

Brockwood Park School and Inwoods Small School

Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	850/6069
Unique Reference Number	116574
Social care URN	SC012443
Inspection number	322048
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Reporting inspector	Linda Kelsey HMI
Social Care inspector	Brian McQuoid SCI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

Inspection of social care (welfare) was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

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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 this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided and to inform the Secretary of State at the DCSF as to the school's continued suitability for registration as an independent school.

This report details whether the school meets the requirements for educational provision and outlines the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2000 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

Information about the school

This was a single inspection of welfare and education for the pupils of Brockwood Park School and Inwoods Small School.

The main part of the school was founded in 1969 by the Indian educational philosopher Krishnamurti, for students aged 14–19. Its intention was to provide a holistic non-competitive form of education with an emphasis on enquiry and active learning. There are currently 81 pupils on roll of whom 65 are boarders and 16 are full-time day pupils at Inwoods. In addition, at Inwoods, nineteen part-time pupils attend for one or four days, the remainder of their provision being covered by home tuition. The school is vegetarian and non-denominational. Pupils and students come from a wide range of backgrounds, nationalities and cultures. Many mature students come back and work as volunteers in the kitchens and gardens.

This is the first inspection of the school under section 162A of the Education Act 2005. It was last inspected in 2005 for education and boarding provision under two separate inspections.

Evaluation of the school

The quality of education at Brockwood Park School and Inwood Small School is good. The curriculum and teaching are good. As a result, pupils from a wide range of backgrounds and cultures are making good progress, although some have very little English. The care, welfare and guidance given to pupils is inadequate because the school has not paid enough attention to keeping records of criminal, medical and suitability checks of staff fully updated. It has also not requested a fire check since 2005 nor ensured that staff have maintained up-to-date training for child protection. Behaviour is outstanding. There is good quality accommodation and a good level of maintenance and care taken to ensure that everything looks clean and tidy

throughout the school. This, together with the strong commitment of all staff, is why this school is so successful and popular.

Quality of education

The school provides a good, broad and balanced curriculum and policies which support the aims of the school. All the pupils attending, who are of compulsory school age, have lessons in the areas of learning specified by the regulations. Older students take part in courses leading to accreditation at AS and A level. In the senior part of the school, pupils follow their own individual timetable made up from a wide range of subjects on offer.

The very extensive and attractive grounds provide pupils with many opportunities to extend their learning and further their personal development. Pupils are given a wide range of responsibilities around the school, helping with cleaning each morning and in the vegetable garden, where they have many opportunities to appreciate the beauty of the world around them. All subject matter is appropriate for the pupils' age and ability. Tutors for academic guidance monitor the progress of all their pupils. Throughout the school pupils are improving their core skills and, where English is a second language, are learning to speak and write it more fluently. Where pupils have a statement of special need their progress is monitored carefully by the class teacher and the assistant or learning support teacher working with the pupil.

At Inwoods Small School, some parents are choosing to have part of the education supplied by home tuition services from the local authority (LA). While some of this home tuition is supervised by local authorities, who are responsible for their pupils, the school has no firm knowledge of the quality of education or number of hours that pupils are receiving.

Personal, social and health education is strong throughout the school because the philosophy of the school is part of its everyday life and culture and permeates every activity that pupils take part in. Pupils say *'we learn about life here because of all the cultures and nationalities of the other pupils that attend'*. There is appropriate guidance given to pupils when they leave the school. Through the routines of jobs and rotas as well as lessons, social interaction and visits outside school, all pupils are well prepared for future life. Pupils are given the opportunity to experience life outside school and go on regular visits to museums and galleries in London and the local area. This gives them a broad knowledge of public services and institutions in England and is especially beneficial to students from abroad.

Pupils are making good progress from their starting points because the teaching is good and because great care and attention are given to ensuring that all pupils follow an individual curriculum which is appropriate to their needs. Class groups are very small. Teachers work hard to encourage pupils to apply their knowledge and to reflect on what they have learnt. Part of the teaching at the school is about pupils learning about themselves and their attitudes to work in general. Most pupils comment that the school achieves well in this respect and that they are gaining a

very good sense about their role in a community and about how to prepare for their future. Lessons are well planned, with a range of methods and styles to make learning enjoyable.

