

Fairlight Glen Independent Special School

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	David Young

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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}

Information about the school

Fairlight Glen is an independent special school located in a residential area of Herne Bay, Kent. All pupils are looked after and are in the care of the proprietor, Pilgrim's Corner Ltd, which operates a children's home that is open 52 weeks a year. The school, which opened in 2008, provides education for 38 weeks a year for pupils with statements of special educational needs. Nearly all pupils have a statement associated with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, alongside associated learning difficulties and autism. The school is registered for up to 12 pupils aged between eight and 16 years, although at the time of this inspection there were six pupils on roll, one of whom was awaiting assessment for an alternative placement. Prior to attending this school, some pupils had been out of formal education for significant periods. Pupils have been referred by local authorities nationally. The school's aim is to re-engage pupils in education so that they can achieve as much independence as possible. The last full inspection of the school was in November 2008 and a progress monitoring inspection took place in October 2009.

Evaluation of the school

Fairlight Glen School provides a good quality of education and meets its aims effectively. A wide-ranging curriculum, together with good teaching, ensures that pupils make good progress in their learning. Arrangements for the personal development of pupils, including welfare and safeguarding, are good. The staff have established a high quality environment, based on outstanding relationships and role models, within which pupils thrive. The school has made good progress since its last inspection and now meets all of the regulations.

Quality of education

The curriculum is good. All of the required areas of learning are included and there is an appropriate emphasis on the development of skills in literacy and numeracy. The curriculum is carefully planned and is derived from the National Curriculum and the requirements of appropriate external accreditations and awards. The long-term curriculum overview is skilfully refined through medium-term planning and lesson plans, in which objectives and activities for learning are appropriately identified. The

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

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

content of the curriculum is pitched at the appropriate level to ensure that each pupil addresses gaps and areas of weakness in prior learning. The pupils are aware of their personal targets. These are based on their statements of special educational needs and written into effective individual education plans, which take full account of the strategies required to help each pupil access the curriculum. This is an important improvement since that last inspection. A good range of experiences is provided across a wide range of subjects and pupils enjoy the variety offered, for example, in art, information and communication technology, physical education and design and technology. While scientific experiences are embedded in the curriculum of a number of subjects and activities, the essential skills and content of a progressive science curriculum are not made sufficiently explicit in the current planning documentation. External trips and visits motivate the pupils and contribute effectively to their academic and social development. Visits for the current half-term include The Turner Art Gallery, Monkshill Farm, Dickens World and the Science and Natural History Museums, illustrating the breadth of learning experiences available. Pupils are well prepared for the future through suitable careers guidance and developing opportunities for individualised work experience.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. The staff have an outstanding knowledge of the learning requirements of each pupil and activities in lessons are planned with the needs of each individual in mind. Pupils are quick to demonstrate their current targets displayed on the classroom wall and to explain how their current activity, such as filling gaps in their 'times tables', is preparing them for success in future learning and accreditation. Lessons progress at a good pace as teachers introduce a variety of activities, carefully planned to engage and encourage pupils to persevere. Teachers are skilled at understanding how effectively their pupils are learning and adapting lesson plans appropriately. Pupils respond positively to the high quality of relationships developed with their teachers and learning support assistants. Teachers have access to a good range of learning resources which have improved since the last inspection. The installation of interactive computer whiteboards is identified in the school's planned improvements for the future. All members of staff combine their skills and expertise to ensure that each pupil succeeds whether in improving personal levels of achievement in mathematics, baking banana cakes, painting in the style of 'pointilism', making personal name badges, acting out scenes from *Romeo and Juliet* or enjoying reading Roald Dahl's, *The Twits*. The high levels of personal support are very effective in ensuring that each pupil makes good progress. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to work together as a team, and to learn to respect and value each other's contributions.

Pupils have access to a good range of external accreditation. As a result of the good range of curricular experiences and the good quality of teaching, pupils make good progress in their learning. On entry to the school, their prior attainment is tested to provide a baseline for future assessment of progress. The use of National Curriculum levels in English and mathematics, together with regular re-testing of numeracy and literacy, including reading and spelling, provides essential information about the extent of their progress. This information is used well as the basis for future

