

ASD Learning Centre – Welling

146–148 Parkview Road, Welling, Kent, DA14 1SR

Inspection dates

5–7 June 2013

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

4

Pupils' achievement

Inadequate

4

Pupils' behaviour and personal development

Good

2

Quality of teaching

Adequate

3

Quality of curriculum

Inadequate

4

Pupils' welfare, health and safety

Adequate

3

Leadership and management

Inadequate

4

Summary of key findings

This school is inadequate because

- Pupils' academic achievement is inadequate because there is insufficient teaching time available during the school day to enable pupils to make the progress of which they are capable.
- While the curriculum is broad and balanced, the lack of time available to deliver it means that pupils' understanding is superficial leading to inadequate progress.
- The proprietor and centre leaders have not ensured that pupils are fully engaged in educational activities for sufficient time to enable them to make good progress in their learning.
- The monitoring of the quality of teaching is at an early stage and has not yet raised the quality of teaching to a good standard.

The school has the following strengths

- The quality of teaching in lessons is adequate. Lessons successfully re-engage most pupils in learning.
- Pupils' behaviour and personal development are good as a result of their good relationships with staff, and the individual support provided for them.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school requires improvement and must take action to meet schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- The inspector observed lessons taught by two teachers and tutors. Two lessons were joint observations with the Director of Education.
- The inspector listened to pupils read. Discussions were held with the centre's proprietor, Director of Education, groups of pupils, and members of staff.
- A wide range of centre documentation was viewed, including the curriculum and planning, records of pupils' progress and examples of their work.
- The inspector took account of the views expressed in staff questionnaires. There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to evaluate.

Inspection team

Jill Bainton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- ASD Learning Centre – Welling is a co-educational special day school registered for 25 pupils aged seven to 19 years. It is located in Welling, Kent.
- Pupils experience behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and some are on the autistic spectrum. All pupils have statements of special educational needs.
- There are currently 24 pupils on roll aged eight to 19 years, of whom two attend part time. All pupils are placed by local authorities or schools; some are admitted as emergency placements at very short notice.
- The centre specialises in alternative education and social development programmes for pupils who have been excluded or are at risk of exclusion from local schools. Placements at the centre may vary from six weeks to several years.
- The centre uses other providers for some courses and services such as careers support and also for physical recreation.
- The centre aims to 'provide every child with an opportunity to experience success with their education no matter what their background or special needs are'.
- The centre was registered as a school in June 2012 and this is its first inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the centre's leaders and managers increase pupils' rates of progress by:
 - providing sufficient time to allow teachers to deliver the curriculum in a way which engages all pupils and has improved impact
 - improving the quality of teaching so that it is good or better by making the teaching more responsive to assessment information
 - providing pupils with better guidance on how to improve their work.
- The centre must meet the following independent school standards.
 - Produce a curriculum policy set out in writing, which is supported by sufficient taught time to enable it to be implemented effectively (paragraph 2(1)).
 - Ensure that sufficient time is made available for pupils to experience properly the required linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative areas of learning (paragraph 2(2)(a)).
 - Ensure that sufficient time is made available to enable pupils to acquire skills in speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy to a good standard (paragraph 2(2)(c)).
 - Ensure that those pupils who have statements of special educational needs have an education which fulfils the requirements of the statements (paragraph 2(2)(e)).
 - Ensure that the curriculum provides the opportunity for all pupils to learn and make progress (paragraph 2(2)(i)).
 - Ensure that the curriculum provides adequate preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life (paragraph 2(2)(j)).

Inspection judgements

Pupils' achievement

Inadequate

Pupils' achievement is inadequate. The majority of pupils have very low achievement on entry through a failure to engage in education in their previous schools. Their achievement remains inadequate because there are weaknesses in the curriculum, with insufficient time made available for purposeful learning during the school day.

Some individual pupils' achievement in literacy and numeracy is adequate as evidenced in their work and in lessons observed. Much of the mathematics is taught practically and then explored, for example, through the use of cookery, which pupils enjoy and achieve good results. In literacy some pupils have acquired improved handwriting skills and through creative writing opportunities show their increased knowledge and understanding. Some read well and others are given good support to increase this skill. The recent introduction of speech and language therapy has proved beneficial and given pupils more confidence in their spoken language, enabling an increasing number to take part in active discussion in lessons and to contribute their views in a measured way. In lessons observed during the inspection, there was evidence of sustained progress in the use of information and communication technology (ICT) for presentation of work and research. Some Year 11 pupils are currently preparing for GCSE examinations in English and mathematics.

