

# Shenstone Lodge School

Birmingham Road, Shenstone, Lichfield, WS14 0LB

<b>Inspection dates</b>		5–6 November 2013	
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Overall effectiveness of the residential experience		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Shenstone Lodge provides a good standard of education and care for its pupils.
- The residential facility provides a warm and nurturing environment, which helps pupils to be receptive to learning.
- Most pupils' attainment is low when they start school, but they make good progress the longer they stay at the school.
- Pupils' behaviour and safety is good and they have largely good attitudes to learning. The vast majority are keen to learn and enjoy the wide range of activities on offer, such as residential trips and land-based activities.
- Teaching is lively and teachers use a good range of practical activities to capture pupils' interests well.
- The new headteacher has set out an ambitious plan for further school improvement. He has implemented substantial improvements to staffing and the use of alternative provision for older pupils.
- Senior leaders are embracing the new challenges well and are establishing greater consistency across the two school sites.
- The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is some inconsistency in the quality of marking, the use of personalised targets to accelerate pupils' learning and in encouraging pupils to work collaboratively and independently.
- The attendance of pupils is not high enough and this limits the progress of those few older pupils who do not attend regularly enough.
- The rate of fixed-term exclusions is too high, although it is starting to reduce dramatically.
- Assessment information is not succinct enough to enable more effective checking of strengths and weakness of provision by senior leaders, governors and the local authority.
- The anti-bullying policy does not cover all types of bullying.
- Night time fire drills are not practised and some checks on the residential provision are not recorded.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 13 lessons, most of which were joint observations with different members of the senior leadership team.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- There were not enough responses from parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View), but parents' views were gathered from the school's recent survey.
- The inspection team looked at a range of documentation including the school's information on pupils' progress, its self-evaluation, development plans and information relating to the safeguarding of pupils.
- The residential provision was observed in operation during the evenings and meetings were held with senior care staff.

## Inspection team

Frank Price, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Joseph Skivington

