

School URN 131384

Independent school standard inspection report

DfE registration number	354/6017
Unique Reference Number (URN)	131384
URN for social care	SC054677
Inspection number	348719
Inspection dates	21-22 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Chanan Tomlin
Social care inspector	Graham Robinson

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

No. 090070

© Crown copyright 2011



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}

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 school, which is part of the Green Corns Continuum Group, is a small independent special school for students aged 10–18 years that is co-located in a children's home. The school opened in 2006. Students are usually funded for full-time attendance by a local education authority. The school caters for students with severe emotional and behavioural difficulties. Students who attend the school often have a history of failed placements in local authority and/or foster homes. The school seeks to give focused individual attention to those on roll. There is one student on roll. The student has a statement of special educational needs. Specialist on-site support is given by in-house clinicians, or through local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). Some of the education is provided off-site. The school aims to provide individualised study programmes to meet the needs of each student and to help them reach their potential both educationally and in their social interactions. Where practically possible, the school aims to re-integrate the students back into mainstream education. The school was last inspected in July 2007 and the last social care inspection was in January 2011.

Evaluation of the school

The quality of the education and of the care provision is good. The school meets its aims of providing a flexible education suited to students' individual needs. Teaching and the progress made by students are good. The provision for the welfare health and safety of the students is good and all safeguarding requirements are met. The school has made significant improvements since the last inspection in the quality of teaching and planning. The school meets all the regulations for its continuing registration as an independent school and the residential provision meets the national minimum standards for children's homes.

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

Quality of education

The quality of the curriculum is good and it meets the needs of the students. A 24-hour curriculum and excellent links between the school and care staff ensure that the education provided is reinforced at every available opportunity. Key workers in the home and education staff have very good relationships with students.

Policies are in place to ensure the effective teaching of all of the required areas of learning. These adhere to National Curriculum guidelines, modified appropriately to the capabilities of the students. Lesson planning is supported by individualised schemes of work linked to students' individual needs. These incorporate the life skills guidance that is at the core of much of the work done at the school. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) elements of the curriculum are good. Students are prepared for adult life through practical lessons in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), through the ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) award scheme and through vocational experiences whenever possible.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. Practical resources are used to support the curriculum effectively and teachers pace their lessons to maintain students' interest. Teachers are keenly aware of the students' aptitudes and capabilities and they personalise the programmes of study accordingly, providing the students with experiences that build on previous knowledge. During lessons, teachers manage behaviour very well; students are calm and enjoy the pleasant learning environment in the classroom. Students are interested in their lessons, are usually engaged successfully and often take part in discussions with their teachers. During an introductory lesson on the Second World War, a student interjected, 'Can I study this (as a GCSE)? I am really interested in this!'

Assessment arrangements are good. They are based on regular testing in school, external accreditation for entry levels and GCSE, and the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) moderation.

Progress is good. Students are keen to succeed in their studies and to achieve well. For example, one student was particularly anxious that staff should track down previous entry level grades and convey this information about achievements to parents. Life skills and sociability are assessed and monitored well through regular meetings, reviews, good record keeping and clear reporting procedures.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students is satisfactory. They are provided with experiences of spirituality through art, drama and music. The opportunities provided to promote students' spiritual and cultural development, although satisfactory, are less well developed than those for their social and moral development. They are taught to understand what is expected of

them and to consider and control their responses. Students are encouraged and supported in ways that promote good relationships. They are offered a wide variety of activities and experiences to enhance sociability and an appreciation of the cultural activities in the world around them although, for some students, the uptake of these activities is limited. The calm, caring atmosphere in the school and home and individualised programmes for monitoring progress promote positive attitudes to learning. Behaviour and attendance are good.

Staff encourage students to appreciate their own potential and to succeed in their studies. This helps them grow in self-esteem and confidence. They are taught to respect the law and to distinguish between right and wrong through constant guidance and staff setting good examples for them. Students learn about local and national services and public institutions through citizenship studies. They raise money for charity by taking part in Red Nose Day, the Shoe Box Appeal and Comic Relief.

The school and care staff make every effort to equip the students for life when they leave school through developing their communication skills and understanding of social norms. Staff take pride in how their students change and adapt during their time at the school and are eager to see this progress continue when they leave. Students are given opportunities to learn about other cultures through religious education.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The provision for the welfare, health and safety of the students is good. The full range of required policies is in place. Policies are clearly written and are understood by staff, who are familiar with their content and are confident to follow the prescribed procedures. The first aid policy, for example, makes it very clear how minor and major incidents will be dealt with. There is a good number of trained first aiders on the staff. The behaviour policy has a strong focus on promoting good behaviour and is very well understood and consistently followed by staff. Risk assessments are carried out meticulously with respect to both the premises and visits outside school. Students are supervised very well both in school and at the home and staff go to great lengths to ensure that students are safe at all times. Staff swiftly address any concerns that arise about students' well-being. Any behavioural issues are dealt with quickly and unobtrusively. The school promotes healthy lifestyles through regular sporting activities and a keen focus on nutrition. For example, students take part in organising daily menus and are expected to make healthy choices. The school makes every effort to help students understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Despite preparing and implementing a good anti-smoking policy, the school struggles to have an effective influence on students' smoking.

Procedures to safeguard students and for child protection are good. All relevant policies, including those for child protection, are robust. Staff, including the

designated officer, are suitably trained. Fire checks and drills are regular events. Admission and attendance registers comply with requirements. The school has an appropriate three-year plan to improve access as required by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school has good recruitment procedures in place and ensures that all staff have undergone the necessary checks before commencing work at the school. All staff have the required enhanced checks with the Criminal Records Bureau and the single central record of staff checks is complete.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The school's premises and accommodation are good. The building is safe and the school complies with fire safety and general health and safety regulations. The classroom enables teaching to be undertaken effectively. It is an adequate size and is bright and airy. There is adequate flooring throughout the building and the accommodation is maintained in a good decorative order. There is limited, but satisfactory, outdoor play space on the premises and the school also makes good use of local parks and sports facilities nearby to provide for recreation and for physical education.

Provision of information

Parents and carers are provided with clear information about the policies and activities of the school and about their children's progress. Parents' and carers' responses to the inspection questionnaire indicate that they are positive about the quality of the education provided at the school.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The procedures for handling complaints are clear and comply fully with the requirements. There have been no formal complaints from parents in recent years.

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').

What the school could do to improve further

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

- Explore more effective ways of promoting healthy lifestyles to encourage students to stop smoking.
- Consider ways to further promote students' spiritual and cultural development.

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
-------------	------	--------------	------------

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		✓		
--	--	---	--	--

The quality of boarding provision

Effectiveness of boarding provision		✓		
-------------------------------------	--	---	--	--

School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Residential school and children's home for pupils with severe emotional and behavioural		
Date school opened	March 2006		
Age range of pupils	10–18 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 1	Total: 1
Number of boarders	Boys: 0	Girls: 1	Total: 1
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 0	Girls: 1	Total: 1
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 1	Total: 1
Annual fees (day pupils)	£34,800		
Annual fees (boarders)	£252,200		
Email address	angela.norris-heyas@greencorns.co.uk		
Headteacher	Mrs Angela Norris-Heyas		
Proprietor	Mr Bob Hall, Green Corns Continuum Group		