There is adequate teaching in the limited number of lessons, but the pupils are not in the centre for sufficient time to enable them to make adequate or better progress over time.

Pupils' behaviour and personal development

Good

Pupils' behaviour and personal development are good. Staff offer good role models in their dealings with pupils which helps them to re-engage in learning and education, often after long periods of absence from school. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme helps the pupils to develop their self-confidence, self-knowledge and their understanding of how to take responsibility for their behaviour and actions. The centre does this successfully. Some pupils commented on how much the centre had helped them to re-engage in education and how they enjoy attending, making comments such as, 'I feel happy here...staff understand and help me.'

Overall, pupils' behaviour is good and the centre can demonstrate good progress in reducing the number of incidents and helping pupils to manage their difficulties. PSHE, together with themes in subjects such as English and history, includes a strong component of citizenship that enables pupils to understand and participate in democratic processes and life in the wider community. Religious education modules are included in the PSHE programme, including study of major world faiths together with issues aimed at developing respect and tolerance for cultural diversity. A range of planned visits to museums such as the National History Museum, the Tate Modern and local public buildings helps pupils to understand the facilities available to them in the local and wider community. This helps to support the citizenship, cultural and multicultural aspects of the pupils' experience. There is racial harmony within the centre. Visits to a local community farm and the allotment help the pupils to integrate into the local community. The centre does not promote any particular political views and balanced views are presented. Pupils' attendance overall is satisfactory, and for some it is very good.

Quality of teaching

Adequate

The quality of teaching is adequate in the planned lesson time. However, the weekly allocation of time for learning, including for literacy and numeracy, is insufficient and does not represent full-time education. As a result, despite the adequate and sometimes good efforts of the teachers, pupils are not given the time to engage in sustained and challenging learning in order to make

adequate progress over time.

In the restricted lesson time, teachers have a clear understanding of the attitudes and challenges which the pupils present in lessons. Some lessons are taught as group lessons, others are individual sessions planned by the teachers and supported by the pupil's individual tutor. During these sessions the staff engage very well with the pupils who mostly settle to the tasks assigned to them, generally behave well and respond to the supportive staff. There is generally a calm and purposeful atmosphere in the lessons. Pupils report that they mostly work better in individual lessons and do not wish to access group lessons, while others say that they like the combination. There is good teamwork between teachers and tutors, and both demonstrate good skills in questioning and challenging pupils to maintain their concentration and complete their tasks. However, a few staff spend too long in explanations at the beginning of the lesson and the tasks given to the pupils are not always sufficiently matched to their ability. In a minority of cases insufficient attention is given to whether individual pupils are working at the levels of which they are capable and the pace of learning is inadequate for others. They are not always given guidance on how to improve their work. Resources, especially information and communication technology (ICT), are used well to support learning. Strategies for managing behaviour are generally good and successful in ensuring that pupils engage in learning during lessons.

Assessment is adequate and the centre is currently devising an assessment system to better identify pupils' achievement and specific weaknesses in order to put in appropriate intervention. A suitable baseline assessment is used on entry. The information is used to suitably assess pupils' attainment in relation to the National Curriculum requirements for literacy and numeracy. Pupils on longer-term placements repeat these assessments annually. However, many of the current pupils have only joined the centre recently and no further data are available. The pupils' work is generally marked adequately, but some tutors do not provide a sufficiently detailed evaluation of the progress their pupils have made during the session, and do not show pupils what they need to do to improve their work. Individual education plans are prepared for all pupils. The centre is in the process of replacing these to give clearer academic targets using National Curriculum levels.

Quality of curriculum

Inadequate

The curriculum is inadequate as insufficient contact time is devoted to providing educational activities which meet the learning needs of the pupils. The education provided does not always meet the requirements of the pupils' statements of special educational needs to provide an appropriately broad and balanced education.

