

# Woodland Grange School

Loxwood Road, Cranleigh, Surrey, GU6 8HP

## Inspection dates

20–21 November 2013

## Overall effectiveness

	<b>Adequate</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	Good	2
Pupils' behaviour and personal development	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Quality of curriculum	Adequate	3
Pupils' welfare, health and safety	Adequate	3
Leadership and management	Adequate	3

## Summary of key findings

### This school is adequate because

- The directors took effective measures to provide students with some stability in times of change and ensure continuity in their learning. However, they do not hold the senior school leaders to account robustly enough.
- There is a small proportion of teaching which is only adequate and results in uneven progress for some students in a few areas of learning.
- Although the curriculum has strong features, it is only adequate in supporting students' achievement because of some inconsistencies in planning, resulting in a lack of breadth in writing and in science.
- Leaders have insufficiently rigorous systems for monitoring the effectiveness of teaching, the curriculum and the provision for students' welfare, health and safety.

### The school has the following strengths

- Leader have ensured that the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good overall, helping students to make good progress over time and achieve well in most subjects.
- Students make excellent progress in their speaking, listening and thinking skills, and in art and design and technology. They are prepared well for their future.
- The staff provide good pastoral care that contributes significantly to students' positive attitudes to learning, good attendance and good behaviour. Students feel safe and well cared for and develop good levels of self-confidence.
- Placing authorities, staff and students are extremely positive about the school's work.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets 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.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- Five lessons taught by three teachers were observed jointly with the headteacher. Students were heard reading.
- The inspector examined students' work, curriculum and lesson plans and assessment records. Meetings were held with the headteacher, teacher-in-charge, other staff and students.
- The inspector also examined policies, procedures and records relating to the provision for students' welfare, health and safety.
- The views of staff, placing authorities and students were considered. The views of all parents and carers were obtained through telephone conversations.

## Inspection team

Michèle Messaoudi, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Woodland Grange is a day school providing education for boys and girls aged between seven and 19 years who have special educational needs related to autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) and social, emotional and behavioural needs (SEBD). It was initially registered in 2009 as a school with residential facilities for up to 55 pupils of the same age range, under the name Forest School. The school moved to new premises in January 2013 and, as a result of a material change inspection in February 2013, it is now registered for up to 18 pupils.
- There are currently three students on roll, aged between 12 and 16 years who all have a statement of special educational needs and joined with very challenging behaviour. Some have additional complex needs and were out of education prior to joining the school. One student is looked after by the placing authorities.
- There have been many changes in staffing and the leadership of the school since the last inspection in December 2010, particularly in the last 12 months. The current headteacher took up his post on 20 November 2013. The main teacher fulfilled the responsibilities of 'teacher-in-charge' between September 2012 and November 2013. As such, she was responsible for the day-to-day running of the school during a period of change. The teaching team also currently includes one part-time teacher, tutors and teaching assistants.
- The school aims to 'help each young person to learn and make positive choices leading to positive outcomes'.

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

- Raise students' achievement by further improving teaching so that it is consistently good or outstanding by:
  - challenging students and developing their independent learning skills more consistently in lessons
  - further developing teaching assistants' skills
  - making arrangements for the internal and external moderation of all of teachers' assessments to improve their accuracy and consistency
  - making consistent use of subject-specific and measurable curricular targets in individual educational plans, lesson plans and during lessons to involve students more routinely in the assessment of their own learning
  - improving the marking of writing so that students gain a clearer picture of what to do to improve their work
  - devising a user-friendly format to track students' progress.
- Improve the curriculum to help students make even better progress by:
  - further developing the thematic approach to enliven all areas of learning and make them more appealing to all students, in particular in writing
  - monitoring the quality of individual educational plans and the breadth of study in every subject more closely, especially in science.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - the quality of the curriculum and teaching, and the effectiveness of welfare, health and safety policies and procedures are monitored systematically and rigorously
  - the directors hold the senior school leaders to account more robustly.

## Inspection judgements

### Pupils' achievement

**Good**

Students achieve well as a result of mostly good teaching, good pastoral care and an adequate curriculum. They join the school with starting points that are typically low for their age and with unhappy experiences of schooling, having experienced exclusion and multiple placements. They make good progress in their academic learning in most subjects owing to two main factors. First, the school rightly gives priority to creating the nurturing and secure environment which students need to settle down before they can start learning. As noted by parents and carers, careful consideration is given to transition plans to ease students back into education. Consequently, students make rapid improvement in their emotional development, self-confidence, behaviour and attitudes to learning. Second, the teachers use the information from initial assessments of students' needs, aptitudes and academic standards effectively to plan work that helps them to catch up lost ground. Achievement is not outstanding because there is not enough outstanding teaching to enable students to make outstanding progress and there is a small proportion of adequate teaching. Furthermore, inconsistencies in assessment and planning, and the breadth of study in some areas of learning, result in pockets of adequate progress for some students.