Additional Inspector

Peter Hylton

Social Care Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Shenstone Lodge is a residential special school for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD) and provides for pupils from Sandwell Borough.
- The school has two sites 16 miles apart. The site at Shenstone Lodge provides for up to 28 pupils, aged 5 to 11 years and includes residential provision for boys up to the age of 11 years. The site at Brades Lodge provides for a further 28 day pupils aged 11 to 16 years.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage and are boys. There are 3 primary aged girls.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of students for whom the school receives pupil premium funding (additional funding allocated by the government for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and for those who are looked after by the local authority) is well above average.
- Five pupils are eligible for the Year 7 catch-up premium which provides additional help with their literacy and numeracy.
- Pupils join the school at different times during their primary or secondary schooling and often have a history of fragmented education and poor attendance.
- The school makes use of alternative providers for students to study courses at Key Stage 4. Krunch Centre delivers life-skills programmes; Archway provides additional academic and vocational support; West Bromwich Albion Foundation delivers sports coaching and academic mentoring; Ground Works provides motor vehicle mechanics. Startrite delivers construction skills training; Wheels provides car maintenance and Shireoak Motorcycles provide motorcycle maintenance and rider training.
- The headteacher took up his post in January 2013.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the poor attendance of a few older pupils in order to raise their attainment, and continue to reduce the number of fixed-term exclusions.
- Improve teaching so that the majority of teaching is outstanding by:
  - ensuring that the best practice of marking, which shows pupils the next steps for learning, are applied consistently across the school
  - sharpening pupils' learning targets, so that they are more personalised
  - extending the practice of collaborative and independent working observed in the primary school site to the secondary provision.
- Develop simpler methods to capture pupil assessment information in a succinct manner to help the monitoring of provision by senior leaders, governors and the local authority.
- Ensure that the anti-bullying policy covers all aspects and types of bullying.
- In relation to the residential provision, ensure that night time fire drills are regularly practised and that checks on the environment of the school are recorded.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- The majority of pupils make good progress. Assessment information spanning the last 3 years indicates that most pupils make better than expected progress. For most pupils, the longer they have been at school and attended well, the better the improvement in their progress.
- There are dips in some pupils' progress, but these are usually related to their poor attendance and factors beyond school, such as chaotic lifestyles and family traumas, which adversely affect pupils' equilibrium.
- The school has had very few Year 11 pupils in school over the last 3 years. This is because of high levels of mobility among pupils and the fact that some pupils fail to complete Year 11. The few Key Stage 4 pupils who were on roll at the end of Year 11 achieved Entry Level qualifications in English and mathematics, and accreditation in a range of vocational courses in line with their abilities. The school has not entered pupils for examinations early.
- The school has recently extended their use of off-site alternative provision for older pupils to help improve their attendance and their academic results. Early indications are that this provision is starting to improve pupils' attendance, but it is too early to know the impact of these initiatives on their attainment.
- In lessons, the majority of pupils are keen to participate. For example, in an English lesson pupils were very focused on producing a piece of persuasive writing to prevent cruelty to circus animals.
- Most pupils make good gains in literacy and numeracy. They are eager to read poems in the school assembly and do so confidently. Less confident readers are equipped with methods to break down simple words in order to read them. Pupils write for a range of different purposes and their writing is generally neat and presented with care.
- Numeracy is often related to practical and purposeful activities, such as telling the time and using money. In a vocational motor mechanics lesson, pupils learned how to measure the depth of tyre treads and appreciate the importance of tyre safety.
- On occasions, pupils' learning targets are not individualised enough and this means that more able pupils are not always challenged and stretched as much as they could be.
- There are very few girls at the school, but the school is careful to check that they achieve as well as possible and that their needs are catered for well.
- Pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding make accelerated progress in English and mathematics. Their weaknesses are clearly identified through accurate assessment, and a range of methods, such as additional staffing or examination practice, are put in place to support them. This extra support has made a difference and helped them to close the gap in attainment between them and their peers. It has also resulted in pupils' improved self-esteem and confidence in basic skills.
- Additional funding for sport for primary pupils has been used to provide a wider range of sporting and outdoor activities. Some of the funding has been identified to provide additional residential outdoor experiences later in the year. Although the funding has recently been

received, it is being used appropriately to promote pupils' health and physical fitness.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching in most subjects, including English and mathematics, is usually good and as a result, most pupils, irrespective of background, gender or need, achieve well over time.
- Teaching has many strengths. One of the most striking features of teaching at the school is how well staff use varied and practical activities to make learning lively for pupils. For example, staff are increasingly using outdoor learning as a vehicle, not only to teach pupils about land-based experiences through Forest School activities, but also to use these activities to maximise opportunities to reinforce aspects of literacy and numeracy. The impact of this approach is that, for most pupils, many lessons encourage positive attitudes to learning and high levels of engagement.
- The increase in vocational opportunities, both on-site and off-site, for older students is a new initiative by the school. Pupils are beginning to respond well to these experiences because they can see a clear link between learning and their everyday lives.
- Staff work hard to establish positive and supportive relationships with pupils, and this is very effective in gaining the trust and confidence of pupils.
- The roles of some secondary school staff have been re-organised to enable them to support pupils' learning more effectively and promote independent learning more widely; this is a developing area. Support staff work closely and well with teaching staff to improve pupils' learning and meet their behavioural needs.
- Teaching at Shenstone Lodge is good and sometimes outstanding. At Brades Lodge teaching is mainly good, but a minority of teaching requires improvement. Where teaching requires improvement, pupils are not independent enough in their learning, relying too much on staff to help them complete tasks or keep them engaged in lessons. Opportunities for pupils to work together in groups or pairs as they get older are not as well established as they are in the primary phase.
- There are some excellent examples of marking that informs pupils about what they need to do to further improve, but this is not consistent across the school. In the best examples, often at Brades Lodge, pupils are given two encouraging comments and one point for improvement.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of most pupils improves well over time. The school's electronic system of recording behavioural incidents shows that pupils' behaviour improves and many develop more positive attitudes to learning. The monitoring of pupils' behaviour and safety allows the school to identify any trends, for example whether problems are related to a particular subject or time of day, and this enables the school to address any underlying causes.
- Pupils' attendance is still below average and the school has not made as much progress in this area as it would have liked. However, early indications are that with the introduction of vocational courses, together with free breakfast and dinner for older pupils, attendance is

