

# Wathen Grange School

Independent school standard inspection report

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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>

## **Information about the school**

Wathen Grange School offers day provision for a maximum of 40 students aged 11 to 18 years with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. The school operates on two sites. The original building in Leamington Spa, which opened in September 2000, currently has five students who have severe emotional difficulties and who require one-to-one tuition. The main site was established some 25 miles away in Mancetter near Atherstone in 2007. This site currently has 12 students of whom two have recently joined on an induction programme. All current students are aged 12 to 16 years. Most of the current students come from Leicester City and Leicestershire and all students have statements of their special educational needs.

The school aims to prepare its students for social challenges, economic independence and the demands of adulthood. It also aims to offer a curriculum that broadly follows the National Curriculum while incorporating an appropriate range of knowledge, skills and experiences beyond the classroom. The school fosters partnerships with carers and other professionals who are significant in students' lives and aims to promote positive relationships with all students. The headteacher has been in post since September 2011 having previously been deputy headteacher at the school. The school was last inspected in May 2008 with monitoring inspections in December 2009 and June 2010.

## **Evaluation of the school**

Wathen Grange School provides a good quality of education. As a result of good leadership and evaluation of the school's development, the school has made good progress since the last full inspection and now meets all but two of the regulations. The curriculum and quality of teaching are both good and result in good progress in their learning for the majority of students. Students enter the school with previous attainment below that expected for their age, and the majority have challenging behaviour which improves during their time in the school. Arrangements for the safeguarding of students are thorough, comprehensive and implemented consistently in line with the school's policies and procedures.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents).

<sup>2</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents).

## Quality of education

The curriculum is good and provides a suitable balance between academic and practical learning. The structure of the curriculum meets the regulatory requirements with one exception. Science is taught as a discrete subject, with appropriate progression of learning at the Leamington site, but not at the Mancetter site. Students at this site are provided with incidental experiences of science which do not result in a coherent, planned programme of learning which develops scientific skills and understanding in a systematic way. There is a good emphasis on the development of students' literacy and numeracy, filling in gaps in previous learning and preparing students for external accreditation. Students are successful in achieving unit awards in a number of subjects and attaining Entry Level certificates in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). Occasionally, students have achieved success at GCSE in a small number of core subjects, although this level of achievement does not entirely fulfil the potential demonstrated in some students' assessment data. The afternoon curriculum includes a number of valuable 'experiences' and outdoor activities. Students take a genuine interest and achieve good success in art, design, food studies and ICT lessons. They enjoy physical education where they are taught to develop their skills progressively in a range of sports. Outdoor activities provide a suitable level of challenge in managing social relationships and developing self-confidence, for example, through a trip on bus and train with responsibility for purchasing their own tickets. Experiences in 'culture' and 'tradition' broaden their experience of the local community and help to develop their respect and understanding of diverse cultures and lifestyles.

The school makes appropriate provision for careers education, with the support of the Connexions service both locally and in students' placing authorities. Suitable opportunities are provided for work experience and work-related learning, for example in motor bike maintenance, construction and college placements, for students in Key Stage 4 depending on their interests and readiness to cooperate with the expectations of the setting. There have been no post-16 students to date but recent proposals have been approved by the placing authority for one post-16 student, involving appropriate work experience, college placement and in-school learning.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good and results in good progress in learning over time. Teachers prepare appropriate learning tasks and activities based on suitable medium-term planning which provides progression in the skills and concepts of each subject. Teachers are skilled at engaging students and ensuring that lessons are mostly not disrupted by poor behaviour and distraction. Occasionally, the pace of lessons is slowed as a result of disruptive behaviour and students do not achieve at the levels of which they are capable. The school has good strategies for the management of challenging behaviour and intervenes effectively to maintain an appropriate learning environment. The staff are successful in identifying activities and areas of learning in which even the most disaffected students will engage and make progress. Progress in practical subjects, including physical education, food studies, art, design and ICT, is good and reflects the good levels of engagement of students with well-planned learning activities. The use of appropriate

assessment of learning has been a positive development since the last inspection. National Curriculum levels are used to assess work in the core subjects and the outcomes are recorded in a manner which enables the school to demonstrate the rates of progress of individual students over time. While attainment is often below age-related expectations due to earlier disruptions to their education, current and recent students who have been in the school for at least two years have made good progress from low starting points, and often in excess of national expectations. The majority of students are placed successfully in further education courses or work-related projects when they leave the school.

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

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory, as is students' behaviour. The school maintains high expectations for respect and cooperation by students, and the majority respond appropriately. However, there are still occasions when disruptive behaviour by a minority of students impacts on the quality of learning. Almost all students enter the school with low aspirations and limited self-esteem as a result of previous experiences in school and the wider community. The staff provide good role models and work hard in lessons and around the school to encourage students to be self-reflective and accept responsibility for their actions. The school has effective procedures for collecting a range of data about attendance, behaviour and attitudes. This information is used effectively as a tool for monitoring trends and agreeing strategies for working with individual students. The available data, including improvements in attendance and a significant reduction in the number of exclusions, demonstrate success for the majority of students in responding to the school's expectations. The available information is not currently displayed in a manner which enables a clear and immediate measure of the extent of improvement in behaviour and attitudes over time.