Teachers have very good subject knowledge, many being experts in their own field of study. Some of this expertise for example, in English and mathematics, is used in the primary section of the school. Relations between teachers and pupils are very good. All staff and pupils are on first name terms and this atmosphere of mutual trust and respect is noticeable throughout school life. Pupils realise that they are at school to work but also welcome the challenge of getting to know and work alongside others from a wide range of countries. There are good classroom resources such as equipment for art and information and communication technology. These are used well by the pupils. Teachers assess pupils' progress effectively and send a report to parents twice per year. Older pupils take public exams and the school measures pupils against its own aims.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The school makes outstanding provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils. The international background of both the school and its pupils contributes strongly to this and provides many opportunities to enrich the pupils' lives at the school. One senior pupil said the school is *'just like home'* while others confirmed that they were very happy at the school and would be sorry to leave. There is a friendly, welcoming atmosphere with a strong emphasis on respect for each individual. The ethos and the philosophy behind the school's foundation ensure that the small community to which all staff and pupils belong is one of openness and trust. The cultural origin of each pupil is respected and differences celebrated. Pupils spend time together but also have the opportunity for time alone and quiet reflection.

The school has a clear behaviour policy. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. As one pupil commented, *'the school tells us the basic rules but it helps us to find out for ourselves what good behaviour is; this is much richer and better and helps us develop'*. Pupils are polite and kind to each other and to staff. They enjoy sharing the wholesome vegetarian meals together. Pupils have pride in their school, are aware of the 'School Agreements' and know the difference between right and wrong. Most pupils are articulate, confident young people who eagerly join in discussions.

Inwoods Small School provides a friendly, attractive environment for the younger pupils in one of the grounds. They are well cared for in small classes where each individual is very well known to the staff. The small school is very much part of Brockwood School, with some older pupils participating in gardening and construction on the Inwoods site, while the younger pupils use the main school facilities such as the main hall and undertake tasks including annual apple-picking.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

Provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is inadequate because the school has not kept up-to-date the training and qualifications for the child protection officer, and because arrangements for the recruitment of staff do not meet regulatory requirements. The school cares well for its pupils as seen by the attention given to promoting their well-being and enjoyment of school. Essential policies and procedures are all in place. Bullying is dealt with appropriately and the majority of pupils know how to keep healthy, safe and fit.

The admission register does not meet regulations. The school does not have a single admission register for both Inwoods Small School and the main school at Brockwood Park. The school fulfils its duties with regard to the Disability Discrimination Act. The school has identified that the tower building used for science needs to be checked by the fire officer but this has not yet been done.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school has not established suitable procedures for ensuring that, prior to taking up their responsibilities, all teaching, non-teaching staff, volunteers, and the proprietorial body are checked with the appropriate authority to verify their suitability to work with children. The school does not keep a comprehensive register of these checks and therefore fails all the regulations regarding the suitability of the proprietor and staff.

School's premises and accommodation

The school's accommodation and grounds are vast and are maintained to a very high standard. The buildings are airy and spacious. They have been thoughtfully adapted to provide classrooms, a meeting room, library and computer room, as well as boarding accommodation for staff and pupils. There are specialist teaching areas for art, science, design and technology. The gardens are used for physical recreation and the school has a swimming pool and fully equipped gym.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school provides a wide range of information for parents, carers and others. The school brochure, website and information booklets are informative and comprehensive. Parents who commented in the pre-inspection questionnaire were very positive about the school and confirmed that they were kept well informed about their child's progress. They receive two written reports each year, which give a clear overview of the progress that their child is making. These include perceptive comments from their personal tutor. Parents of the older pupils have the opportunity to spend a weekend at the school each year, meeting staff, participating in school activities and spending time with their child and their friends. Parents of the younger pupils have regular opportunities to speak to staff.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school has a complaints procedure which fully meets the regulations.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005, with the exception of those listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

- maintain and update the training and qualification of staff who are responsible for implementing the policy on child protection (paragraph 3(2)(b))
- ensure that the centre has a satisfactory level of fire safety identified by its risk assessment under the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997, the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and by any report from the Fire Authority (paragraph 3(5))
- ensure that the admission register and attendance registers are maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 3(9)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of suitability of proprietor and staff (standard 4) and must:

- prior to the confirmation of the appointment and employment of all staff, including volunteers and boarding staff, ensure that it has made appropriate checks to confirm identity, medical fitness, right to work in the UK, previous employment history, references, qualifications and appropriate criminal records check (paragraph 4(2)(a), (b), (c), (d) and (e))
- ensure that the proprietor checks other members of the proprietorial body to confirm identity, right to work in the UK and enhanced medical checks. (paragraph 4B(4 and 5))
- Keep an electronic register which provides all the above information in a legible form (paragraph 4C(2 and 3), (6 and 7) and (9)).

Evaluation of boarding provision

The quality of the boarding at Brockwood Park School is satisfactory. There are some outstanding areas and the majority of the National Minimum Standards are met, with some exceeded. There are some key areas, however, where the standards are not met. This reflects a lack of effective management and monitoring to ensure compliance with the boarding standards and the education regulations. The school has taken appropriate action to address 10 of the 11 recommendations contained in

the previous report. These have included revised guidelines for the use of the swimming pool, an expanded medication policy, the appropriate scrutiny of risk assessments for off site trips, and the introduction of an induction process for newly appointed staff.

