

Lewis Charlton School

Independent school standard inspection report

DfE registration number	855/6020
Unique Reference Number (URN)	134438
URN for social care	SC059033
Inspection number	393309
Inspection dates	5–6 July 2012
Reporting inspector	John Gush
Social care inspector	Jo Vyas

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 03001231231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/090070.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

No. 090070

© Crown copyright 2012



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}

The inspection of boarding 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, in order to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and the government of the quality and standard of the service provided.^{3, 4}

Information about the school

Lewis Charlton School is an independent special school catering for up to 47 students of both genders between 11 and 19 years of age. It has weekly boarding facilities for up to three 11 to 16 year old students and up to two students aged over 16 years. Currently there are 45 students on roll, three of whom are weekly boarders. The school is located over four sites, all within easy walking distance of each other and close to the centre of the Leicestershire market town of Ashby-de-la-Zouch.

All students have a statement of special educational needs that identifies behavioural, emotional and social difficulties as the primary concern. The students travel to the school from a number of boroughs across the central and East Midlands. Seven students are in the care of their local authority. The school's last full inspection by Ofsted was in February 2009 and the residential provision was last inspected in June 2011. This report is of an integrated inspection of both the educational and residential provision.

The school states that its primary aim is 'to re-engage pupils in the process of education so that they may become confident and successful learners who are able to access social and vocational opportunities and eventually take their place as responsible members of society.'

Evaluation of the school

The quality of the education at the Lewis Charlton School is good. The students have access to a good curriculum and to good teaching and assessment; as a consequence they make good progress. The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good and as a result students are confident and articulate. However, the provision that the school makes for the welfare, health and safety of the students is inadequate, as are its safeguarding arrangements. A significant number of the regulations for independent schools are not met. The

¹www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents.

²www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents.

³www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents.

⁴www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/a00192112/boarding-schools.

overall effectiveness of the school's residential provision is satisfactory. The outcomes for residential students are good as they make good progress with regard to their behaviour and academic achievement. The quality of residential provision and care is satisfactory, as is residential students' safety. The leadership and management of the residential provision are satisfactory. A small number of national minimum standards are not met.

Quality of education

The curriculum is good. It places a strong emphasis on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and also provides the full range of National Curriculum subjects together with good courses in personal, social and health education (PSHE) and religious education. Students in Key Stage 4 are able to choose from a broad range of accredited courses covering various ability levels including those students taking GCSE courses. In addition to the core subjects, courses include modern foreign languages, history and geography as well as vocational options such as hair and beauty, 'rock school' music performance, countryside skills and interactive media. Lessons in PSHE and citizenship help students learn to look after themselves and to make the most of their opportunities. These are supplemented by very effective gender awareness classes: 'man plan' and 'fem gen', wellbeing sessions, and by visiting speakers. For instance, during the inspection the local community police officer spoke to the whole school and led lively group discussions on youth crime, personal safety and peer pressure. Good opportunities are provided for students to consider future options and careers including access to the school's careers adviser and library as well as visits from Connexions advisers. Visits to museums and activity centres enhance students' learning and provide rewards for their effort. The curriculum and the way it is implemented ensure that the requirements of the students' statements of special educational needs are fully met. The school's sixth form enables students to build effectively personalised courses based on supported integration into local further education colleges. These courses are backed up by individually tailored work on functional skills and personal development and, as a result, these students make good progress.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. Teachers plan lessons carefully, use effective resources and move lessons on at a good pace. As a result, all students make good progress. In the best lessons, teachers' excellent use of students' individual objectives and targets ensure that all are challenged. Students know what is expected of them and expectations are high. Although lesson planning and the choice of options are well informed by assessment, the school has not developed a strategy to ensure that subjects are not repeated. Teachers display confident subject knowledge and make good use of the presence of the teaching assistants so that students gain from individual support and encouragement. Behaviour in lessons is well managed through a shared knowledge of expectations and a good use of the school's incentive scheme. Students' books are generally well presented and thoughtfully marked with comments that both encourage and identify strategies for improvement. Students make good use of a wide range of specialist learning facilities including those for science, design and technology, food technology and music recording.

