

Brockwood Park School and Inwoods Small School

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Martin Newell
Social care inspector	Brian McQuoid

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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

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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.^{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 boarding 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

This was an integrated inspection of the education and boarding provision for the students and pupils of Brockwood Park School and Inwoods Small School. The schools, for registration purposes, are regarded as a single school. The schools are situated about half a mile apart in Bramdean, Hampshire. The school was founded in 1969 by the Indian educational philosopher, Krishnamurti, for pupils aged 14 to 19. There are currently 73 pupils on roll at Brockwood Park, of which almost all are boarders.

At Inwoods Small School, education is provided for 35 pupils in total aged between four and 11 on a non-boarding basis. Twenty-one of these pupils are part-time. Three children are currently in the Early Years Foundation Stage. No children are in receipt of government funding. Pupils attend Inwoods for between one and four days, with the remainder of their provision covered by home tuition. Two pupils at Inwoods have a statement of special educational needs.

The school is vegetarian and non-denominational. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds and nationalities. Education and boarding provision were last inspected as a single event in 2008.

The school's aim is to offer a personalised and holistic education which 'encourages academic excellence, self-understanding, creativity and integrity in a safe, non-competitive environment'.

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

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

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

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

Evaluation of the school

The school provides its pupils with a good quality of education and enables them to leave the school as accomplished individuals. The quality of the curriculum and teaching are good overall throughout the school and pupils of all ages make good progress. The provision made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Relationships between adults and pupils are excellent, both in school and in the boarding provision and pupils' behaviour is outstanding. However, the welfare, health and safety of pupils are inadequate because the school does not carry out the necessary safeguarding checks on volunteers and trustees who visit the school. This also means that the overall effectiveness of the boarding provision is inadequate despite the very many positive features and outstanding outcomes. Although the school has addressed a number of regulatory failures since the previous inspection, it is currently failing to meet a number of the independent school regulations and three of the national minimum standards for boarding.

Quality of education

The curriculum is good. Policies and schemes of work are in place to ensure that knowledge and skills are taught in a progressive manner across the school. The pupils who are of compulsory school age follow areas of study that are in line with regulations. Older pupils often pursue studies that lead to accreditation at AS and A level, although some choose not to take the examinations. There is a wide range of subjects from which to choose. As pupils have made individual choices there tends to be great enthusiasm for the chosen subjects. There is a good level of career guidance on offer for older pupils. All pupils participate in physical activity in the extensive school grounds, with older pupils also participating in activities off-site at a local sports hall. Older pupils also participate in sporting activities in the evenings and at weekends, reflecting the almost seamless transition between boarding and school provision.

Life at the school is not just seen as an opportunity to develop academic skills but also a chance to develop social and personal acumen. In addition to the academic subjects, older pupils participate in a 'Care for the Earth' programme which involves practical work in the school's organic vegetable garden and an exploration of the wider dimension of caring for the Earth through the study of human ecology. These pupils are more than happy to take part in this programme after the school day and at weekends, which again strengthens the links between school and boarding provision.

Pupils' personal, social and health education is promoted very well in the formal curriculum and through the philosophy of everyday life. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to discuss issues of moral and social consequence, substance abuse and keeping safe. The carrying out of jobs and rotas, working alongside staff, both during and after the school day, is a regular sight at the school and is highly effective at developing pupils' social and team-building skills. The strong emphasis on developing independence, collaboration and skills in budgeting within the boarding

provision carries over into school life and adds much to the highly effective and functioning of the school as a genuine community. Pupils' personal development is further enhanced through visits to galleries, museums and other places of historical and cultural interest as well as, for older pupils, international visits to Japan, India and the United States of America.

At Inwoods, pupils spend between one and five days at the school. When pupils are not at the school, they receive home tuition from their local authority. Pupils benefit from a broad curriculum covering different subjects, which meets their needs and abilities appropriately and enables them to make good progress in acquiring basic and creative skills and in enhancing their personal and social development. There are good opportunities to investigate, use the outdoors and collaborate together. The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum suitably covers the required areas of learning, offering a good balance between independent learning and more adult-directed activities.

The quality of teaching and assessment ranges from satisfactory to outstanding and is good overall. Many teachers demonstrate excellent subject knowledge and use this to great effect to motivate and enthuse the pupils and to develop high levels of discussion and debate. Teaching is at its best when questioning is challenging and pupils are expected to justify their views and opinions and where the pace of the lesson does not drop. The best teaching fully capitalises on pupils' desire for new learning and makes clear the intended outcomes of the lesson and the part they must play to ensure the objectives are achieved. Just occasionally, there is too much teacher talk and not enough open-ended questioning to challenge pupils' thinking. Marking of pupils' work often provides clear and concise pointers for improvement and pupils readily take on board the guidance given. Pupils with learning difficulties, including those with statements of special educational needs, receive benefit from good support and strategies to help them with their learning. For the pupils at Inwoods, teaching is often fun and enjoyable and well matched to individual needs. There is regular assessment of pupils' progress and this information is used well to support teaching and learning.

