

# The Grange School

2 Milner Way, Ossett, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF5 9JE

## Inspection dates

15 January 2014

## Reason for inspection

This unannounced emergency inspection was conducted by Ofsted at the request of the Department for Education (DfE), after Ofsted and DfE had received 'whistle-blowing' complaints from members of staff. They raised concerns about the lack of appropriate educational provision and lack of management of pupil behaviour leading to bullying by students and staff. Concerns were also raised about aspects of health and safety, relating to fire safety and the use of the company's cars.

The Department for Education asked Her Majesty's Inspector to consider whether the school is compliant with the regulatory requirements in relation to Standard 1: the quality of education, including the curriculum, teaching, planning, assessment, pupil progress, resources and managing behaviour and Standard 3: arrangements to promote the welfare, health and safety of students, including promoting good behaviour and sanctions, fire safety, proper supervision, recording of sanctions and the use of cars for transporting students.

## Conclusions

Her Majesty's Inspector toured the school and garden during lessons, breaks and lunchtime. Two teaching sessions were formally observed and six lessons visited for short periods of time or observed from outside the classroom. The start-of-day assembly and end-of-day review were observed, along with staff interacting with students throughout the day. Informal discussions were held with students during their lessons and at break times. Discussions were held with the Headteacher, the acting Education Director of Keys Care, a senior teacher, a temporary teacher and members of the support staff. A wide range of documentation was scrutinised, including the school's single central register of staff checks, staff files, policies for health and safety and first aid, the fire safety file and pupil incident and behaviour records.

## Part 1: The Quality of Education

The school was found to meet all but two of the regulations for independent schools relating to the curriculum and teaching in Part 1, The school has experienced a period of acute turbulence in terms of staff change. Senior leaders believe the school is back on track and over the worst. Given the many recent changes that are documented below this is an over-optimistic view. The teacher in charge has been absent for almost two years and there has been a succession of temporary staff. Two teachers recently left and some members of the support staff have had time off. These changes have impacted on rates of improvement following the last inspection and have contributed to the reasons why two regulations are not met. A senior teacher has been transferred to the school from the sister school, Denby Grange, along with an instructor. Both have been at the school since

December 2013. On the day of this inspection an agency-employed teacher was teaching and had been for working at the school for only six days.

The senior teacher has introduced new daily routines and systems for grouping students. All students begin English and mathematics lessons together, where the senior teacher introduces the learning and explains tasks. Students then split into three groups to complete tasks with the other teacher or support staff, using the other two classrooms. Although this is generally successful, work is not always carefully tailored to the abilities of all students. Staff and students are still getting used to the new approaches and routines. The skills of the staff vary and some identify that they require further support and guidance, particularly with teaching early reading, spelling, handwriting and writing skills.

Individual targets have been identified for each student but these targets, primarily focussed on behaviour, are not used on a day-to-day basis by staff and do not link to the daily planned lessons. Students were largely unaware of the specific details of their targets but do know that either their work or behaviour needs to improve.

Relationships between staff and students are positive and all staff use their knowledge of students to encourage them to make the right choices about their behaviour and engagement in lessons. The school has a clear policy to promote acceptable behaviour and to encourage students to develop independence, self-control and self-esteem. Behaviour is generally well managed and the behaviour of students can be good at times. For example, during the start-of-day assembly, once students had settled, they listened well to a story with a moral dilemma and offered their suggestions of what the character should have done. However, there are instances when individual students choose not to engage in learning activities and this limits their academic progress. Records indicate that the behaviour of a small number of students can become very disruptive and, in line with the school's policies, there are times when staff have used restraint to manage the situation and safeguard other students. Students say that this does not happen too often.

Scrutiny of records shows that assessments are up-to-date and include recent tests of students' reading, spelling and mathematics ages. These confirm that students are generally making gains in these important areas. Homework is being regularly set for all students and there is some evidence that at least some students are completing this. Scrutiny of work shows that the quantity of work retained in the school from before this term is limited. Work produced since the start of this term demonstrates that students have had regular and consistent teaching since the senior teacher took up her post at the school. The quality of work reflects students' generally poor basic skills and consequently handwriting and presentation are poor. That said, there are signs of improvement in the quality of work being produced, along with some gains in students' spelling and writing skills, but this is not sufficient to ensure that these students are going to securely improve their English and mathematics skills.