Students have positive attitudes to learning and show keen interest in their lessons. They are aware of the level at which they are currently working and of their targets for improvement. Residential students make good progress, especially with regard to their behaviour and academic achievement. All students make good progress with their reading, spelling and numeracy, in addition to the new knowledge, skills and understanding evident across the full range of subjects studied. This leads to good results in the suitably chosen range of public examinations. These include GCSE examinations, where grades in English, mathematics and science in the last two years demonstrate good progress from very varied starting points on entry to the school. Teachers use effective procedures for allocating National Curriculum levels to students' performance in the various subjects and are currently developing their moderation procedures to bring additional rigour to this process.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The spiritual, social, moral and cultural development of students at the school is good. Students say that they enjoy coming to school and residential students report that they enjoy the boarding experience. They are all aware of, and appreciate, the special efforts the school makes to support and enable their learning. This is confirmed by the generally good attendance and punctuality to lessons. Students are relaxed around staff and feel able to approach them with any difficulties they are experiencing. They have good relationships with staff and each other. Overall, students are confident and articulate and show courtesy and consideration to visitors. They are aware of the high expectation for appropriate behaviour and show their increasing personal responsibility by evaluating their own behaviour and success in learning at the end of each lesson. These evaluations are central to the weekly incentive scheme and can lead to personal and class-based rewards. Residential students are also encouraged to develop their independent living skills such as shopping, cooking a meal and household chores.

The students are well integrated into their local community. They regularly walk across the town between the school's sites and they use the local leisure centre and library for lessons. As a result, they learn the importance of appropriate behaviour in public places. They serve visitors in the school's café including those from a local elderly peoples home and for two years running they have won the 'Respect Challenge Award' conferred by North West Leicestershire Borough Council. The school's football teams take part in inter-school competitions and one of the teams has recently won an 'Every Player Counts' cup. Regular opportunities for learning about other cultures are provided in PSHE and religious education lessons enabling students to develop an attitude of understanding.

Students' behaviour is satisfactory because they are making reasonable strides in improving this. Many students behave sensibly around the school; although a small number of lessons are interrupted by poor behaviour. Residential students state that they know what the rules are and the consequences of breaking the rules. They feel these are fair. Throughout the whole school, however, the number of instances of angry or frustrated outbursts remains high and the number of times staff members have to physically restrain a student has only reduced a little in the past year.

Students who have been restrained say it is carried out properly and for the right reasons, to keep themselves and others safe. The school monitors these incidents carefully but has not yet developed a procedure to evaluate them or an effective strategy to reduce the number of times they occur. The school has a suitable plan to address this issue and has recently acquired a new computer programme for this purpose.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The school's arrangements to promote the welfare health and safety of students are inadequate and several of the regulations regarding this standard are not met. The school's child protection policies and procedures are satisfactory in most respects, but they are not consistently followed. Reporting of safeguarding concerns lacks the required rigour and records are poor, as they do not provide an account of decision-making processes and conversations with external professionals. Insufficient attention is paid to fire safety. There is potential fire risk on one of the education sites which has not been adequately assessed. The health and safety of students on trips and visits away from the school site is not satisfactorily assured. This is because, other than in the sixth form, the school does not record any plans or risk assessments for these visits. This practice is not proportionate to the level of risk associated with the students in the school. Staff members are suitably trained in child protection and the headteacher, who is the designated child protection officer, has received the required advanced level of training.

The school's procedures to counter bullying are satisfactory in many respects but do not take account of current Department for Education guidance. However, both residential and day students say they feel safe and that bullying is well managed by the staff. Students are listened to and any safeguarding concerns are taken seriously. Medication is securely stored and, in most cases, safely administered. However, some medication is not given as stated on the prescription label. Furthermore, the school occasionally accepts medication which is not in its original box and, therefore, staff do not have the most up-to-date administration regime.

A suitable policy for health and safety is in place. However, although adequate risk assessments have been carried out of all the school's teaching facilities these have not been satisfactorily reviewed or refreshed. The safety of equipment is regularly checked by external contractors. There are appropriately trained first aiders in all the school's sites. The school has a satisfactory policy to promote good behaviour among students. Any sanctions imposed in relation to serious misbehaviour are suitably recorded and staff members are appropriately deployed to ensure the proper supervision of students. Residential students can leave the school grounds in the evenings. However, during the day, an electronic gate on one site impedes their freedom to leave. The gate is in place to keep students safe from intrusion or running away from the school, but, as there is no accessible release button, it is a restriction of their liberty.