Students make excellent progress in their listening, speaking and thinking skills because these are promoted consistently well through very effective questioning and discussion. Students make good progress in their reading skills as they have daily opportunities to read a variety of texts. While they have consistent opportunities to rehearse their ideas and refine their thinking through oral class work, opportunities are missed to take these forward into the development of their writing skills. As a result, some students' progress is slower in writing than in other areas of literacy. Students apply their mathematical skills in other subjects, for example when making shelving units in design and technology – a subject where they make excellent progress, benefiting from specialist teaching. Students develop good information and communication technology (ICT) skills in all subjects. The artwork displayed around the school reflects students' good artistic and cultural development. Students who complete their education at the school achieve well in various qualifications and move on to college.

### Pupils' behaviour and personal development

**Good**

Students' behaviour and personal development are good and make a strong contribution to their learning. As noted by placing authorities and parents and carers, students develop very positive attitudes to schooling owing to a caring and nurturing ethos. Their enjoyment of learning is clearly reflected in their good attendance and high levels of contribution in lessons. Staff support students consistently well in managing their anxieties, frustrations and anger, pre-empting outbursts and using de-escalation strategies very effectively. Incidents of poor behaviour have reduced over time and when outbursts do occur, they are managed very competently and so are short-lived, with students swiftly re-engaging in learning. The staff work as a cohesive team to create a learning atmosphere that is both warm and calm, and establish trusting and respectful relationships. As a result, students can flourish and respond well to high expectations of conduct and work. They feel safe and are taught to keep safe from all forms of bullying and to avoid accidents near water, on the road, involving fire, and when using tools and equipment. They feel free from any form of harassment.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through the curriculum. Students' self-confidence and self-esteem increase gradually after joining the school and are enhanced effectively by praise and displays of their work. Students demonstrate a strong sense of right and wrong, for example when commenting on the impact of war on innocent civilians. They learn to respect cultural and religious diversity mainly through art and religious studies, although they have too few first-hand experiences. They gain a good awareness of public

institutions through citizenship, visits from police liaison officers, and regular use of the local facilities. Students are encouraged to practise democracy by expressing their views on various aspects of school life and they feel that they are listened to. Where controversial issues are debated, the school ensures that views are presented in a balanced way. Students contribute to the wider community by raising funds for charity, for example by selling cakes which they had baked.

### Quality of teaching

### Good

Teaching is good overall and enables students to make good progress in most areas of learning. Teachers have high expectations of what students can achieve. They know students well and use strategies, methods and resources that are the most likely to bring out good outcomes. They review what students have learnt in previous lessons very effectively and build systematically on what students know and understand. They are particularly skilful at asking questions and promoting discussion to engage students actively in learning, deepen their understanding and refine their ideas. Teachers listen to students' responses attentively and reshape explanations when necessary to dispel misconceptions and ensure accurate understanding. Teaching assistants usually support students' learning well, especially when acting the part of an able student and making contributions that help to raise standards. Where the teaching is outstanding, students are challenged at a consistently high level and are put in a position where they lead some of their learning. On occasion, the teaching is only adequate when students' independence is not sufficiently well promoted and their progress in one area of learning is restricted; for example when teaching assistants unnecessarily scribe for students instead of encouraging them to write, or when the teacher does not provide challenging tasks that sufficiently extend students' skills.

Teachers assess students' progress against national norms. However, not all of teachers' assessments are moderated internally or externally to improve their accuracy and consistency. Teachers and students are generally supported effectively by individual educational plans that set literacy and numeracy targets. However, these targets are not consistently subject-specific and measurable against national norms. Consequently, lesson plans are not always sharply focused on meeting students' needs precisely, and their learning, on occasions, is not as rapid as it might otherwise be. Some of the marking of students' work was constructive and showed them exactly what to do to improve their writing, but this practice is not consistent and students are sometimes not always given time to respond. Teachers track students' progress against their targets twice a term but do not collate the information in a user-friendly format that gives a clear picture of progress at one glance.

