

William Henry Smith School

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 107589 |
| Local authority | Calderdale |
| Inspection number | 377609 |
| Inspection dates | 1–2 February 2012 |
| Lead inspector | Alastair Younger |

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection of residential provision was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

| | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Type of school | Special |
| School category | Non-maintained special |
| Age range of students | 8–16 |
| Gender of students | Boys |
| Number of students on the school roll | 55 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Steve Goodall |
| Headteacher | Brendan Heneghan |
| Date of previous school inspection | 14 January 2009 |
| School address | Boothroyd Brighouse HD6 3JW |
| Telephone number | 01484 710123 |
| Fax number | 01484 721658 |
| Email address | general@whsschool.org.uk |

| | |
|--|----------------------------|
| Boarding provision | William Henry Smith School |
| Social care Unique Reference Number | SC001038 |
| Social care inspector | Michelle Moss |



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Introduction

Inspection team

Alastair Younger
Eric Craven

Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Nine lessons were observed, involving six different teachers. Meetings were held with groups of students and staff. There were no responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to aid planning the inspection and no parental questionnaires were returned. However, the social care inspection of residential provision took account of parents' and carers' views as expressed in a 'point of inspection' questionnaire relating to that provision. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation relating to school improvement, the progress of students and records of monitoring by senior staff and the governing body.

Information about the school

This is a non-maintained residential and day school for boys who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. All students have a statement of special educational needs. There are currently 45 residential and 10 day students; all residents return home at weekends. The school admits students from many different local authorities, mainly in the north of England or the Midlands. There are five residential units, all on the school campus. Nearly all students are White British. Prior to this integrated inspection residential provision was last inspected a year ago.

Following a fall in the number of students last year considerable reduction in staffing was necessitated.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory and 4 is inadequate
 Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

| | |
|---|----------|
| Overall Effectiveness | 2 |
| Achievement of students | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of students | 2 |
| Leadership and management | 2 |

Key Findings

- This is a good school. Residential provision is outstanding. Nearly all students enjoy attending. They say they feel exceptionally well cared for and are helped to learn as much as possible. The student ‘voice’ is an outstanding feature of the school. Students talk confidently and sensibly to visitors and are proud of their achievements.
- Nearly all students achieve well. A few make outstanding progress in improving their reading skills but, for many, writing remains a weakness. There is very little difference in the performance of different groups of students. Nearly all go on to positive destinations when they leave.
- The school uses a wide and good range of therapeutic approaches to remove barriers to learning and development, thus enabling students to contribute successfully to the school community.
- Students feel safe. They are outstandingly well cared for in school and in the residential provision. Behaviour in the residential provision is excellent, with residents socialising well and participating wholeheartedly in evening activities. Behaviour is slightly weaker in school because a few students do not show as much enthusiasm for learning as they do in recreational activities.
- Teaching is good. Relationships between adults and students are particularly strong and this contributes to sensitive and effective management of behaviour. A few teachers fail to promote students' basic skills, particularly writing, in all lessons.
- Leadership, management and governance are good. Difficult decisions have had to be made over the past year. Throughout, the school has maintained an outstanding ethos, as defined by the excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students.
- All national minimum standards for residential special schools are met.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the promotion of literacy, especially writing, across the whole school by:
 - encouraging students to write at greater length, with better spelling and presentation
 - ensuring that all staff promote literacy skills in all lessons and activities, including in the residential provision
 - celebrating achievement in writing in displays and communal gatherings and linking rewards to improvements in writing
 - ensuring that writing for different purposes is strongly promoted across the whole curriculum.

Main Report

Achievement of students

Students achieve well. Most start at a level of attainment well below their potential. This is because their education prior to admission has often been highly disrupted by long periods of disaffection or absence from school.

Students made good progress in nearly all lessons during the inspection. This was because they were attending well, paying good attention to their teachers and working hard. Their efforts are helping them to catch up and close the gap between their potential and actual attainment. In a particularly good mathematics lesson younger students were enthused and motivated to investigate for themselves the properties of three-dimensional shapes and learn about 'faces, vertices and edges'. They worked with interest and enthusiasm because they were presented with good resources and were well supported by learning support assistants as they conducted a practical activity to create the actual shapes they were investigating. In weaker lessons students are given too much leeway to negotiate how little writing they need to do. Too few students produce written work of any length and their work includes basic errors. Reading is well taught and nearly all students make significant progress in improving their reading skills.

Attainment on leaving is usually below average but all students make good progress and leave with qualifications, often including GCSEs at the lower end of the grade scale. Nearly all go on to further education or training and a few find employment or enter apprenticeships. This is often as a result of their good achievements in the school's work-related learning programme.

The numbers of students in different groups are nearly always very small, with the result that differences in performance can be heavily skewed by the performance of just one or two individuals. Overall, however, there is very little difference in the performance of any group, such as day or residential students or looked after children.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is good. Students feel they learn a lot in lessons and that they are helped to make as much progress as possible. Leaders and managers recognise that there is unevenness in

the quality of teaching, but their monitoring gives detailed evidence to support the fact that it is good and improving.

