

# iMap Centre

Independent school standard inspection report

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URN for social care	SC407800
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Reporting inspector	Ramesh Kapadia
Social care inspector	Karen Forster

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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

The iMap Centre is an independent residential special school for students aged 11–19 years. Students currently in school are aged 13–19 years. The site includes a large manor house and a lodge, with teaching blocks, situated in 10 acres of grounds. It provides education and care facilities for students who have severe autism, severe learning difficulties, and challenging behaviour; all have a statement of special educational needs, and many require 52 week placements as a result of their very complex needs. There are fourteen boarders and one day student. The school is dually registered as a residential school and a children's home, and has more boys than girls. The centre is committed to increasing the participation of young people with autism in all aspects of living and learning and helping them to make a positive contribution to society by developing their independence and decision-making skills. The school was formerly called Lambs Grange School and was last inspected in July 2007, with a follow-up inspection in November 2009. Its new owner took over the school in December 2009, and it has been re-named in line with its rationale of 'individuals making autism positive'. This is the first inspection of the residential care provision since it was re-registered following the change of ownership.

## Evaluation of the school

The iMap Centre meets its aims. It provides a satisfactory quality of education and a good quality of residential care. It has made a significant number of improvements since its last inspection in 2007, especially in arrangements for welfare, health and safety which are good, and recent significant refurbishment of the facilities. Safeguarding procedures are robust. All other areas are satisfactory and all regulations are met; this is a significant improvement from the previous inspection. The school meets the learning needs of its students well, especially through its promotion of joint educational and residential provision and support.

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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, which is satisfactory, is broad and balanced for students of compulsory school age, including regular lessons in English and mathematics. Other areas such as science, technology, information and communication technology (ICT), creative and physical development are covered. Religious education promotes the coverage of spiritual and moral issues, while physical education is linked to students' interests such as swimming or golf. There is a strong emphasis on personal, social, health and citizenship education, which is included both as a discrete subject and in a cross-curricular way. The schemes of work are based on a commercial scheme, which is adapted further to meet the complex needs of students. Their needs are met with very high levels of structure and support throughout their day. The personalised approach with joint targets agreed by education and care staff promotes the effective 24-hour curriculum increasingly well. There is speech and language therapy, as well as music therapy.

The school has moved from compatibility grouping to grouping students in three age-related classes, to which the teaching staff and students are adapting. There are plans to involve residential care staff as teaching assistants on a regular basis in all classes in the school. The class for the oldest students aims to plan for transition into adult life and includes a range of varied activities; some students also follow vocational courses and attend a local college. Careers education is provided and there is an effective partnership agreement with the Connexions service and appropriate opportunities for work experience which have been effectively utilised. The range of extra-curricular activities at lunchtime is not extensive, but is developing. External visits and some holidays are also arranged by the care staff, as part of the 24-hour curriculum.

Teaching and assessment are satisfactory. Teachers plan individual tasks for students in sessions, but occasionally these are not matched as well as they could be to students' individual needs. There is occasional group work but this is limited and sometimes difficult to implement with regards to varying students' needs. The school intends to extend the range of group work over the year. A lesson with good features included practical activities in technology to engage students. Teachers are making good use of the new facilities of interactive whiteboards in teaching small groups.

Students' progress is satisfactory. Care is taken at the start of sessions to orient students to work, sometimes including a walk outside. Students' learning is restricted by their short span of concentration and there are occasional lapses in behaviour. However, this is well managed and there are well-understood systems for managing behaviour, such as the 'Go' system, where students can go to an alternative place to reduce their anxiety level. Over time, behaviour management does have a positive effect, as was evident with one student who had learnt how to plan an external trip to an art gallery, and also developed extensive skills in ICT. For other students, the process of increasing their independence and decision-making skills is slower. Work in students' files is sometimes sparse because of their limited written skills, but

evidence of their progress is supplemented by other evidence to show their attainment. A new assessment system with smaller steps has been introduced, but teachers recognise that the assessments have to be moderated and are moving towards more consistency. Assessments have already been made in English and mathematics but are yet to be made for other subjects of the curriculum. Entry level and other accredited courses are used to enable students to gain externally recognised accredited qualifications in a variety of areas including literary, numeracy and science.

