

# Ocean Lodge Independent 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**

Ocean Lodge Independent School, which opened in October 2011, is an independent day special school located in a residential area. It is owned by Potton Homes and is registered to admit up to eight boys and girls between the ages of seven and 16 years with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. There are currently seven students on roll, six of whom have statements of special educational needs. Five of the students live in accommodation provided by the company. The school aims to 'nurture and inspire students and to make them believe in themselves; to remove barriers to learning and spawn trust and the desire to achieve; helping students to become confident and productive members of society.' This is the school's first full Ofsted inspection since its registration.

## **Evaluation of the school**

Ocean Lodge provides a good quality of education which is personalised to meet the needs of each individual student. Students make satisfactory progress overall, however, those who attend regularly make good progress with their learning and all students make good improvements in their behaviour. The good curriculum is adapted, including the use of a variety of external providers, to ensure that each student has access to a relevant, personalised learning experience. Arrangements to ensure the welfare and safety of students, including safeguarding procedures, are good. The school has established a clear sense of direction and effective monitoring of its own development in a short time since registration; it meets all of the regulatory requirements.

## **Quality of education**

The school provides a good curriculum which is well matched to the individual needs of the current students who are all in Key Stages 3 and 4. Students are provided with stimulating experiences which cover all of the required areas of learning, broadly reflecting the requirements of the National Curriculum. Students enter the school with a largely negative previous experience of school and long periods of absence from formal education. Most are working at levels below those typical of students of their age. The school has appropriate procedures for assessing students' attainment, particularly in reading, writing, mathematics and science. As a result, work is set at

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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).

an appropriate level to enable them to fill gaps in their learning and to ensure that they can experience early success. Good account is taken of the objectives specified in students' statements of special educational needs to inform the targets set in their individual education and behaviour plans, including targets for improving both learning and relationships. A good range of appropriate resources has been established, including on-line programs to improve reading, and practical resources to develop knowledge, skills and understanding in mathematics. The teaching of science incorporates regular practical, experimental work to which students respond very positively and creatively. Students particularly enjoy art, music and physical education activities. These combine suitable opportunities for the development of a range of hands-on skills, together with a therapeutic environment with opportunities for personal reflection and expression. Good use is made of off-site facilities, including the beach, local parks, a local supermarket and a primary and a secondary school link. Firm plans are in place, for example, for students to use the new music centre in the primary school and to attend a short cookery course at the supermarket. Personal, social and health education features strongly in the curriculum, including opportunities for accreditation through ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) and the Certificate of Personal Effectiveness (CoPE) courses. The school provides good opportunities for staff to upgrade their qualifications to teach accredited courses and is currently seeking to extend its registration for accreditation of additional vocational programmes. The school is very flexible in providing for the needs of students who enter at various points in Key Stage 4. Good links with local alternative providers have resulted in opportunities for students to attend, for example, courses in hair and beauty or animal management, with varying degrees of success. Arrangements for the monitoring of students' responses to off-site provision are not consistently rigorous to ensure that the school can take timely action to adjust provision immediately when required.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. Provision is not outstanding because teaching and curriculum outcomes are not yet outstanding. Teachers have developed positive relationships with students and a productive working environment has been established. Teachers and learning assistants work successfully as a team and judge effectively when to intervene, to suggest, advise or to direct. Students work with interest, particularly on practical activities, for example in science or music. Their literacy levels inhibit the extent of their progress, particularly with writing activities. The staff are becoming increasingly skilled at finding alternative approaches to record work without compromising the need to ensure that basic skills are improved. The ASDAN award scheme and access to functional skills accreditation ensure that there are appropriate outcomes available when students reach the required levels. Work is continuously assessed using National Curriculum level descriptors, supplemented with termly formal assessments in the core subjects. A progress tracking spreadsheet has recently been introduced to provide an effective visual summary of the extent of progress for each individual student. A small number of older students are taught individually in their residences or allocated to accredited courses off-site. Their responses to these opportunities vary between enthusiastic participation, short-term active attendance and unauthorised absence. The staff are

unstinting in their work to find new and appropriate opportunities for all students to take part in full-time education.

Students make satisfactory progress overall. Those who attend regularly are making good progress in their learning, including in literacy and numeracy. Although the majority have been at the school for relatively short periods of time, assessment records and completed samples of their work demonstrate good progress in knowledge, understanding and the ability to record accurately and legibly. Progress is much more varied and irregular for the minority who do not take part in regular, continuous formal learning. Poor attendance by a small number of students in Year 11 restricts the extent of their progress with their education.