beginning to improve. Often it is a small number of pupils whose poor attendance affects their progress and means examination courses are not completed.

- Fixed-term exclusions, particularly at the secondary site, have been far too high. However, a restructuring of staffing and improved systems have been introduced. These new arrangements are working well and the number of fixed-term exclusions has fallen dramatically since September 2013. However, it is too soon to assess the long-term impact of these new arrangements.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted strongly. Outdoor activities give pupils an opportunity to appreciate nature and animals, and also to work together in team-building exercises. Regular assemblies are used as opportunities to boost pupil's self-esteem and confidence.
- Most parents are supportive of the school and recognise the improvements their children make. One parent commented: 'My child has matured a lot in a relatively short space of time. His education is improving to the standard of his age group.'
- School-based pupil surveys and discussions held with pupils indicate that most pupils enjoy school and that the school deals with bullying effectively so that pupils feel safe in school. Pupils are confident about turning to adults in the school for help and guidance, should they need it. However, the anti-bullying policy does not cover all forms of bullying explicitly enough, particularly aspects such as homophobic, racial and cyber-bullying.
- Residential pupils feel safe and are safe in the residential provision. High levels of appropriately trained and experienced staff ensure the safety of residential pupils. Safe practices are enhanced by clear policies and procedures. Safeguarding is given a high priority by the residential staff team and an on-site social worker is available to discuss any concerns relating to the safety, welfare or wellbeing of pupils. Robust safeguarding systems ensure that concerns are swiftly identified and resolved. Effective school-wide procedures are in place and all staff know how to raise concerns about the safety or welfare of residential pupils.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The new headteacher, together with senior leaders and the governing body, has set an ambitious target for the school to be outstanding within the next 3 years. There is a strong commitment and enthusiasm across the school to work toward this goal. Leaders and managers at different levels have a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and how they intend to make further improvements.
- The majority of staff are supportive of leaders and managers in the school. They recognise that changes are being made to secure improvements and to bring about better consistency across both school sites.
- Many of the senior and middle managers are relatively new to their posts, but they have risen well to the challenges and are embracing the new initiatives with vigour.
- The school has ample data to support its judgements about pupil progress but this is not presented in a clear and succinct format. This makes it more difficult for senior leaders, governors and the local authority to check the work of the school easily.

