

Fairways School

Independent school standard inspection report

DfE registration number	850/6088
Unique Reference Number (URN)	135240
Inspection number	364307
Inspection dates	20–21 October 2010
Reporting inspector	John Seal HMI

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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.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

Fairways is an independent special school for boys and girls aged from 11 to 18. The school shares a site with a separately registered children's home, both of which are run by Fairways Care UK Limited. It is registered for 20 pupils. At the time of the inspection there were nine pupils on roll. All of the pupils attending the school have a statement of special educational needs and have been identified as either having emotional, behavioural and social difficulties or autism. The pupils come from a variety of home backgrounds including foster care and some are looked after by their local authority. The aims of the school are:

'to enable pupils to become positive members of the local, national and global community through initially building self-esteem and developing social and emotional well-being, alongside providing a structured, diverse and creative curriculum, the design of which is aimed at enabling all pupils to develop a sense of achievement.'

The school is based on two sites: the main building is situated near Swanwick in Hampshire and there is a small, vocational training site in Southsea. The school opened in 2006 and was last inspected in February 2008.

Evaluation of the school

Fairways School provides a satisfactory quality of education. It meets all the regulatory requirements for independent schools which is an improvement from the last inspection. Most of the points for development outlined in the previous report have been addressed. The school successfully meets its aims. Strengths of the school include: the good pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the good promotion of pupils' welfare, health and safety, including effective safeguarding procedures. Pupils' behaviour is good and they make satisfactory progress. The curriculum and teaching and assessment are satisfactory.

Quality of education

¹ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162

² www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8

The satisfactory curriculum has a clear and detailed policy. There are appropriate plans for most subjects based on either the National Curriculum or nationally accredited courses such as Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN). Pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) is appropriately supported by the ASDAN Life Skills awards, which are supplemented informally by staff during the school day. Pupils' basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) are appropriately planned. The school uses its outdoor space and links to local sports facilities to provide pupils with physical education (PE) activities and lessons. Although there are general long-term plans for other subjects, for example in science, there is insufficient detail to support pupils' progression throughout each term. In Key Stage 4, pupils are provided with opportunities to follow GCSE courses and the school has set up a vocational training unit on a separate site. Here, some pupils are studying motorcycle maintenance and carpentry skills based on City and Guilds materials. The school is beginning to forge effective links with local colleges where some of the pupils have begun to attend courses on hair and beauty, construction and catering.

To enhance the curriculum and provide pupils with stimulating experiences there are opportunities to attend powerboat courses. As a result, some pupils have achieved Royal Yachting Association (RYA) qualifications. There are other experiences on offer which include horse riding and fishing. The school invites visitors to the school, including sexual health advisors and the 'Prison me? No way' team. Appropriate work experiences are provided through links with local colleges. Careers advice is being developed through recent staff appointments and links with the Connexions service. Despite the range of activities on offer, some activities have been introduced too recently to gauge their impact. In addition, there is insufficient formal planning to ensure pupils' learning needs are fully met. Consequently, there are missed opportunities to link these activities to other subjects or to develop pupils' basic skills.

Teaching and assessment are satisfactory. There is a range in the quality of teaching resulting in some good lessons but many that are satisfactory. This is because of the inconsistent approach across subjects and teachers in the quality of planning and teaching of lessons. Where lessons are most effective, teachers ensure that the requirements of pupils' statements of special educational needs are matched with clear learning outcomes. As a result, pupils make good progress and are able to work in a sustained, concentrated manner. However, there are many lessons where the specific learning outcomes are not clear or do not meet the specific needs of the pupils. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress. Not all staff are qualified or experienced in teaching pupils with specific learning needs and, although they are generally very skilful in behaviour management and establishing positive relationships, there many occasions when pupils' next steps in learning are not precisely identified, leading to satisfactory progress. In lessons, pupils' prior learning and their next steps are not always fully taken into account or fed back to the pupil. Many teachers follow nationally accredited coursework, but only some of them evaluate and adapt their plans to ensure pupils make the most progress possible.

