

Belview School

Independent school standard inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number (URN) | 136236 |
| URN for social care | SC067798 |
| Inspection number | 366902 |
| Inspection dates | 13–14 July 2011 |
| Reporting inspector | Martyn Groucutt |
| Social care inspector | Caroline Brailsford |

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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}

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

Belview, owned by Direct Care Limited, is a children's home that provides education during term time and home life for 52 weeks a year for up to four boys and girls, between the ages of 11 and 16, who have severe behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. There are currently two boys and one girl on roll, two having statements of special educational needs and all looked after by local authorities. Belview aims to 'fulfil students' academic, sporting, artistic, practical and social potential within a safe and supportive environment'.

This is the first inspection of the school, which opened in November 2010, and took place at the same time as the social care inspection of the children's home. The last social care inspection of the home took place in February 2011.

Evaluation of the school

Belview School provides a good education that supports the process of transforming young people's lives. The curriculum is good and individualised to ensure that the specific needs of each student are addressed, including those students with a statement of special educational needs. As the result of good teaching and assessment, all the students are engaged in learning, usually for the first time in their lives, are attending regularly and making good progress, often from an extremely low baseline. The provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, and their good behaviour is supported by the common high expectations of the education and care staff. The welfare, health and safety of students are good and the procedures for safeguarding are effective. The school fulfils its aims and meets most, but not all, of the regulations.

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 overall quality of education is good. The curriculum is good; a key element is that the very small number of students enables activities to be tailored to each individual. This ensures that specific needs are addressed effectively, developing new learning and skills, and filling the often very large gaps in prior knowledge. Students make good and sometimes outstanding progress, covering a spectrum of learning experiences usually from exceptionally low starting points. Basic skills in literacy, numeracy and the use of information and communication technology are taught across the curriculum. For almost all students, these are key areas where previous achievement has been low. This approach is reflected in schemes of work but these do not make sufficient provision to meet the needs of students who may enter the school at higher levels of attainment. Plans are being developed and expanded to promote students' staged integration into local mainstream and special schools, when appropriate and after careful analysis of risks and benefits. The wider curriculum is well supported by care staff in taking students out on trips, to piano lessons or sports centres, and supporting them with homework during the evenings. This reflects the excellent professional relationships between education and care within the home. Good links with outside agencies support appropriate careers education and promote effective personal, social and health education, including positive work on smoking cessation and drug and alcohol abuse. Equally effective is the way staff address the behavioural, emotional and social difficulties that underlie the placement of every student at Belview. Planning and preparation for the development of on-site education was thorough.

Teaching and assessment are good. Lessons are planned with care and, because each student is so well known, are pitched at a level which both challenges and supports learning. While the stress is on the promotion of basic skills, there is also a focus on the promotion of independence and life skills. Students participate in outdoor and leisure pursuits, supported effectively by the care staff. A recent project involved designing and building garden furniture for sale, which promoted a range of skills supporting students' future economic well-being. The home has its own canal narrow boat which is used well for educational and recreational activities. Teaching observed during the inspection was good and, in most cases, students are experiencing educational success for the first time. Work is marked regularly but, while praise is given when appropriate, there is less support for students in how work might be improved or how it might reflect progress towards a learning target. Targets are set as part of every student's personal education plan. However, there is no clear focus on how these targets are being met. That said, individual progress and achievement are monitored with care and the information used effectively to maximise learning. Systems enable the placing local authorities to be aware of students' progress. Questionnaire returns reflect the local authorities' very strong support for the education being provided. All of the students are admitted because of the severity of their special educational needs and because of the very high potential to be in situations in which they might be vulnerable, including severe physical risk. Often they have a history of multiple placements and complete breakdown of education. The fact that students say they are making rapid and demonstrable

progress in so many ways is a testimony to the effectiveness of the provision in helping to transform lives. As one of the students said, 'I like Belview. I am doing really well and the other students are doing really well as well.'

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The students' spiritual, moral, social, moral and cultural development is good. They all say they are happy at the home and are very well supported as they move through adolescence towards adulthood. As a result, despite their difficulties, students' behaviour is good, supported by the excellent relationships that exist between staff and young people. One student said, 'For the first time in my life I feel valued and happy.' High expectations and clear routines reinforce the ability of the students to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence. There is a clear stress on doing the right thing and on distinguishing right from wrong. In turn, this reinforces the high expectations, although care is taken not to be judgemental and to support any student who has any occasional lapses.