planning. Recent pupils have achieved good success in a range of ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) and Entry Level awards at Levels 1 and 2. Current pupils are making good progress against their National Curriculum targets and are building portfolios of evidence towards their ASDAN and functional skills assessments.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The pupils have all experienced disruptions and difficulties in their previous educational settings. The school places a high priority on creating a welcoming and stable environment in which effective learning takes place. The quality of relationships between the staff and students is outstanding, and this is a significant feature in the pupils' ability to learn mutual trust and respect. Staff have high expectations of pupils' cooperation with the routines of the school, and as a result behaviour is good. Pupils are making good progress in their ability to manage their moods and occasional negative reactions and have generally positive attitudes to learning. They enjoy school and their attendance is good. In their questionnaire responses they all confirm that staff care about them, treat them fairly and help them to achieve. The educational trips and activities in the local community contribute to pupils' social development effectively and help to prepare them for life after school. There are good opportunities in the curriculum to learn about local services, and pupils' tolerance of and respect for the diversity of national and international communities is enhanced by a range of learning activities, including the chance to investigate their own cultural heritages.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good. Day-to-day practice is exemplary and the welfare of pupils, ensuring their readiness to learn, has a high priority among the staff. Levels of staff supervision are high and based on excellent risk assessment, including for regular off-site activities. Staff are fully aware of the school's child protection procedures and related communications within the parent company and with external agencies are comprehensive and implemented thoroughly. Staff are appropriately trained to the required levels in child protection and first aid. Safe recruitment checks are implemented by the parent company in line with its effective policy and procedures. Policies for the management of behaviour and anti-bullying are understood by staff and pupils, and contribute to the orderly school community. Careful risk-assessment of the premises and fire safety have resulted in the development of safe and well-maintained accommodation. Routine checks on all aspects of fire safety are implemented with appropriate regularity. All of the required written policies are in place and they are implemented effectively. While there has been some improvement to written policies since the last inspection, there is some duplication of policies and procedures, for example for first aid, particularly where updates have been produced without a comprehensive review of previous documentation. The requirements of the Equality Act 2010 are implemented appropriately.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The school has completed all of the required checks on the suitability of staff and proprietors in line with the parent company's recruitment procedures. All of the required checks are recorded in a suitable single central register.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The school premises consist of a two-story semi-detached former residential building, which has been suitably adapted for use as a school. The classrooms and other teaching spaces are of an appropriate size to ensure safe and effective learning. There are sufficient toilets, recreational spaces and offices to provide for the needs of staff and pupils. The rear garden is of suitable size for play and recreation and is used well to enable pupils to take an active part in growing vegetables and flowers.

Provision of information

All of the required information for parents and carers is provided through a suitable prospectus and website. Information is clear and up to date. Weaknesses in the provision of information, identified at the time of the last inspection, have been suitably addressed. Each pupil has a daily contact book, which is used effectively to exchange information between the school and pupils' homes. Appropriate annual reports provide information about pupils' progress in all areas of the curriculum. The school contributes to the annual reviews of pupils' statements of special educational needs and to regular looked-after-children reviews. Placing local authorities, parents and carers, who responded to the inspection questionnaire comment positively on the provision made by the school, including its commendable impact on the personal development of their children.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The school has an appropriate complaints procedure which meets regulatory requirements.

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.

- Include scientific learning experiences and activities as an explicit element of all curriculum planning.
- Provide more opportunities for students to work together as a team on curriculum projects.

- Ensure that all school written policies are up to date and take full account of government guidance.

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

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Special school for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties		
Date school opened	September 2008		
Age range of pupils	8–16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 2	Girls: 4	Total: 6
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 2	Girls: 3	Total: 5
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 2	Girls: 4	Total: 6
Annual fees (day pupils)	£31,200		
Address of school	Fairlight Glen Underdown Road Herne Bay Kent CT6 5BP		
Telephone number	01227 741113		
Email address	edu@pilgrimscorner.co.uk (Headteacher) sarah.curry@pilgrimscorner.co.uk (Proprietor)		
Headteacher	Maureen Hickford		
Proprietor	Sarah Curry and Linda Norman		

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 February 2012

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Fairlight Glen School, Herne Bay CT6 5BP

Thank you for your welcome when I visited your school. I enjoyed my visit very much, including the opportunity to speak with you about the school. The inspection judged that Fairlight Glen School provides you with a good quality of education. I was particularly pleased to see:

- how well you concentrate and take part in your lessons
- that your questionnaires and comments show that you enjoy school, feel safe and you believe that you are making good progress
- the respect you show for your teachers and the way that everyone works together to make sure that you succeed
- your understanding of how to live a healthy life, and particularly your knowledge about healthy foods
- the enthusiasm you put into your learning, for example in your painting, acting out *Romeo and Juliet*, your individual reading and mathematics
- the number of visits that you make to places of interest to help you learn.

Your teachers are doing a good job providing you with a good education. I have asked them to make sure that there are more opportunities to include the study of science in your work, and to provide projects in which you can work together and help each other to improve your work. I have also asked the school to make sure that all of its school policies are up to date. You can help your school to be great by continuing to work as hard as you do and by making sure that your behaviour is always considerate of others.

With all best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Young
Lead inspector