The centre's curriculum statement is set out in a planning, curriculum and assessment policy. The curriculum, for pupils of compulsory school age, provides experience in all of the required areas of learning. It is organised into six-week blocks so that they can complete blocks of learning while placed at the centre, whether it be for six weeks or a longer period. It has at its core, literacy, numeracy, science, ICT, PSHE, art and physical education, but insufficient contact teaching time is spent on the core subjects due to the shortness of the school day. In addition to this, all pupils take part in a life skills programme which has been devised recently and includes local history and geography to better equip the pupils to access local facilities. This again is only allocated a short amount of time and despite the adequate efforts of the teachers is insufficient to properly meet pupils' needs.

Pupils in Key Stage 4 and post-16 follow an appropriate mix of academic and vocational courses leading to accreditation. Physical education is conducted off site at local sports facilities, and pupils participate in football, boxing exercise and swimming.

The afternoon timetables, which are also very short and therefore limited in what they achieve, include social learning activities and more practical activities with external providers. Some pupils follow courses in music production technology, motor mechanics, cookery, visits to the allotment

and trampolining. In addition the proprietor has recently purchased a caravan on the North Kent coast. It is planned that pupils will go there regularly, use ICT resources for their lessons, and extend their knowledge and understanding of the world around them and to assist them in socialisation. Input from the Connexions careers service is provided on an individual basis for all pupils in Key Stage 4 and post-16. Additional work, for example on preparing job and college applications and preparing for interviews is provided. The centre also makes use of local colleges and with external providers to supplement the work-related elements of the curriculum. This provision is suitable for the older pupils who attend the colleges and good use is made of time.

Pupils' welfare, health and safety

Adequate

Arrangements for pupils' welfare, health and safety are adequate and all the regulations are met. The centre has devised and implemented an appropriate range of policies and procedures. These include policies for the management of behaviour and the prevention of bullying. There are appropriate sanctions, which are implemented well. The good pupil to staff ratios ensure that the pupils feel safe and know who to turn to for help when needed. Pupils confirm there is no bullying at the centre as they are never left alone and incidents of poor behaviour are carefully recorded. Arrangements for the safeguarding of the pupils are good. The centre has ensured that all staff are trained at an appropriate level, including the designated officer, and this is carefully monitored. Staff have been checked for their suitability to work with children and the information is held on the required single central register of staff appointments. There are trained staff for first aid and a suitable policy. Risk assessments are carried out on all aspects of the centre and off-site activities. The staff are aware of the potential risks posed by the pupils' behaviour and these are taken into account in the planning of activities and the detailed risk assessments. The fire procedures are suitable. A fire risk assessment has been carried out and is reviewed annually. All fire equipment is checked and fire drills take place and are recorded termly. There are opportunities within the curriculum for the pupils to consider healthy lifestyles. Admission and attendance registers meet the regulations.

Leadership and management

Inadequate

The leadership and management are inadequate because pupils' overall achievement is inadequate and, in particular, insufficient time is provided for developing the pupils' engagement in full-time education. Although the quality of the teaching in lessons is adequate, the length of the school day is too short to provide sufficient taught time for this adequate teaching to have sufficient long-term impact on pupils' progress. The centre's leaders have not yet addressed the need to extend the taught time and to raise the quality of teaching to good and better through increasing staff training and monitoring.

The centre has devised a development plan, which identifies some key issues to address to improve its educational provision. The Director of Education monitors teaching and conducts annual staff appraisal, which is working towards addressing the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement, but this is still at an early stage.

The premises are well maintained and suitable for safe and effective learning. All the required information is provided to parents, carers and local authorities. The policy and procedures for complaints meet the regulations. The results of questionnaires received from staff were very positive about the work of the centre.

The proprietor and senior staff have failed to ensure that all the regulations for independent schools are met.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of education and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of education that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of education it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and/or the quality of education has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	138386
Inspection number	420251
DfE registration number	303/6000

This inspection was carried out 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.

Type of school	Special school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	7–19 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	24
Number of part time pupils	2
Proprietor	Philip Hoppenbrouwers
Headteacher	Paul Mersh
Date of previous school inspection	This is the first inspection
Annual fees (day pupils)	£29,250
Telephone number	07739 628515
Email address	Paul.mersh@asdlearning.com

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

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 St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

