

Lewis Charlton School

Independent school progress monitoring inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Michael Best

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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.^{1,2}

The inspection was conducted at the request of the Registration Authority for independent schools in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan following the previous inspection.

Information about the school

Lewis Charlton residential special school is located in Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire. It is registered for up to 41 students, aged 11 to 19 years, with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. There are currently 36 students on roll, including three weekly boarders. The school is on three sites; the newest site, 'The Village', which formally opened in September 2010, is a short distance from the main school. This addition has significantly increased the school's accommodation.

Context of the inspection

The school had a light touch inspection in 2009 when it was judged to provide a good quality of education and boarding. An emergency school inspection was undertaken jointly with a social care inspector in January 2011. The school failed a significant number of regulations in relation to students' welfare, health and safety and the suitability of the proprietor, staff and supply staff. A number of the national minimum standards for residential special schools were also not met. The school submitted an action plan to address these shortcomings which was accepted in April 2011, although some improvement was needed. In June 2011, a progress monitoring inspection was carried out jointly with a social care inspector (SCI) who was undertaking a full inspection of school's boarding provision. Inspectors found that the school had not made sufficient progress in implementing all aspects of its action plan. This second progress monitoring inspection was announced as a joint visit by an education inspector and a social care inspector. At the last minute, the social care inspector was unable to undertake the visit, which was therefore made by one education inspector who focused on the school's progress in addressing the regulations for registration as an independent school.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

The school has made satisfactory progress in implementing its action plan. All but one of the regulations outstanding at the time of the first progress monitoring

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

inspection in June 2011 are now met. This remaining regulation could not be judged on this visit as it relates to the national minimum standards for residential special schools which are inspected separately by Ofsted's social care inspectorate.

The inspection in January 2011 found that the school's recording of physical intervention, restraints and serious incidents was insufficiently detailed. What led up to the restraint was not thoroughly identified, nor the description of the method of restraint itself. The school submitted an action plan to address these shortcomings, which was evaluated in April 2011. The first progress monitoring inspection in June 2011 found that the school's plan for improvement had not been effectively implemented in regard to the recording of events that lead to physical restraint. Reports were still not sufficiently detailed: they did not show how staff had tried to defuse a situation or use sufficiently specific language to describe what happened. This second progress monitoring inspection found that these shortcomings have been satisfactorily addressed and that the regulation is now met.

The inspection in January 2011 found that the school did not ensure that supply staff details were recorded on its single central register of recruitment and vetting checks. Although the school included proposals to address this in its action plan, the first progress monitoring inspection found that these had not been implemented satisfactorily. The school has subsequently revised the format of its single central record and, while no supply staff have worked at the school since the last inspection visit, the format now provides for the required information to be clearly recorded.

The first progress monitoring inspection in June 2011 found that the school did not comply with the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005¹. The school did not consistently record fire drills or emergency lighting checks and had not sufficiently updated all of its fire risk assessments, especially for the new building. This second progress monitoring inspection found that the school has taken the necessary action to meet this regulation. A full audit has been undertaken of fire safety systems and the necessary remedial works undertaken. Scrutiny of records shows that regular checks are made and recorded. The electrical installations have been periodically inspected and, where necessary, faults have been remedied and duly certified. Current gas safety checks are in place for all the school's premises and a full fire safety audit has been satisfactorily completed.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school has made satisfactory progress overall in implementing its action plan. It now meets or is on course to meet most regulations. The following regulation could not be judged on this inspection visit:

- ensure in the boarding accommodation that there are arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders and that they have regard to the national minimum standards for residential special schools (paragraph 8).

School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Special for students with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties		
Date school opened	September 2003		
Age range of pupils	11–19		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 26	Girls: 10	Total: 36
Number of boarders	Boys: 1	Girls: 2	Total: 3
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 26	Girls: 10	Total: 36
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 5	Girls: 3	Total: 8
Annual fees (day pupils)	£43,152		
Annual fees (boarders)	£79,490		
Address of school	North Street Ashby-de-la-Zouch		
Telephone number	01530 560775		
Email address	g.pearson@lewischarltonschool.org		
Headteacher	Georgina Pearson		
Proprietor	Georgina Pearson		