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

The school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is satisfactory. There is a strong emphasis in the curriculum and in the ethos of the school on the development of emotional stability and moral values. Students are encouraged to reflect on their behaviour and a restorative approach is taken to the resolution of any incidents. All but one of the current students have been enrolled at the school for less than seven months; the attendance of the majority is excellent. However, the poor attendance of a minority adversely affects their learning and progress. Behaviour in the school is good and students show respect towards adults and have positive attitudes to learning. There is clear evidence of improvements in behaviour and social skills for the majority of students. The school works continuously with parents and carers to establish consistent expectations of behaviour and engagement with education. This provides a secure environment where students recognise that they are valued, even during times when they are struggling to meet expectations regarding their full-time involvement in education.

A number of satisfactory activities have been implemented or planned, to contribute to the cultural development of students and their involvement in the wider community. Visitors from local services, for example, the police and first aid trainers are welcomed to work with students. An effective link has been established through an international charity, with a schoolboy in Lesotho. This has resulted, for example, in an enterprise topic through which students have begun planning for the design, production and marketing of fund-raising items. Festivals from a number of world faiths, Black History Month, visits to places of worship, and the developing relationship with the local multicultural primary school are all built into the school's calendar in order to provide students with opportunities to develop their understanding and respect for diversity in the wider community in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony.

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

Arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of students are good. Comprehensive policies and procedures for the recruitment of staff, management of behaviour, risk assessments for off-site visits, first aid and the safeguarding of

students, provide the context in which all are safe and are well cared for. All staff have been trained to the required levels in child protection, and a second member of staff is about to be trained to the standard required to act as the designated person for child protection. Physical restraint is rarely used and there have been no exclusions from the school. Appropriate details are recorded of incidents and of any sanctions imposed for misbehaviour. Good attention is given to the maintenance of health and safety throughout the premises, including all required aspects of fire safety.

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

All of the required checks on the suitability of staff and the proprietor have been completed and the details entered in a suitable single central register.

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

The premises and accommodation at the school provide a suitable environment for safe and at least satisfactory learning. Classrooms are of a good size for the numbers of students taught and are maintained to an attractive and welcoming standard. Good use is made of the display of students' work and achievements, and students treat the premises with respect. There is sufficient outside space for play and relaxation, and good use is made of local open spaces for physical education.

### **Provision of information**

All of the required information is provided, or is made available to parents and carers through a comprehensive, clearly presented annual prospectus. The website is being redesigned at present and the specification for this will ensure that parents and carers have an additional means of access to the school's policies and procedures. Good end-of-year reports are sent home to all parents and carers, supplementing the variety of information contributed by the school to reviews of statements and individual education and behaviour plans.

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

The school has appropriate procedures for the management of any complaints. Details of the school's policy are made available to all 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').

### **What the school could do to improve further**

While not required by regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development.

- Improve arrangements for the regular monitoring of students' attendance and progress and the provision made when students are placed with off-site providers.
- Implement strategies to improve the attendance of all students to an average of 92%.

## 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 behavioural, emotional and social difficulties		
<b>Date school opened</b>	October 2011		
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–16 years		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed		
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 6	Girls: 1	Total: 7
<b>Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs</b>	Boys: 6	Girls: 0	Total: 6
<b>Number of pupils who are looked after</b>	Boys: 4	Girls: 1	Total: 5
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£38,750		
<b>Email address</b>	debra@potton-homes.co.uk		
<b>Headteacher</b>	Debra Hughes		
<b>Proprietor</b>	Sue Potton		

**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.**



20 September 2012

Dear Students

### **Inspection of Ocean Lodge Independent School**

I would like to thank you for making me welcome when I visited your school recently. The inspection judged that Ocean Lodge is a good school and all government regulatory requirements are met. I was particularly pleased to see that:

- the staff provide you with a range of good learning experiences to prepare you well for the future
- a number of you have had excellent attendance since joining the school
- you are making at least satisfactory progress and those that attend regularly make good progress, particularly in improving your reading, writing and maths, even when you sometimes find the subjects difficult
- you enjoyed your science lesson and gave good ideas to improve the experiment
- you worked well together, for example in your music and physical education lessons
- you respect the staff and cooperate well with the good teaching that they provide for you
- you are making progress with the management of your behaviour.

I know that some of you find it difficult to attend regularly and to make the most of the good opportunities provided by the school. In order to make the school even better, I have asked the staff to continue to work with you to make sure everyone's attendance is excellent and that staff monitor the quality of the off-site courses provided for you so you really benefit from them. You can play your part by attending regularly and taking an active part in all the activities provided for you. I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Young  
Lead Inspector