On the day of the inspection, a school-specific curriculum with appropriate schemes of work was not available. There was a model for curriculum planning but, beyond English and mathematics, there was no outline of which subjects and topics would be taught to each year group or key stage over the year, and there was not enough evidence in the form of students' work to demonstrate that curriculum planning was secure. The timetable and topic plans for the current term indicate a suitable range of subjects being taught and at largely appropriate levels, but there is nothing in place for the following terms. There was a suggestion that the teachers who had left had taken the curriculum planning materials with them. Consequently, there is not a coherent, well planned programme of

learning which develops students' skills and understanding in a progressive and systematic way. Although senior leaders say that appropriate careers education was provided in the past, there are no plans for this currently. The curriculum is complemented by a range of educational visits. Students particularly value the opportunity to play football at break times with staff, although the state of the rear garden means that they very quickly become very muddy and wet.

The range of resources, including text books and practical resources, is available to support learning and was appropriate for the lessons observed. Two of the classrooms present as welcoming and have a reasonable range of resources displayed to support learning. However, this was not the case in the third, smaller classroom; here the learning environment was generally poor, with almost no displays or resources to support learning.

#### **Part 4: Welfare, Health and Safety.**

The school was found to meet all regulations in this respect and the single central record, showing the checks made on staff before they take up posts, meets requirements. The good ratio of staff to students means that students are well supervised; on the day of this inspection all ten students were present from the start of the school day and there were seven members of staff at the site. Discussions with students and observations of them throughout the day indicated that they feel safe and well looked after by staff. Training records and discussions with staff indicate all staff have had appropriate training in child protection and know what to do if they have any concerns. A good number of staff have received first aid training and there is always a trained first aider on the site when students are present.

The school has its own car and access to other cars owned by the Keys Care Group. The school's car, although more than 11 years old, is serviced appropriately and has a current MoT certificate. There are appropriate systems and procedures in place to ensure that each member of staff who drives any one of the cars undertakes a simple roadworthiness check before setting off.

Arrangements for fire safety meet requirements. A detailed fire risk assessment is updated annually, fire fighting equipment is checked appropriately and regular checks are made on the fire alarm system. Records show that regular fire practices take place and students know what to do when the alarm sounds. On the day of this inspection a heat sensor was accidentally triggered by a member of staff while cooking and students were observed to exit the building safely. Before the school opened, the lower section of an exterior metal fire escape was removed. At its initial inspection by the fire and rescue authority, this was criticised. However, as the use of the second floor is restricted and no students or members of staff use the second floor it was later agreed that an exterior fire escape was not required. Although Her Majesty's Inspector was not provided with documentary evidence of this, it is clear that no one has access to the second floor.

An examination of the attendance registers indicates that procedures are followed appropriately and the register is completed daily in ink. There is no evidence of that the register has had any inappropriate changes made to it.

Discussions with the acting Director of Education for the Keys Care Group identified that there had been a number of complaints made to both the Keys Care Group and to placing

authorities about the school. These complaints were broadly similar to ones received by Ofsted and the DfE. The school's logs and documentary evidence confirms that all such complaints have been taken seriously and have been investigated appropriately by the Keys Care Group. The most recent such investigation had been made the week before this present inspection and had also been unannounced to staff. Similarly, one local authority officer made Her Majesty's Inspector aware that he had undertaken an unannounced visit to investigate a complaint. To date, investigations completed by Keys Care senior staff and Wakefield Local Authority have found all concerns about health and safety to be unfounded.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

#### **The school requires improvement and must take action to meet The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010 ('the Regulations'), and associated requirements.**

Ensure that the curriculum policy is fully supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, and is it implemented effectively. (paragraph 2(1))

Ensure provision is made for appropriate careers guidance for pupils receiving secondary education. (paragraph 2(2)(g))

## Inspection team

Amraz Ali, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

## Information about this school

- The Grange is an independent special day school for students who are identified as having behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD).
- Opened in January 2010, it is managed by The Keys Group, which owns several children's homes and schools throughout the United Kingdom. These include Denby Grange Secondary School, with which this school has close links, including a joint headship.
- The Grange school is registered for 12 boys and girls aged between seven and 14 years of age. Currently, there are ten boys on roll between the ages of eight and 14 years, who all have statements of special educational needs, including for behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and for autistic spectrum disorders.
- Students are placed at the school by a number of local authorities. Most students have been excluded from their previous schools or have persistently not attended school.
- The school's premises, in Osset, near Wakefield, comprise a large, refurbished former residential property with its own grounds, and which is surrounded by an industrial estate.
- The school was last inspected in March 2011 when the quality of education was judged to be satisfactory, students' welfare, health and safety were judged to be good, and all regulations for independent schools were met.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136040
<b>Inspection number</b>	434181
<b>DfE registration number</b>	Wakefield
This inspection was conducted at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. It was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005.	
<b>Type of school</b>	Special day school
<b>School status</b>	Independent School
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–14 years
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	10
<b>Number of part time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Keys Child Care
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Jennie Littleboy
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 March 2011
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£33,735
<b>Telephone number</b>	01924 278 957
<b>Email address</b>	grangeschool@keyschildcare.co.uk

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