Pupils make good progress overall both academically and socially. Any pupil found to be underachieving is quickly identified and effective strategies put in place to make up any lost ground. There are no significant differences in the progress made by boys and girls and effective support for less-able pupils means that any gaps in learning are quickly closed.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. From an early age, pupils appreciate the natural world around them and this continues as they progress through the school. Pupils demonstrate a genuine concern for the natural world and take great pride in tending the school's garden and have a passionate belief in conservation and the world's ecology.

Pupils of all ages are developing well a very strong belief in justice and fair play and of what is morally right and wrong. They demonstrate an excellent awareness of moral, social and political issues and welcome the many opportunities they have for discussion on such issues both in school and in the boarding provision. Relationships between staff and pupils of all ages are excellent. There is a tangible mutual respect that is equally evident in school and in the boarding provision. Staff and pupils work together in completing jobs around the school and both greatly appreciate the humour and commitment with which these tasks are completed. The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They are extremely polite and courteous to staff, visitors and one another and demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning. Attendance levels are high.

Older pupils are given opportunities through the school council, school meetings and 'morning group' meetings to offer their views about school and boarding life. Younger pupils let their views be known at assemblies. Across the school, pupils feel confident to approach any member of staff, knowing their opinion will be respected. They are taught the importance of tolerance and understanding. Boarding pupils attend from many different countries and staff in both the school and boarding provision capitalise on this to deepen pupils' awareness and understanding of a wide range of traditions and beliefs. This approach works extremely well in creating a harmonious and highly inclusive community in school and in the boarding provision.

Pupils raise monies for different charities and are empathetic to those less fortunate than themselves. They have a good understanding of the role of British public institutions, helped by the visits out of school and by visitors to the school.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is inadequate. This is because the school does not undertake all the necessary safeguarding checks properly for both the school and the boarding staff. Facilities for boarders who are ill do not meet the required national minimum standards. Appropriate policies for safeguarding, behaviour, anti-bullying, fire and first aid, health and safety and pupils are all in place. With the exception of safeguarding, all are understood and properly applied.

Health and safety arrangements are excellent, with an external consultancy carrying out an annual audit, and comprehensive systems are effectively implemented for the management of risks for the school and the boarding provision. Fire safety provision is good, with students and records confirming that they have regular fire drills. All staff have received appropriate training for child protection. There are an appropriate number of trained first aiders. Pupils are properly supervised. The school has an accessibility plan which indicates that it takes seriously its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. The school, including the boarding provision, is highly effective at promoting healthy eating and keeping fit.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school has improved its procedures for safer recruitment since the time of the previous inspection and a single central register is now in place, with all checks on staff appropriately recorded. However, appropriate checks have not been undertaken on trustees who visit the school and volunteers who work in the boarding provision and so their details have not been recorded in the single central register.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The accommodation and grounds occupied by the schools are of a high standard and contribute much to creating a stimulating learning environment. Classrooms are spacious and are well resourced to support learning. The outside accommodation for pupils of all ages is put to good use for physical education and for learning about the natural world. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have good access to outdoor play equipment and that adds much to the quality of their learning experiences. The school has developed its own vegetable garden and pupils benefit from a well-stocked library, a swimming pool and fully equipped gymnasium. High-class facilities are on hand for assemblies, school and group meetings and new boarding accommodation is currently being built.

Provision of information

All of the required information is provided, or made available, to parents, carers and others. Detailed reports are written and sent to parents and carers on a regular basis through the academic year, outlining how well their children are progressing both academically and socially. Parents and carers who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly supportive of the school and its work and its keeping them well informed. Communication during the year is often by telephone or e-mail, which is necessary given that some parents and carers live abroad. Parents and carers of younger pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, have the opportunity to meet and talk with the staff on a daily basis.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The complaints policy and procedures meet all educational and boarding requirements.

Leadership and management of boarding

Leadership and management of the school's boarding provision is inadequate overall, despite there being many positive features. The inadequacy is due to the failure of the school to undertake all the necessary safeguarding checks and record them in the central register.

The school is almost wholly boarding for older pupils and as such there is a strong sense of community. Boarding is at the heart of the school and staff are clearly highly committed and enthusiastic in seeking to provide memorable learning and

living experiences for all pupils. It is evident that the ethos and aims of the school are as pronounced in the boarding provision as they are in the main school.

The school operates very smoothly on a day-to-day basis and the building of new boarding accommodation highlights a strong desire to continually develop and improve the school's facilities for its pupils and staff. Staff operate extremely effectively as a team across the school. This is a major contributory factor to the outstanding outcomes for boarders, academically and socially. Communication between staff takes place on a daily basis and there are effective systems for monitoring individual pupils when necessary. Levels of staffing provide well for the supervision of pupils who are always able to contact a staff member both day and night. There is a student council that operates effectively and has considerable influence.

Staff report feeling extremely well supported and say that the school provides well for their individual training needs. Reports on the school's operation are provided to the trustees every term and there is excellent communication with pupils, 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.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 arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school and that these arrangements have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 7)
- ensure that arrangements are in place in the boarding provision to safeguard and promote the welfare of boarders and that these have regard to the national minimum standards for boarding schools (paragraph 8).