- The checking of teachers' work is rigorous. Under-performance has been tackled by the headteacher and teachers have clear objectives to help them improve further. Training, especially the increased opportunities for teachers to observe best practice in other schools, has been very beneficial.
- The alternative provision the school has started to use is monitored well to check both the quality of the provision and safeguarding of pupils. These providers are visited on a termly basis, and staff use weekly phone calls and emails to check up on the progress and attendance of pupils.
- The various sources of additional funding, such as the pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding have been spent wisely. The impact of the funding to help pupils to make up lost ground has been measured and shows positive benefits for them. The full impact of the primary sport funding is not evident as yet, but plans for spending this funding are appropriate to pupils' interests and needs.
- The range of subjects and experiences that the school offers pupils is good and improving. The practical approach in many subjects to make them meaningful to pupils is very effective and promotes more positive attitudes to learning by pupils. Older pupils are given impartial careers advice and guidance to prepare them for future education, training or employment.
- The local authority has confidence in the new headteacher and has provided effective support for improving teaching, particularly at the secondary school site.
- The management of the residential provision is good. An experienced head of care ensures that regular reviews of the residential service's provision identify strengths and weaknesses. Recent improvements to the service have further enhanced the standard of care given to residential pupils.
- The school and residential areas are safely maintained. However, although regular and thorough checks are made of the residential environment, these are not always recorded. For example, window restrictors and outside opening doors are regularly checked for defects but the outcomes are not recorded. Fire drills regularly take place and pupils know how to safely evacuate the residential provision in the event of fire, although there have been no evening fire drills to test safe evacuation during the hours of darkness.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body has an accurate view of the school and rightly describes the school as 'work in progress'. Governors rightly judge that greater consistency across the school sites is developing well. They know that teaching is strong at Shenstone Lodge but that it is more variable, although largely good, at Brades Lodge. Governors undertake first-hand visits to lessons to check how behaviour is managed and focus on the progress of individual pupils. Governors have ensured that there is an appropriate link between pay and teachers' performance and weak teaching has been tackled.
  - Governors have undertaken a suitable amount of training in relation to safeguarding, financial management and evaluating provision. Governors are aware that assessment information is complex and not always easy to understand, and that this makes their task more difficult. For example, they know how the pupil premium, primary school sports funding and Year 7 catch-up funding has been spent, but are less clear about the impact this has had on the progress of pupils.
  - The governing body's monitoring of the residential provision is much improved and is now regular and systematic. They make regular focused visits which have brought about improvements in quality.

<b>Outcomes for residential pupils</b>	<b>are good</b>
<b>Quality of residential provision and care</b>	<b>is good</b>
<b>Residential pupils' safety</b>	<b>is good</b>
<b>Leadership and management of the residential provision</b>	<b>is good</b>

- The residential provision has a positive impact on residential pupils. They make good progress and develop their confidence, self-esteem and emotional resilience well. They benefit from a stable environment that is secure and meets their individual needs well. Pupils enjoy staying in the residential provision and feel safe. Comments from pupils are positive and include, 'I'm really happy here' and 'It's like another home.'
- The individuality of residential pupils is promoted well. Specific needs relating to culture, religion and personal preference are reflected in detailed and comprehensive placement plans. Pupils receive care that is based on their individual needs.
- Residential pupils confirm that they are looked after if they feel unwell. They are supported in maintaining their health and good systems ensure that all prescribed medication is given as directed by medical professionals. As a result, the health needs of residential pupils are promoted. Where residential pupils display emotional needs, they are encouraged to discuss these with staff. Residential pupils are able to discuss their feelings, views and wishes through regular key work sessions and group meetings. As a result, they feel listened to, valued and respected.
- All residential areas are exceptionally well maintained. Residential pupils enjoy staying in a comfortable, homely and welcoming environment. The staff team ensure that pupils are able to personalise their bedrooms to their individual tastes and preferences. Pupils are able to take part in their preferred activities. They enjoy playing competitive games, and playing on the computer and with toys. As a result, young people develop an attachment to the residential service. This ensures that young people look forward to staying at the school.
- Parents and carers have exceptionally positive views about the quality of provision for their children. Comments from parents and carers include; 'absolutely fantastic', 'he is well looked after and 'the staff are absolutely brilliant',
- Staff are well-trained, effectively supported and highly competent in their duties. Supervision ensures that staff are able to discuss their practice, areas for personal and professional development, and ideas for improving the service. Residential pupils benefit from this because they are cared for by a staff team who can provide consistent, safe and effective levels of care.



## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

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

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	104024
<b>Social care unique reference number</b>	SCO38726
<b>Local authority</b>	Sandwell
<b>Inspection number</b>	427060

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The inspection of residential 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 residential special schools.

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	56
<b>Number of boarders on roll</b>	9
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	David Fereday
<b>Headteacher</b>	Neil Toplass
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 January 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01543 480369
<b>Fax number</b>	01543 481104
<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@shenstonelodge.sandwell.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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](mailto: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 and as part of the inspection.

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](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013