The best teaching observed actively involved students in their learning, often through practical activities or the use of computers, for example when students used computers to research the nations competing in the forthcoming Olympic Games. Teachers are particularly good at helping students to overcome the difficulties that have previously created barriers to learning, for instance through strong promotion of social and emotional aids to learning and by the careful deployment of learning support assistants to help individuals and small groups. Teaching that was satisfactory rather than good was often 'safe', with students being fed information rather than finding it out for themselves. Occasionally, this led to signs of boredom and disengagement rather than the enthusiasm and inquisitiveness seen in better lessons. A weaker feature of teaching is that not all teachers acknowledge their role in improving students' literacy skills, especially in writing. Whilst many lessons are characterised by good promotion of computer skills and some, such as design and technology and science, promote numeracy well, not enough actively promote students' writing skills. This is in contrast to the effective promotion of students' speaking, listening and reading skills.

A consistently strong feature of teaching is the way in which teachers build positive relationships with students and celebrate their achievements. As a result, they grow in confidence and feel good about themselves. Teachers set a good example to students and strongly promote their spiritual, moral and social development, be it through specific content, such as in a lesson covering the Jewish festival of Hannuka, or through sensitive management of behaviour and the promotion of high moral values.

Behaviour and safety of students

The behaviour and safety of students is good. In the residential provision and in therapeutic interventions it is outstanding. Whilst the safeguarding of students in school is of the same exceptional standard as it is in the residential provision, some students' behaviour, especially in terms of their attitudes and willingness to take the initiative, is weaker.

Conduct in lessons is good. A few individuals display signs of stubbornness and there are occasional outbursts of frustration at times. These are rare and well managed so as to minimise their impact on learning. The main weakness in behaviour for learning is that some students remain over-reliant on adult support. The school is a very settled and calm environment. This has been commented on by several previous inspections and closely reflects what students and staff told inspectors.

Bullying happens but it is rare and always promptly and very effectively dealt with. There are clear and comprehensive policies and procedures to prevent all types of bullying. Students are heavily involved in promoting anti-bullying measures, for instance through producing prominently displayed posters around the school. Immaculate records are kept of any incidents and these show that any instances of racism, sexism or homophobia are virtually non-existent. Except under the most extreme circumstances the school does not exclude students. There have been only two instances in recent years.

Students strongly voice the view that they feel safe and well cared for in school as well as in the residential provision. They fully appreciate the wealth of support they receive in times of crisis and the access they are given to successful therapeutic interventions. Many students

are more critical of their own behaviour than that of others. This sometimes leads to a lowering of self-esteem but this is well addressed through therapeutic interventions.

Students attend well and punctuality is good. Many are extremely personable and confident when speaking to visitors. It was particularly heartening during the inspection to have so many students approaching inspectors politely and sharing their experiences. Students respond very well to the school's points system whereby they gain recognition for their positive behaviours and attitudes. They respect staff judgements and rarely contest them.

Leadership and management

Leadership, management and governance are good. Leadership and management of the residential provision are outstanding. High expectations are held of all students and the performance of all staff. Following a fall in the number on roll, and hence revenue, major restructuring in the staffing of the school had to take place last year. As a result, morale fell, especially amongst learning support assistants. Despite this, standards have been upheld and many staff have been successfully introduced into positions of seniority and responsibility. There is a strong culture of continuing professional development for all staff. Training has effectively raised attainment in reading, for instance through the literacy coordinator's development of a structured programme to teach letters and sounds. Teachers have also been guided in their more accurate moderation of students' work in numeracy and literacy. Writing is the weaker aspect that still requires further attention. The school is heavily represented on many national associations and staff visit other schools to observe good and outstanding practice. The school is clear about priorities and improvement plans identify actions, responsibilities and challenging deadlines. The contribution of students to school improvement is strongly promoted. The school has a good capacity to improve further.

The curriculum is good. However, there is a limited cross-curricular approach to the teaching of literacy, especially to ensure that students write at more length and for a range of different purposes. Nevertheless, the curriculum has many strengths. These include the excellence of the work-related curriculum for older students and the promotion of enterprise skills for all students. Residential provision makes an excellent contribution to the curriculum by providing students with a huge range of recreational and cultural experiences to broaden their horizons and encourage new interests. There is exceptionally good integration of day and residential students, with each day student attached to a residential unit and having full access to the after-school activities provided. Older students are presented with a good range of nationally accredited courses through which they progress to positive destinations.

Leaders, managers and the governing body strongly promote equality for all and there is no tolerance of discrimination. Safeguarding arrangements are exemplary. As a result, there is an outstanding sense of well-being in the school. Students are happy. Their increasing sense of self-worth and respect reflect the successful promotion of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The good sense of celebration in assemblies engenders an appreciation of the achievement of others. Students are interested in other people, their religions and their cultures. Nearly all Key Stage 4 students have opted in to the religious education GCSE course on offer. There are many testimonials from ex-students explaining how the school helped them to become better able to fit into society.