The school's admissions and attendance registers are correctly maintained. The school does not have a current three-year action plan to improve the accessibility of

its accommodation, its curriculum or the information it makes available and so does not fulfil its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school has an adequate recruitment policy and makes all the required checks to ensure that staff members are suitable to work with children. The checks are correctly maintained on a central register. However, one of the requirements is not met. At the time of the inspection, the school was not aware of its responsibility to inform the Independent Safeguarding Authority if a member of staff is disciplined or dismissed due to their unsuitability for working with children.

Premises and accommodation at the school

Adequate premises and accommodation are available for the number of students for which the school is registered. The main school site provides very good facilities for the nurturing of the younger students as well as adequately sized classrooms and a well-equipped science room. Appropriate outdoor space is available for play and relaxation. The recent acquisition of the Lewis Charlton Village site has been well utilised to broaden the range of practical and vocational courses available for the students and to provide a very useful school theatre. Lewis Lodge, where the sixth form is based, provides excellent facilities to support learning and to promote the independence of this group of students. The school has adequate washrooms and facilities for students who are ill.

One regulation is not met because the fire safety policy and procedures do not adequately protect the safety of the residential students.

Provision of information

Most, but not all, of the regulations that relate to this standard are met. The school's development plan identifies the need to improve the quality of the information it makes available for parents, carers and others. The school is in the process of reviewing its website and brochure. The school's information currently does not state the name of the proprietor nor the address at which the proprietor can be contacted. It does not state that the policy on the health and safety of students on trips and visits can be seen and it does not provide information about the academic performance of students during the preceding school year. The school's safeguarding policy is not available on the website nor is it routinely made available to current or prospective parents or carers.

The brochure provides all the other required information for parents and carers, and annual reports of students' progress are made available to parents, carers and referring authorities. Financial information is also sent, as required, to the students' local authorities.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school's complaints procedure is available for parents, carers and others and it meets the requirements.

Leadership and management of the residential provision

Leadership and management of the residential provision are satisfactory. The leadership team and staff are passionate about the work they do and students are central to all practice. Staff are qualified, caring and committed. However, the induction for new staff is not linked to the Children Development Workforce Council induction standards. Although staff feel well supported by the leadership team, they are currently not given an annual appraisal of their performance. The school does not have a clear and accurate evaluation of its performance with regards to the residential provision. For example, the headteacher's report does not fully examine the residential experience against the national minimum standards. Furthermore, the independent visitor, who visits the school at least termly, does not fully assess the conduct of the school as required by the national minimum standards. This does not help the school to plan for its future effectively.

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.⁵

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

- ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of students at the school and ensure that these arrangements have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 7)
- ensure that where boarding accommodation is provided, arrangements are 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)
- ensure that there are effective procedures to prevent bullying which have regard to the DfE guidance *Preventing and tackling bullying - advice for school leaders, staff and governing bodies*⁶ (paragraph 10)
- ensure that there are effective procedures for ensuring students' health and safety on educational visits which have regard to DfE guidance⁷ (paragraph 12)

⁵www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1997/contents/made.

⁶www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/advice/f0076899/preventing-and-tackling-bullying.

- ensure that there is compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005?⁸ (paragraph 13).

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 it is aware of its duty to refer a person who is deemed unsuitable for working with children to the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the premises of and accommodation at schools (standards in part 5) and must:

- ensure that, where boarding accommodation is provided, it has regard to standard 7.1 of the national minimum standards for residential special schools (paragraph 23(t)).

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

- ensure that it provides the name of the proprietor together with the address and telephone number of the registered office (paragraph 24(1)(a))
- ensure that the following information is made available to parents and carers of students or prospective students and on request to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate: particulars of arrangements for promoting students' health and safety on educational visits and particulars of academic performance during the preceding year, including the results of any public examinations (paragraph 24(1)(b))
- ensure that the safeguarding children policy is published on the school's website or sent to the parents or carers of students or prospective students, on request (paragraph 24(1)(c)).

In order to comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, the school should devise a three-year accessibility plan.⁹

National minimum standards

The school must meet the following national minimum standards for residential special schools.

⁷www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/healthandsafety/f00191759/departmental-advice-on-health-and-safety-for-schools.

⁸www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2005/1541/contents/made.

⁹www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents.