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 can be verified that no member of the proprietorial body is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (ISA barred list), or does not carry out or intend to carry work at the school in contravention of any direction made under section 142 of the 2002 Act in respect of that person(List 99), or

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

disqualification prohibition or restriction having the same effect (paragraph 21(6)(a))

- ensure that the chairperson has made the following checks on other members of the proprietorial body:
 - an enhanced criminal records bureau (CRB) check
 - the individual's identity and their right to work in the United Kingdom
- and
 - in the case of any person for whom, by reason of living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, further checks are made in regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 21(6)(b)).
- ensure that in relation to each member of a body of persons named as the proprietor appointed on or after **1 May 2007**, the register shows whether the checks referred to in 21(6)(b) were made, the date they were made and the date on which the resulting certificate was obtained.

Checks required include:

- an enhanced CRB check and, where requested by the Secretary of State, is countersigned by the Secretary of State
- the individual's identity and their right to work in the United Kingdom
- and
 - in the case of any person for whom, by reason of living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, further checks in regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 22(6))
 - ensure that in relation to each member of a body of persons named as the proprietor who was appointed at any time before **1 May 2007**, does the register show whether the checks referred to in 21(6)(b) were made, the date they were made and the date on which the resulting certificate was obtained.

Checks required include:

- an enhanced CRB check and, where requested by the Secretary of State, is countersigned by the Secretary of State
- and
 - in the case of any person for whom, by reason of living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, further checks in regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 22(7)).

National minimum standards

In order to meet the national minimum standards for boarding schools or residential special and associated regulations, the school should:

- ensure the accommodation for boarders who are unwell is adequately staffed by appropriately qualified personnel. The accommodation should be adequately separated from other boarders and provide separate accommodation for male and female boarders where this is necessary (NMS 3.2)

- ensure the operation of safe recruitment procedures and vet staff in line with the regulatory requirements and having regard to relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State. (NMS 14.1)
- ensure that for all persons over 16 (not on the roll of the school) who after April 2002 began to live on the same premises as boarders but who are not employed by the school, there is a CRB check completed at the standard level (NMS 14.2).

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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Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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Overall effectiveness of the boarding experience

Overall effectiveness of the boarding experience				✓
Outcomes for boarders	✓			
Quality of boarding provision and care				✓
Boarders' safety				✓
Leadership and management of boarding				✓

School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Primary schooling, secondary schooling and boarding		
Date school opened	1969		
Age range of pupils	5–19 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 42	Girls: 45	Total: 87
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 9	Girls: 12	Total: 21
Number of boarders	Boys: 39	Girls: 34	Total: 73
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 0	Girls: 2	Total: 2
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£934–£3,829		
Annual fees (boarders)	£17,270		
Address of school	Bramdean Alresford Hampshire SO24 0LQ		
Telephone number	01962 771744		
Email address	adrian.sydenham@brockwood.org.uk		
Headteacher	Mr Adrian Sydenham/ Mr Bill Taylor		
Proprietor	Mrs Mary Cadogan, Chairman of the Board of Trustees		

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.

19 March 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Brockwood Park School, Alresford SO24 0LQ

Thank you very much for making me so welcome when I recently visited your school with my colleague who was evaluating the quality of the boarding provision. You certainly made us very welcome and made our visit one that we will remember for quite a while. It was a pleasure to get the opportunity to talk to a number of you and it was evident from the discussions that you are proud to be a part of the school community and that you greatly appreciate what it provides for you. I thought that you demonstrated an infectious enthusiasm for learning and it was clear that you thoroughly enjoy both learning and living at the school.

The judgement that I came to was that the school provides you with a good quality of education. There is little doubt that the education and boarding provision combine well to enable you to leave school as accomplished and confident individuals. Good and, at times, outstanding teaching helps you to make good progress and achieve well. The curriculum gives you a wide and varied choice of subjects to study and this is enhanced by the school's tradition of the 'Care for the Earth' programme and the array of visits out of school. Staff go the extra mile in supporting you and helping you develop socially and personally as well as academically. The relationships between yourselves and the staff both during the school day and in the boarding provision are excellent and add greatly to the tangible sense of community that wraps around the school. Another strength of the school is you, the pupils. Your behaviour is outstanding and contributes greatly to the harmonious ethos of the school.

Even good schools can improve and so we have asked the staff to tackle some weaker aspects of school and boarding provision. First, it is important that safeguarding procedures are tightened. It is necessary for the volunteers who support the work and life of the school and live on site and trustees who visit the school to have the appropriate checks on their suitability to be with pupils. Because of this, the provision provided by the school for your safety is inadequate. It also means that the leadership and management of boarding are inadequate because this important matter has not been attended to. We have also asked that accommodation for boarders who are unwell is improved. I know that you will want to continue to contribute to the success of the school through your continued learning efforts and exemplary behaviour. I wish you continued success in your future lives and it was a privilege to meet you.

Yours sincerely
Martin Newell
Lead inspector