

Overley Hall School

Independent school progress monitoring inspection report

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| DfE registration number | 894/6003 |
| Unique Reference Number (URN) | 123621 |
| Inspection number | 410117 |
| Inspection dates | 19 November 2012 |
| Reporting inspector | Michael Best |

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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. ^{1,2}

The inspection was conducted at the request of the Registration Authority for independent schools in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan following the previous inspection.

Information about the school

Overley Hall is a special school that is registered for 22 pupils aged eight to 19 years. There are currently 22 pupils aged 10 to 19 years on roll, grouped into four mixed-aged classes. Pupils have a range of very complex needs, including autistic spectrum disorder, severe learning difficulties and challenging behaviour. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs and are funded by their local authorities. Eighteen children are looked after by their local authorities, with a further two undergoing review. The school admits residential pupils and opened in 1981. It is located in a large Victorian house set in extensive grounds, with a new purpose-built classroom block that opened in 2009. The school's main aim is to: 'provide a happy, safe and secure learning environment where each pupil has equality of opportunity to access a curriculum designed to meet individual needs, and where every member of the school is treated with respect and valued as an individual'.

Context of the inspection

When the school was last inspected in June 2012, it met most but not all of the regulations. The school drew up an action plan, which was submitted to the Department for Education in September 2012, outlining its proposals to address these shortcomings. The action plan was not evaluated but this monitoring visit was arranged to check the school's progress in implementing its proposals.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

The inspection in June 2012 found that the school's curriculum policy did not accurately reflect the provision being made for pupils; there was no strategic plan to ensure continuity in their learning from year to year and the school was not making sufficient provision for all the required areas of learning for pupils of compulsory school age. In addition, some pupils were not receiving their full entitlement to the National Curriculum as required in their statements of special educational needs, particularly in history and geography. The school's action plan proposed reviewing and strengthening the curriculum by ensuring that all the required subjects were

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

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

taught, establishing closer links between subjects within the topics covered each term and developing a three-year curriculum plan to underpin pupils' progression in learning. It also proposed conducting a full audit of pupils' statements of special educational needs so as to check their requirements and to reflect these in the targets in each pupil's individual education plan. The school has made good progress in implementing these proposals. The curriculum policy has been revised and the new schemes of work implemented. All the required areas of learning are reflected in the curriculum for pupils of compulsory school age and all pupils are now receiving their entitlement to the National Curriculum and other support as specified in their statements. New opportunities for pupils to learn a modern foreign language and participate in the Forest School initiative have been part of the school's successful strategy to bring together knowledge, skills and understanding across different subjects. In addition, changes in the way in which teaching groups are organised have helped to accelerate pupils' progress, particularly in their communication and literacy skills. The school has made good progress in implementing its action plan proposals and the regulations are now met.

The previous inspection also found that careers guidance was not formally planned, and was not covered in sufficient depth. The school's action plan proposed developing a planned programme and involving outside agencies and providers in supporting its implementation. Pupils' annual reviews now identify the support required by each individual with respect to careers education and include targets for pupils to achieve. A recent Connexions workshop has successfully engaged pupils in considering future options. Those pupils attending college courses are supported by school staff, and a suitable mix of school-based work experience and off-site placements is now established.

Omissions in the information provided for parents, carers and others were identified at the time of the previous inspection, including the availability of the school's safeguarding policy. In its action plan, the school proposed updating its website and revising its printed prospectus. While the website is still under development, the revised paper prospectus now meets requirements as it signposts the availability of all the required information.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school has made good progress and now meets all regulatory requirements.

School details

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| School status | Independent | | |
| Type of school | Independent for pupils with complex needs, including autistic spectrum disorder, severe learning difficulties and challenging behaviour | | |
| Date school opened | January 1981 | | |
| Age range of pupils | 8–19 years | | |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | | |
| Number on roll (full-time pupils) | Boys: 16 | Girls: 6 | Total: 22 |
| Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs | Boys: 16 | Girls: 6 | Total: 22 |
| Number of pupils who are looked after | Boys: 13 | Girls: 5 | Total: 18 |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £72,885 – £175,566 | | |
| Address of school | Wellington Telford TF6 5HE | | |
| Telephone number | 01952 740262 | | |
| Email address | gillflannery@overleyhall.com | | |
| Headteacher | Gill Flannery | | |
| Proprietor | Anita Brown | | |