### Quality of curriculum

### Adequate

The curriculum is adequate rather than good, owing to inconsistencies in its planning and teaching. However, its strengths enable students to make good progress. In Key Stages 2 to 4, its breadth covers all the required areas of learning and meets the requirements of students' statements. The curriculum is well balanced between academic and practical subjects. It follows a primary model based on a thematic or topic-based approach, which enables teachers to plan links between various subjects. There is an appropriate emphasis on teaching literacy and numeracy skills. However, the thematic approach is still developing and is not exploited fully to stimulate the interest of students in areas such as writing, towards which they sometimes show reluctance. ICT is taught effectively through discrete lessons and other subjects. The provision for art, design and technology and physical education benefits from specialist teaching and is strong. The provision for science is only adequate as some areas of study lack breadth. The post-16 curriculum focuses on equipping students with the skills that are needed in the workplace, and is constructed around functional skills in literacy, mathematics and ICT, and vocational courses provided through links with local colleges. Students have access to a wide range of qualifications including Entry Level, Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) and BTEC certificates, as well as GCSEs, which prepares them well to move on to college or employment. Students are helped to

make informed decisions about their future through adequate careers education. Personal, social, health and citizenship education is taught very effectively through discrete lessons and strongly promoted through the whole curriculum and school ethos. Consequently, it successfully fosters students' good personal development. The curriculum is enhanced adequately by enrichment activities.

The teaching of the curriculum is supported effectively by schemes of work and medium-term plans that are based on National Curriculum documentation and which are sufficiently detailed. However, links between subjects are still developing. Although individual educational plans are reviewed every half term, inconsistencies in the setting of literacy and numeracy targets mean that students and teachers are not always supported well enough, resulting in uneven progress in some areas.

### **Pupils' welfare, health and safety**

### **Adequate**

The overall provision for students' welfare, health and safety is adequate rather than good because the implementation and effectiveness of some policies and procedures are not monitored systematically enough to identify weaknesses.

Staff provide good day-to-day care and all independent school standards are met. The staff successfully create a calm and nurturing environment in which students feel welcome, safe and well cared for, and can flourish. The students demonstrate genuine affection for the staff and trust them to deal effectively with any concerns they may have. The staff promote high standards of behaviour consistently well and they are supported very effectively by training in de-escalation strategies, the use of restraint, clearly written behaviour plans and a thorough understanding of individual students' needs. Instances of bullying are very rare. Good supervision results in few on-site and off-site accidents. Robust safeguarding arrangements ensure that all adults working at the school are properly vetted. The required recruitment checks are recorded carefully in a single central register. All staff receive the appropriate level of training in child protection at the required intervals. There is a sufficient number of staff trained in first aid, fire safety and health and safety. Risk assessments for the premises, on-site and off-site activities, and fire safety are carried out appropriately. The attendance and admission registers are maintained properly and attendance is monitored closely. Students are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles through the curriculum, in particular through personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE), food technology, and a wide range of physical activities.

Minor weaknesses in provision include the lack of systematic recording of weekly fire alarm tests and termly fire evacuation drills. A minor omission in the recording of accidents has escaped notice. Although behaviour incidents are recorded carefully, this information is not collated in a way that facilitates the analysis of trends and identification of patterns. While the clarity of some policies is commendable, for example the anti-bullying and fire safety policies, a few have not yet been fully updated since the school became a day school and still contain references to the former residential provision.

### **Leadership and management**

### **Adequate**

Leadership and management are adequate rather than good owing to insufficient rigour in monitoring activities and governance, which results in an adequate curriculum and provision for students' welfare, health and safety. Nevertheless, the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good, and enables students to achieve well. Good pastoral care and a nurturing ethos help students to make good progress in their behaviour and personal development. All independent school standards are met and the complaints procedures meet requirements. The 'teacher-in-charge' has managed the day-to-day running of the school very effectively during times of change and enlisted the full support of the staff to provide stability and

avoid disruption of learning.

Parents, carers and placing authorities are overwhelmingly positive about the progress which students make in their attitudes to schooling, behaviour and academic learning. They say they receive all the information to which they are entitled and commend the approachability of staff and the effectiveness of the home-school communication books and weekly telephone calls for regular updates. Self-evaluation is mostly accurate but not supported by sufficiently coherent management systems and plans. Staff appraisals are not sufficiently centred on raising standards because the judgements on the quality of teaching rely solely on informal observations of lessons and students' work. Consequently, insufficient action has been taken to improve a small minority of adequate teaching and to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching. The curriculum and the effectiveness of welfare and safety policies and procedures have been monitored with insufficient rigour. The directors do not have sufficiently robust systems to hold the senior school leaders to account. The proprietors have worked hard to move the school to premises that provide a safe and much more effective learning environment than the previous ones. They have plans in hand to further develop the school.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	135999
<b>Inspection number</b>	422817
<b>DfE registration number</b>	936/6277

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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Day special school for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD)
<b>School status</b>	Independent
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	3
<b>Number of part time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Sussex Healthcare (Shafik Sachedina)
<b>Chair</b>	Colin Jenkinson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Colin Jenkinson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	December 2010
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£50,000 to £60,000
<b>Telephone number</b>	01403 752350
<b>Fax number</b>	01403 219836
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:info@shc-sussexeducare.co.uk">info@shc-sussexeducare.co.uk</a>

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