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

The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Students are learning to recognise differences between right and wrong. Spiritual development is promoted in religious education, which also deals with moral issues sensitively. A strong emphasis is put on social development by care and education staff who share information as necessary and work well together. Cultural development is fostered, for example, by trying food from different countries and the overall provision to develop cultural awareness and tolerance amongst all students is satisfactory. Lessons in personal, social, health and citizenship education provide some opportunities for students to learn about other cultures and religions. Students are developing positively their awareness of public institutions and responsibilities through topics taught within citizenship, such as banks and post offices. Economic well-being is supported by the emphasis on literacy and numeracy, as well as other activities such as opening a bank account. In questionnaire returns, adapted to their needs, students stated that they enjoy school; they also attend regularly. They sometimes find it hard to manage their own behaviour, which is satisfactory overall.

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

The provision for the welfare, health and safety of students is good. Arrangements for ensuring the welfare, health and safety of students, which were judged inadequate a few years ago, have been considerably improved and supported with appropriate training, such as a course on safer recruitment. Child protection procedures are in place and given a high priority, with regular training for all staff, and enhanced training for several members of the senior management team. Risk assessments are undertaken, including for educational trips and other activities.

The positive ethos in the school ensures that students feel safe and are well-cared for. Arrangements for first aid and monitoring health and welfare of students are systematic, with many staff trained in first aid. Students learn to cook healthy meals, such as one student who used recipes from the British Heart Foundation. They are also prompted to adopt a healthy life style by staff. They have raised money for charities such as Macmillan Nurses and also the Forestry Commission. The school meets the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended.

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

The school maintains a single central record of checks on staff and undertakes vetting checks systematically, in line with statutory requirements. Criminal record checks are renewed every three years and so all staff have had an enhanced criminal records check.

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

The school is set in peaceful grounds and provides a safe and supportive environment for students with autism and learning difficulties. The three main classrooms are of a suitable size and there are some specialist facilities such as rooms for music therapy and speech and language therapy. Facilities for teaching practical subjects like science and technology are supplemented by staff bringing materials into the classroom to allow experiments to be undertaken. There is a sensory room, though this was not used during this inspection. Toilet provision is sufficient and changes have been made to provide a medical room for students who are ill. There are areas which can be used for horticultural purposes and recreation. The school is near open country and well located so that students can undertake leisure walks and outdoor pursuits.

## **Provision of information**

There are good channels of communication with students and their families to ensure that information relating to education and care is shared quickly. Returns from the parental questionnaire for the inspection indicated their satisfaction with the school. Regular progress reports are completed to support individual education plans, which are completed for all students. Annual written reports are provided to parents and carers. The school's brochure includes all the required information, as does its web-site.

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

The school's complaints policy complies with the regulations.

## **Effectiveness of the boarding provision**

The care provision was judged to be good and 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 point for development.

- Use the new system of assessment to plan learning tasks which offer an appropriate level of challenge to engage students and help them to make incremental steps of progress on a regular basis.

## 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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### The quality of boarding provision (*delete table if there is no such provision*)

Effectiveness of boarding provision		✓		
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## School details

<b>School status</b>	Independent		
<b>Type of school</b>	Residential special school for students with autism and severe learning difficulties		
<b>Date school opened</b>	September 1998		
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed		
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 13	Girls: 2	Total: 15
<b>Number on roll (part-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
<b>Number of boarders</b>	Boys: 12	Girls: 2	Total: 14
<b>Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs</b>	Boys: 13	Girls: 2	Total: 15
<b>Number of pupils who are looked after</b>	Boys: 10	Girls: 2	Total: 12
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£55,000		
<b>Annual fees (boarders)</b>	£229,000		
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:enquiries@imapcentre.co.uk">enquiries@imapcentre.co.uk</a>		
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Joanne Mills		
<b>Proprietor</b>	Mr Martin McKeivitt		