- The school must comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (as referenced in 'Residential Special Schools National Minimum Standards') and any requirements set out in regulations relating to school premises. (NMS 7.1)
- Most monitoring visits must be carried out unannounced. They include: checks on the school's records of attendance, complaints, sanctions, use of physical interventions, risk assessments, and where they exist, individual care plans for children; assessment of the physical condition of the building, furniture and equipment of the school; and opportunities for any child or member of staff who wishes to meet the visitor (in private if they wish.) (NMS 20.2)
- The headteacher (or school equivalent), governing body, trustees, partnership, or organisation responsible for must carry out and record in writing, once each year: a review of the operation and resourcing of the school's welfare provision for boarding pupils, in relation to: its Statement of Purpose, its staffing policy, the placement plans for individual children; and an internal assessment of its compliance with these Standards. Where appropriate such a report may be incorporated within a review of the whole school. (NMS 20.4)
- The school should have, and implement, appropriate policies for the care of children who are unwell. These include first aid, care of those with chronic conditions and disabilities, administration of medicines and dealing with medical emergencies. The provision of accommodation for children who are unwell should have regard to any requirements set out in regulations relating to school premises. (NMS 3.6)
- The school should ensure that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and that such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State. (NMS 11)
- The school must ensure that a written record is kept of major sanctions and the use of any physical intervention. Records may include the information in Appendix 2 (use of physical restraint). The record should be made within 24 hours of the sanction being applied and be legible. Children should be encouraged to have their views recorded in the records. The school should regularly review any instances of the use of physical intervention restraint and examine trends or issues to enable staff to reflect and learn in a way that will inform future practice. (NMS12.6)
- The school should not restrict the liberty of any child as a matter of routine or provide any form of secure accommodation. (NMS 12.7)

- New staff should undertake the Children’s Workforce Development Council’s induction, beginning within 7 working days of starting their employment and completing training within 6 months. (NMS19.3)
- All staff should have access to support and advice for their role. They also should have regular supervision and formal annual appraisal of their performance. (NMS 19.6)



Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	Inadequate
-------------	------	--------------	------------

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				✓
--------------------------------------------------	--	--	--	---

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
-------------	------	--------------	------------

Overall effectiveness of the residential experience

Overall effectiveness of the residential experience			✓	
Outcomes for residential pupils		✓		
Quality of residential provision and care			✓	
Residential pupils' safety			✓	
Leadership and management of the residential provision			✓	

School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Special school for students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties		
Date school opened	September 2003		
Age range of pupils	11 to 19 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 33	Girls: 12	Total: 45
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of boarders	Boys: 1	Girls: 2	Total: 3
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 33	Girls: 12	Total: 45
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 4	Girls: 3	Total: 7
Annual fees (day pupils)	£43,152 to £59,850		
Annual fees (boarders)	£79,490 to £87,926		
Address of school	North Street Ashby-de-la-Zouch LE65 1HU		
Telephone number	01530 560775		
Email address	g.pearson@lewischarltonschool.org		
Headteacher	Georgina Pearson		
Proprietor	Lewis Charlton 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.



9 July 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Lewis Charlton School, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, LE65 1HU

Thank you for welcoming us so warmly when my fellow inspector and I visited your school last week. We were very impressed by the confidence and self esteem that you showed in your conversations with us, in your lessons and as you moved around the school and between the school sites. The teaching and curriculum in your school are good and, as a result, you make good progress. Well done. Your personal development is good and most of you are making an effort to learn to control your behaviour, which is satisfactory. Not many lessons are interrupted by poor behaviour but there are too many outbursts of anger or frustration that result in staff members having to physically intervene.

We found that residential students have a satisfactory residential experience overall and their outcomes are good. The quality of the residential provision is satisfactory as is residential students' safety. Leadership and management of the residential provision are satisfactory.

Unfortunately we found that the provision that the school makes for your welfare, health and safety is inadequate and we have asked the school to make some improvements as a matter of urgency. These relate to the arrangements it makes for safeguarding, for fire safety, for health and safety on educational trips and for working with you to prevent bullying.

While the school is working on these issues we would urge you to continue to work hard and to enjoy your learning. If you become angry or frustrated, remember that the school staff can help you to gain control and to avoid an outburst. Do ask them.

Yours sincerely

John Gush
Lead inspector