The close liaison between education and care staff reinforces good practice. For example, care staff who have come from other countries and cultures talk about their backgrounds and encourage discussion. This links in with lessons about the main festivals and celebrations of world faiths, and care staff support those students who want to attend local churches. Positive links with the community within the home and locality are encouraged. A weekly meeting of staff and residents of the home enables all the young people to have a say in the running of Belview. In addition, students elect a spokesperson each week to represent them in discussion on any specific matters that might crop up. Involvement in the community was nicely reflected during the inspection in the very active involvement of one student with a local drama group, playing a role in their production of *The Wizard of Oz*. Students are actively encouraged to accept responsibility and show initiative. For example, during the inspection, one student, who is developing good culinary skills, cooked lunch for all the staff and young people in the home. Students develop an appropriate knowledge of public institutions and services in England.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Provision for students' welfare, health and safety is good and all the regulations are met. Students feel safe because they are able to trust the adults with whom they come into contact at Belview and because the home's procedures place a very heavy emphasis on safeguarding. Students say that because everyone gets on so well together there is no bullying. There is very clear guidance for the students, including a booklet for them on the dangers of cyber-bullying. The welfare and safety of the students is the prime concern for all the staff and this is supported by excellent arrangements for supervision. The house and grounds are secure. A healthy lifestyle is promoted effectively in a variety of ways, such as through the promotion of good diets and regular discussion of menus, and the regular use of gym and sports

facilities at the local sports centre. Risk assessments are thorough for activities on and off site and for trips. Through its three-year disability access plan, the school fulfils the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

Systems and procedures for appointing staff, including enhanced level checks through the Criminal Records Bureau, are securely in place. However, there is one failure to meet the regulations in that the checks made on qualifications, where appropriate, are not recorded in the single central register.

Premises and accommodation at the school

Belview is a large, modern house set in extensive grounds with gardens and an orchard. Standards of maintenance, fixtures and furnishing are very good. One of the rooms that overlook the garden has been turned into a light and airy classroom. It is well-equipped for learning, although it has no specialist facilities. The large and comfortable lounge and well-equipped kitchen can also be used for educational purposes. All of the regulations are met.

Provision of information

Direct Care Limited has produced an online brochure that covers provision in its homes. The majority of the regulations that apply to the school provision at Belview are met, but the name of the headteacher and the particulars of the arrangements for admission, discipline and exclusions are missing. There is effective contact between Belview and the local authorities who are placing young people, reflected in the extremely positive questionnaires returned. Information about the provision of boarding is all in place.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

There are effective procedures for making complaints that fully comply with all the regulations and the relevant national minimum standards. Details are available on Direct Care's website and on request.

Effectiveness of the boarding provision

The care provision was judged to be outstanding 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'), with the exception of those listed below.³

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors (standards in part 4) and must:

- ensure that the single register contains evidence that checks have been made of relevant qualifications, if appropriate (paragraph 22(3)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information (standards in part 6) and must:

- ensure that the name of the headteacher is provided in information provided for parents, carers and others (paragraph 24(1)(a))
- make available particulars of the school's policy on and arrangements for admissions, discipline and exclusions (paragraph 24(1)(b)).

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:

- Ensure that schemes of work provide suitable academic challenge for those who may be admitted whose attainment is closer to that usually expected for students of their age
- Make sure that marking includes advice on how students' work might be improved in working towards agreed targets
- Make sure that there is a focus on achieving individual learning targets which underpin the work done in class.

³ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1997/contents/made

Inspection judgements

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|-------------|------|--------------|------------|
| 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 | | ✓ | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|

The quality of boarding provision

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|-------------------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| Effectiveness of boarding provision | ✓ | | | |
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School details

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| School status | Independent | | |
| Type of school | Children's home that provides education | | |
| Date school opened | 1 November 2010 | | |
| Age range of pupils | 11–16 | | |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | | |
| Number on roll (full-time pupils) | Boys: 2 | Girls: 1 | Total: 3 |
| Number of boarders | Boys: 2 | Girls: 1 | Total: 3 |
| Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs | Boys: 2 | Girls: 0 | Total: 2 |
| Number of pupils who are looked after | Boys: 2 | Girls: 1 | Total: 3 |
| Annual fees (boarders) | £194,574 | | |
| Email address | mark.naylor@directcareltd.co.uk | | |
| Headteacher | Mark Naylor | | |
| Proprietor | Direct Care Limited | | |