The school's curriculum includes a number of themes, through personal, social and health education and across a range of subjects, which support the students in managing their own emotions and social interactions. The rewards system enables students to demonstrate improvements in attitudes and behaviour throughout the school day. This is effective for many but not universally valued by students. Visits by the local police service, the prison service and the Warwickshire Youth Service enable students to understand how their actions impact on others, and to appreciate the role of local services in the community. The 'experiences' curriculum includes excellent themes on culture and tradition which enable students to appreciate diversity of cultures and beliefs in the local and wider curriculum. Photographic evidence and work in students' books illustrate the enjoyment and engagement of a number of students in this work.

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

Arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of students are good. A high priority is given to the welfare and safeguarding of students. Unmet regulations at the time of the last inspection have been addressed appropriately and all regulations are now met. All staff are trained to the required levels in child protection, restraint and first

aid, and comprehensive policies and procedures for child protection are implemented consistently. A number of students present challenging behaviour, and all staff follow agreed and documented routines consistently for the management of behaviour. The school's procedures for managing all aspects of health and safety are comprehensive and are kept under continuous review. This includes all aspects of fire safety; a fire risk assessment is reviewed regularly and all routine checks on fire safety equipment are completed and recorded to the required standard. A comprehensive range of risk assessments have been completed for all required aspects of school practice and procedure. The school meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

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

The school has appropriate procedures for the recruitment of staff which are implemented effectively. All the required checks on staff, supply staff and proprietors have been completed and entered in a single central register.

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

The school is located on two sites in Mancetter and Leamington, both of which provide a safe and effective environment for learning. The Mancetter site consists of a former local authority primary school which has been adapted suitably to meet the needs of the current school. The Leamington site consists of a former residential property with good teaching spaces and facilities over three floors. Both sites have been improved since the last inspection and now meet all the regulatory requirements.

### **Provision of information**

The school provides clear and up-to-date information to all parents, carers and placing authorities. The prospectus presents an informed introduction to the school, including details of a range of policy documents which are available on request. Appropriate information about the progress of individual students in their academic and personal development is provided three times a year. In addition, all the required information is provided for annual reviews of students' statements of special educational needs and personal plans.

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

The school's complaints procedures meet requirements and are made available to parents and carers.

## 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.<sup>3</sup>

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the quality of education provided (standards in part 1) and must:

- produce appropriate plans and schemes of work for science, and implement them effectively (paragraph 2(1))
- ensure the curriculum gives students of compulsory school age a full time education with experience of the scientific area of learning (paragraph 2(2)(a)).

## 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 high expectations result in students working towards challenging external accreditation in all subjects
- review the strategies for managing behaviour in lessons, including the rewards system, in order to ensure good behaviour in all lessons
- implement the proposed system for the recording of behaviour indicators in order to demonstrate clearly the extent of students' progress in improving their behaviour.

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<sup>3</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1997/contents/made).

## 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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## School details

<b>School status</b>	Independent		
<b>Type of school</b>	Special school for students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.		
<b>Date school opened</b>	21 January 2000		
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18 years		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed		
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 17	Girls: 0	Total: 17
<b>Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs</b>	Boys: 17	Girls: 0	Total: 17
<b>Number of pupils who are looked after</b>	Boys: 6	Girls: 0	Total: 6
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£45,000 to £65,000		
<b>Address of school</b>	Church Walk, Mancetter, Atherstone, CV9 1PZ		
<b>Telephone number</b>	01827 714454		
<b>Email address</b>	diane.molyneux@completecare-warks.co.uk		
<b>Headteacher</b>	Diane Molyneux		
<b>Proprietor</b>	Complete Care Warks Ltd		

**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.**



22 March 2012

Dear Students

### **Inspection of Wathen Grange School, Atherstone, CV9 1PZ**

Thank you for your welcome when I visited your school. I enjoyed my visit, including the opportunity to see you at work and to talk with some of you about your experiences. The inspection judged that Wathen Grange School provides you with a good quality of education and helps you with both your academic and personal development. I was particularly pleased to see:

- that your questionnaires show that the majority of you recognise that you attend a good school and that you are taught well
- that your work is assessed regularly and you know how well you are doing
- the good efforts you are making to improve your behaviour and to cooperate with your teachers
- the good progress which many of you are making in practical lessons including art, cooking, design, physical education, ICT and outdoor activities
- the qualifications which some of you have already achieved and your continued work towards further examinations
- the good opportunities provided for you to improve your English and mathematics.

To bring about further improvement I have asked the proprietor and staff to continue to develop Wathen Grange by including science in the curriculum for all students, and by making sure that the rewards system is helping everyone to improve their behaviour. You can help to get the best out of your school by making sure that your respect for staff and cooperation in lessons is always good.

With all best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Young  
Lead Inspector