The school has a range of information regarding pupils' achievements for literacy and numeracy but these data are not monitored rigorously enough to either check how much progress pupils are making or to set them appropriately challenging targets. Some pupils have achieved one or more GCSEs at the end of Key Stage 4 and bronze or silver ASDAN awards. All the pupils who have left the school have gone on to further training or education. However, the use of targets and clear learning outcomes to ensure pupils make even better progress is not consistent.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Because of the serious and complex needs of all the pupils, the school's staff have developed effective behaviour management strategies enabling pupils to understand and demonstrate good behaviour for most of the school day. The school has effective systems and procedures for working with pupils who challenge accepted ways of behaving. As a result, much of the school day is calm and productive. There are regular opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills and interact with groups and with other pupils on work placements and college courses. Pupils' attendance rates are good and this is no mean feat as many start the school from a position of either non-attending or very low and infrequent attendance at their previous schools. The school effectively promotes pupils' tolerance, and understanding of different faiths and beliefs through visits to local places of worship including a Mosque and Sikh temple. The recent establishment of a vocational training centre, day release to colleges and a focus on basic skills contribute effectively to pupils' future economic well-being.

The school promotes pupils' contribution to the school community through activities such as the weekly pupil meeting and involving pupils in the preparation and presentation of lunches cooked in the school kitchen. Because of the complex needs of the pupils, the school takes an active role in promoting their safety and well-being through a range of activities on how to live healthier lifestyles through raising awareness of the dangers of smoking and substance abuse. The school works closely with outside agencies including the local authority and a local adolescent mental health unit. In the questionnaires returned during the inspection, pupils said they felt safe at school. The positive relationships between staff and pupils ensure there is always an adult that can be turned to if help is needed. Pupils' awareness of public institutions in England is supported by visits and visitors, including the local fire service and police officers.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The school's promotion of pupils' welfare, health and safety is good. There are robust policies and procedures in place which ensure all staff have received the required child protection training. There are good links with the care home, parents and carers which are well managed. Daily meetings of all staff take place to ensure pupils are prepared for school and any incidents are discussed, logged and followed

up. Incidents of bullying are very rare and there are very few fixed-term exclusions and no permanent exclusions. The school promotes pupils' awareness of how to live healthy lifestyles and there are many opportunities for them to be physically active. By involving pupils in preparing school meals, healthy eating is promoted well. The school has a rigorous approach to risk assessments both on and off site. The school's development plan meets the regulatory requirements of the Disability and Discrimination Act, which is an improvement from the previous inspection.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school has effectively carried out the required checks on all staff and proprietors prior to their appointment to make sure there are no reasons why they should not be employed to work with children. The required checks are recorded in a single central register, which is an improvement from the last inspection.

Premises of and accommodation at the school

The school's premises and accommodation meet all the regulatory requirements. Classrooms are in good condition and suitable for the curriculum and numbers on roll. There are specialist rooms for art, music, science and food technology. The separate vocational training site is appropriately equipped with materials, resources, tools and safety equipment. The main site has appropriately-sized hard and grassed outside areas.

Provision of information

The school provides clear, accurate and up-to-date information for current and prospective parents, carers, inspectors, Ofsted and the Department for Education (DfE) on request. There is a clear and helpful prospectus and website. Most of the parental questionnaires returned were highly positive as was the one from a local authority. The school provides termly reports to parents and carers about their learning which is an improvement since the last inspection.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school's complaints procedure meets the requirements.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

What the school could do to improve further

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

- Ensure that all lessons are planned to include clear learning outcomes which are based on an understanding of individual pupils' next steps in learning.
- Include the off-site and practical activities in curriculum planning by linking them to other subjects in order to optimise all pupils' learning.
- Use assessment information more effectively to rigorously monitor pupils' progress.

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 pupils			✓	
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs			✓	
How well pupils make progress in their learning			✓	

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

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

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		✓		
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SCHOOL DETAILS

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Special school for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties		
Date school opened	2006		
Age range of pupils	11–19		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 6	Girls: 3	Total: 9
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 6	Girls: 3	Total: 9
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 5	Girls: 0	Total: 5
Annual fees (day pupils)	£ 41,786		
Address of school	Manor Farm Cottage, New Road, Swanwick SO31 7HE		
Telephone number	01489 579011		
Email address	ian@fairways-care.org		
Headteacher	Mr I Thorsteinsson		
Proprietor	Fairways Care UK Ltd		