The school's ethos and underpinning philosophy very successfully support an environment where students from all over the world live together in an integrated and supportive community. There is a unique atmosphere at the school within which students feel valued and safe, and where they develop close relationships with each other and with staff. Students are extremely happy to be living at the school and their parents are very happy to send them there.

There is a high standard of pastoral care provided by dedicated teams of staff who effectively monitor the health and welfare of all students. A significant number of staff are suitably trained in first aid and there is a very good working relationship with the local surgery where all students are registered. There are clear procedures for the management and administration of medication, and good provision for supporting students should they be unwell. There are no guidelines in place for assessing or monitoring those students who may wish to self-medicate.

There is very good provision for promoting the good health and well-being of students. Human development classes provide suitable education and information for students on health related topics such as drugs, alcohol, and smoking, and external agencies are used on occasions during these classes. There are lots of opportunities for students to partake in physical activities, both on and off site. The school provides a solely vegetarian diet which is of a high standard and which is greatly appreciated by the majority of students.

Staff at the school have a sound understanding of child protection and are suitably aware of the relevant reporting procedures. The school has a designated person with overall responsibility for child protection matters who provides guidance for staff at the start of each school year. However, this person has not undertaken training as required by the education regulations. Gaps in recruitment records show that staff are not being recruited in accordance with the National Minimum Standards nor the regulations for education. .

The school's philosophy encourages students to have enquiring minds and to participate in open and honest discussion. There is excellent provision for students to express their views and opinions, both formally and informally, including a school council, school committee, whole school meetings, and an effective tutor system.. Students play a very active part in the day-to-day running of the school and feel suitably consulted about how the school operates. The provision of wireless computer access in parts of the school is an example of student views being taken into consideration and acted upon.

There is a very strong sense of community at the school. Relationships between students and staff are mutually respectful and the behaviour of students is

exemplary. Bullying is not a problem at the school. A school agreement clearly details the school's expectations of students and is signed by students, their parents, and the school prior to admission. Students feel that they are fairly treated at Brockwood.

The overall standard of boarding accommodation at the school is good and the National Minimum Standards are met. Students' rooms and the facilities provided afford appropriate levels of privacy and are well maintained. There is excellent provision for students to study. Students describe feeling safe at the school and a number described 'loving' their rooms. The school premises and grounds are spacious and meticulously maintained, with suitable provision for recreational activities.

The school has a suitable health and safety policy in place and procedures for managing risk relating to the premises and activities undertaken by students. There is however ineffective monitoring and reviewing of the risk assessments in place. The person with overall responsibility for health and safety across the school has not undertaken any training specific to the role, but has acknowledged the shortfalls that exist and has begun to review the current operational systems. The school conducts and makes a record of required checks and tests of fire safety equipment and an appropriate fire risk assessment is in place. The group have not consulted with the fire authority in relation to an identified risk in the school's tower building, as recorded in their risk assessment. Students are aware of the fire evacuation procedures and confirmed that practice drills take place regularly.

Levels of staffing at the school are sufficient to meet the needs of students. Both staff and students are happy that there are always enough staff around to provide support and supervision when necessary. Students are encouraged to be self-motivated and regularly organise events and activities for themselves. There is an induction process for new staff, which includes child protection guidance. First aid training and food handling is also routinely provided. The school reacts to any identified additional and specific needs of students, such as eating disorders. The school has established positive links with external health professionals.

What must be done to secure future improvement?

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- devise procedures for assessing and monitoring students who wish to self-medicate **(NMS 15)**
- implement a suitable system for the effective monitoring and reviewing of health and safety matters, most notably risk assessments **(NMS 47 & 23)**

- provide specific and relevant training for the person with overall responsibility for health and safety across the school (**NMS 47**)

School details

Name of school	Brockwood Park School and Inwoods Small School		
DCSF number	850/6069		
Unique reference number	116574		
Unique reference number (social care)	SC012443		
Type of school	Primary and secondary boarding		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1969		
Age range of pupils	5-19		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 38	Girls: 43	Total: 81
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 12	Girls: 7	Total: 19
Number of boarders	Boys: 31	Girls: 34	Total: 65
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 0	Girls: 1	Total: 1
Annual fees (day pupils)	£ 3150		
Annual fees (boarders)	£ 13500		
Address of school	Bramdean Alresford Hampshire SO24 0LQ		
Telephone number	01962 771744		
Fax number	01962 771875		
Email address	adrian.sydenham@brockwood.org.uk		
Headteacher	Mr Adrian Sydenham		
Proprietor	Mrs Mary Cadogan, Chairman of the Board of Trustees		
Reporting inspector	Linda Kelsey HMI		
Social care inspector	Brian McQuoid SCI		
Dates of inspection	8–9 May 2008		