Residential provision

The provision of care is excellent. Students experience high-quality care from staff they trust and respect. The seamless 24-hour integration of education and social care means students receive remarkable support to help them overcome their difficulties.

Students feel safe, protected and valued by their carers. They are afforded excellent healthcare, assessment and support to enhance their physical and emotional well-being. Every student has opportunities to develop personal and social skills, talents and abilities. This is made possible by the enriched alternative curriculum programme and the evening activities, which enable every student to pursue an extensive range of leisure, sports and recreational activities.

There is a strong passion to support students' emotional well-being through a therapeutic approach that enables them to overcome significant barriers that impact on their social skills and learning. The willingness to receive support means students become better at resolving problems and modifying their behaviour. This in turn strengthens their confidence and self-esteem.

Students describe their school as 'the very best', including scoring their school a full 'ten out of ten'. Equally, parents and carers describe the school as 'brilliant'.

Care staff are rigorously trained in all aspects of safeguarding children. They are alert to students' vulnerabilities and risks of harm. Importantly, care staff hold a thorough knowledge about how to implement the school's child protection procedure.

Each residential house is extensively designed to take into account the privacy, support and comfort of students. The students are encouraged to become actively involved in establishing a safe and clean environment. Students take great pride in their achievements. These are fully recognised by care staff and positively celebrated.

Students' induction to the school is managed extremely sensitively and delivered in a holistic way, so that the child remains at the centre of the process.

Care staff have a superior understanding of their roles and responsibilities including being vigilant about students' health and safety. Students are confident that bullying is actively tackled and concerns are dealt with sensitively.

Care staff make it their top priority to create a climate where mutual trust and respect are commonplace. This enables students to feel at ease and increasingly willing to engage and to take advice and guidance, which enables them to make safe decisions.

Placement plans involve various resources being pulled together so that a whole-child approach is secured. For example, therapeutic services input, health care and educational assessments all help to form the placement plan.

Students show genuine concern, respect and tolerance of each other. Furthermore, students are proud to be associated with their school. The student voice is strong on the school's

agenda. Students feel their views substantially matter. They know their opinions are taken extremely seriously and that their engagement has influenced key decisions.

The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools

These are the grades for the residential provision

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| Overall effectiveness of the residential experience | 1 |
| Outcomes for residential students | 1 |
| Quality of residential provision and care | 1 |
| Residential students' safety | 1 |
| Leadership and management of the residential provision | 1 |

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

| Grade | Judgement | Description |
|---------|--------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its students' needs. |
| Grade 2 | Good | These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its students well. |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory | These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its students. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its students. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. |

Overall effectiveness of schools

| Type of school | Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools) | | | |
|----------------------|---|------|--------------|------------|
| | Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate |
| Nursery schools | 46 | 46 | 8 | 0 |
| Primary schools | 8 | 47 | 40 | 5 |
| Secondary schools | 14 | 38 | 40 | 8 |
| Special schools | 28 | 48 | 20 | 4 |
| Pupil referral units | 15 | 50 | 29 | 5 |
| All schools | 11 | 46 | 38 | 6 |

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

| | |
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| Achievement: | the progress and success of a student in their learning and development taking account of their attainment. |
| Attainment: | the standard of the students' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. |
| Behaviour | how well students behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Students' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school. |
| Capacity to improve: | the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement. |
| Leadership and management: | the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school. |
| Learning: | how well students acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners. |
| Overall effectiveness: | inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. |
| Progress: | the rate at which students are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the students' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started. |
| Safety | how safe students are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Students' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning. |

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



3 February 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of William Henry Smith School, Brighous, HD6 3JW

It was a joy to visit your school the other day; the inspection team were very impressed. We feel that your school is good and that your residential provision is outstanding. You played a big part in convincing us. We were all very impressed by your politeness and your willingness to talk sensibly with us. You made us feel very welcome. Thank you.

After two days we came to the conclusion that: you achieve well because you are well taught; you behave well because you are well supported to do so; you are also exceptionally well cared for, so you feel safe and that your school is well led, managed and governed.

We were very impressed by the sensible ways you make your views known to staff and the attention they pay to them. Thank you for completing the questionnaire we sent to you. It showed us that nearly all of you like school, feel that it is helping you to improve your learning and is keeping you very safe.

We felt that one major thing is getting in the way of your achieving even better, and that is the quality of your writing. There is not much of it and what there is is not very good. You read confidently and you speak and listen well. You understand what you are being taught, answer questions well and have some good-quality discussions which contribute well to your learning. You are really good at practical work. The problem seems to arrive when you are given a pen, at which point good intentions seem to vanish. We have set the school the task of remedying this situation. You can help by making a greater effort to write more and as well as you can.

Yours sincerely

Alastair Younger
Lead Inspector

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