix of more experienced teachers with others less so, creates variability in the quality of teaching; some is good, most is satisfactory and a little is inadequate. School leaders are seeking to raise the quality of teaching although their interventions in this respect are at an early stage. There is sufficient good teaching promoting learning and progress to serve as a model approach. In English, history and food technology, expectations are high and the pace of learning is good. The rapport with students is positive and their capabilities are understood. Work is challenging and students see purpose in their efforts to achieve and make progress. Otherwise, teaching is less skilful in attaching a clear learning objective to the work students are asked to do; lesson time is more focused on completing a task and assessment is not applied in a refined way to match work to each student's capabilities. In science, the over-reliance on reading and answering questioning in text books makes learning dull. As class groups are

small and each teacher has a classroom assistant, students receive close attention and support and this helps them persevere and behave appropriately. Teaching assistants are skilful in encouraging students and supporting their learning.

Progress is satisfactory. The systematic tracking of progress is being introduced but the limited data at present means there is no clear perspective on progress over time. There are no GCSE results as yet, although predicted grades and the coursework in students' folders point to satisfactory progress at least. Teachers use assessments to set targets based on the progress students are normally expected to make. However, the strategies to pursue targets are not always clear. Students' individual education plans set targets focused on behaviour and other aspects of personal development but not on academic priorities, which is a shortcoming.

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students**

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Students' attitude to school is positive and their behaviour is good, which reflects the widespread success in students adopting the school's high values and expectations. The children's home is developing resources to promote independence to prepare leavers for transition. Accommodation in the children's home is arranged according to age and older students have good opportunities to practise independent living skills.

The system of merits and rewards acts as a strong incentive to behave well and to act appropriately within a clear moral framework. Relationships between students are positive and they all get along well with staff. This builds self-confidence and a good enjoyment of school. Good social skills are evident in students' concern for each other and in their willingness to help. They are proud of their fund-raising for a school in Kenya and could contribute much more if further opportunities permitted. A school council is being planned. In citizenship, students learn tolerance and understanding in tackling the issues in racism and bullying and this is expressed clearly in how they accept cultural differences and show respect for each other.

### **Welfare, health and safety of students**

The welfare, health and safety of students are satisfactory. The promotion of a healthy lifestyle is good and acts as a positive influence on the choices students make about habits, diet and staying fit physically. Students are closely supervised, well-cared for and in most respects are kept safe. The risk of bullying is reduced by a robustly implemented policy and students are adamant that no bullying takes place.

Child protection arrangements are firmly in place; the senior staff who have responsibility for child protection procedures are known and are trained to take a lead. Most staff are appropriately trained for child protection, although this has not extended to ancillary staff in the children's home who have contact with students. Checks on the suitability of staff are not rigorous in all respects; procedures, while understood, do not ensure the proprietor has obtained all of an appointee's written references before they start work.

A full range of policies and procedures are in place promoting health and safety, including when students are on visits away from school. A wide range of risk assessments have been completed to ensure health and safety, including a satisfactory level of fire safety.

The school fully meets the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended).

### **Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors**

All of the checks to confirm the suitability of staff and proprietors are carried out and meet requirements. The checks are managed directly by the proprietor and not by the school. This has led to the school holding incomplete evidence of checks which has led to gaps in the single central register. This was fully rectified in the course of the inspection and the school now has a complete record and evidence of suitability checks.

### **Premises of and accommodation at the school**

The premises and accommodation are of high quality and meet all of the regulations. The school is in an outstanding rural setting providing superb, safe accommodation and many excellent indoor and outdoor facilities, all promoting learning and personal development. The school, occupying the substantially renovated building, provides a broad range of very good accommodation including spacious classrooms and well-furnished specialist areas for science, information and communication technology, food technology and art.

### **Provision of information**

All regulations are met. Wings East statement of purpose provides parents, carers and others with comprehensive and detailed information about the school. A regular newsletter keeps stakeholders up-to-date with school events and new developments. Parents receive regular written reports on their children's progress and the school supplies detailed reports for the annual review of students' statements.

### **Manner in which complaints are to be handled**

All of the regulations are met. The complaints procedure is precise and easily understood by parents and others. There have been no complaints in the past year.

### **Effectiveness of the boarding provision**

The care provision was judged to be satisfactory but not all of the national minimum standards were met. A full report on the care provision is available on Ofsted's website and should be viewed in conjunction with this report.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations').

Please see the report on Ofsted's website relating to the care provision in the children's home which should be read in conjunction with this report.

## **What the school could do to improve further**

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- improve the quality of teaching and promote good progress through the development of effective approaches to learning and, in particular, the effective use of assessment to plan lessons and set targets
- improve students' interest and engagement in science by developing the teaching of scientific methods particularly through investigation and experimentation.

## Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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### The quality of education

Overall quality of education			✓	
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of students			✓	
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of students' needs			✓	
How well students make progress in their learning			✓	

### Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of students		✓		

### Welfare, health and safety of students

The overall welfare, health and safety of students			✓	
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### The quality of boarding provision

Effectiveness of boarding provision			✓	
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## School details

<b>School status</b>	Independent		
<b>Type of school</b>	Special school for students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties		
<b>Date school opened</b>	January 2010		
<b>Age range of students</b>	11-16		
<b>Gender of students</b>	Mixed		
<b>Number on roll (full-time students)</b>	Boys: 12	Girls: 14	Total: 26
<b>Number of students with a statement of special educational needs</b>	Boys: 10	Girls: 10	Total: 20
<b>Number of students who are looked after</b>	Boys: 11	Girls: 10	Total: 21
<b>Annual fees (boarding students)</b>	£102,930 (38 weeks) £149,859 (52 weeks)		
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dr Roger Shipton		
<b>Proprietor</b>	Wings Educational Ltd		