

Fairways School

Manor Farm Cottage, New Road, Southampton, SO31 7HE

Inspection dates 12–14 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Good	2
Pupils' achievement	Good	2
Pupils' behaviour and personal development	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Quality of curriculum	Outstanding	1
Pupils' welfare, health and safety	Good	2
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings

This school is good because

- Students, who have previously been excluded from school and experienced severely unsettled education, engage in learning and make good progress.
- Students' good progress results from good quality teaching and an outstanding range of subjects and activities for each student.
- The staff demonstrate high levels of patience and determination in finding the right approach to help each individual student to improve their attendance and enjoy learning.
- Students with challenging and disruptive behaviour respond positively over time to the respect and consideration shown to them by the staff.
- The headteacher communicates high expectations of what students can achieve, and supports and challenges staff to provide outstanding teaching for students so they can achieve well.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Although the school has improved very much since the last inspection, this has not secured outstanding achievement.
- A minority of students take a long time to respond to the school's expectations and to improve their attitudes to learning.
- Assessment data are not recorded in a way which makes it easy to measure the extent of students' progress over time compared with national averages.

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

- The school was inspected with one day's notice.
- The inspector observed seven lessons or part-lessons taught by seven teachers. Some of these were jointly observed with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, staff with management responsibilities, the proprietor, teachers and learning support staff. Informal discussions took place with individual students. Telephone conversations were held with two parents and two representatives of placing local authorities. Questionnaires from 17 members of staff were considered.
- A large number of documents were read including: school policies; individual education plans and school reports; students' personal profiles; planning documents; the school's self-evaluation and development plan; student performance data; and samples of students' work.

Inspection team

David Young, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Fairways is an independent coeducational special school for students aged from 11 to 19 years. The school shares a site with a separately registered children's home, both of which are run by Fairways Care UK Limited.
- The school is registered for up to 20 students. At the time of the inspection there were nine students on roll.
- All of the students attending the school have a statement of special educational needs and have been identified as either having emotional, behavioural and social difficulties or autistic spectrum conditions. The students come from a variety of home backgrounds including foster care and some are looked after by their local authority.
- The school aims to ensure that:
 - 'No-one is disadvantaged educationally and that education provision is a continuous process. Students are encouraged to achieve, whatever their abilities, and are confident in their abilities and those achievements.'
- The school is based on two sites: the main building is situated near Swanwick in Hampshire and there is a small, vocational training site in Southsea.
- The school uses facilities away from school for sports, vocational training and work experience.
- The school was last inspected in October 2010.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that precise judgements can be made about the extent of students' progress over time in comparison with national averages by changing the way that assessment data are recorded.
- Further develop the quality of teaching and learning to enable students to make outstanding progress from their various starting points by:
 - ensuring teachers have a clear understanding of what constitutes outstanding progress for students in this client group
 - providing support for all teachers and tutors to ensure that they produce high-quality planning for outstanding learning activities
 - undertaking a careful analysis of the behaviour support arrangements required to enable the most reluctant students to engage and succeed in their learning.

Inspection judgements

Pupils' achievement

Good

The quality of students' achievement is good because they experience good teaching and an outstanding curriculum. The majority of students make good progress with their learning across a range of subjects once they have learned to understand and accept the expectations of the school. The majority have been excluded from or refused to attend previous schools, so have significant gaps in their learning and are disaffected. All students enter the school with attainment levels below those usually expected for their age but the majority rapidly begin to catch up on gaining the knowledge and understanding which they have missed. The school places an appropriate emphasis on the development of skills in reading, writing and numeracy. As a result, the majority of students have made good progress in these areas of learning, often in a short time.

Students who have left the school recently have achieved success in GCSE, Functional Skills awards and Entry Level certificates; they have, as a result, secured places in post-16 college courses. All students are enabled to achieve success in areas of personal interest and aptitude as a result of the school's imaginative and excellent provision. Most students have achieved, or are working towards, awards in subjects as diverse as science, art, information and communication technology (ICT), sport, catering and equine studies. The school also ensures that all students make good progress in personal, social and health education and associated life skills. In these areas they achieve accreditation in the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) and Certificate of Personal Effectiveness (CoPE) awards. Considerable, useful data are recorded but are not currently set out in a way which enables an immediate and clear evaluation of the extent of individual progress compared with national averages. The school provides excellent opportunities for students to prepare for the next stage in their education, training or employment.

Pupils' behaviour and personal development

Good

Students make good progress with the management of their behaviour and their ability to get on with other people. For the majority of students this is a major area of challenge due to their previous life experiences. Improvements in behaviour, particularly the ability to work in a larger group, are often slow. However, the staff are extremely sensitive to the students' individual behaviour characteristics, and daily life in the school is appropriately organised to give each student a chance to succeed. Much of the teaching takes place on a one-to-one basis so effective learning can occur and students can develop respect for and cooperate with adults in the school community. The staff share their experiences on a daily basis and carefully analyse the challenges and successes in each student's progress. Incidents of poor behaviour rapidly decrease for the majority of students and they attend willingly and take an active part in their learning. The overall attendance of students is very good. Students are safe at school and parents and carers are appreciative of the levels of care and consideration provided by the staff.

Arrangements for the spiritual, moral and social development of students are good. The staff have high expectations of students' behaviour and they are taught to understand the consequences of their actions. Opportunities for students to reflect on their attitudes and responses are continuously built into their learning and the majority make good progress in this respect. For the majority of students, there is a significant reduction in the number of incidents and disturbances to learning as they learn to cooperate with the expectations of the school. Classrooms are orderly and productive and students understand the school's expectations of their behaviour. The school provides a number of opportunities for students to be involved in the local and wider community. Students' life skills are developed through suitable activities such as catering, shopping, work experience and visiting sporting venues. Their work in a number of subjects takes them to venues as diverse as a local castle or a football ground, where they accept more responsibility for their learning, for example by working independently in the community. There are examples in individual student's

work, of learning about the lives and beliefs of people from different cultures and countries. However, the development of understanding and respect for cultural difference is not a consistently strong feature of students' experiences. The school ensures that balanced arguments are presented when considering any matters of political sensitivity.

Quality of teaching

Good

The quality of teaching is good and, as a result, students make good progress with their learning. Teachers and support staff work extremely well together, enabling students who have previously rejected school to settle in gradually and to meet the expectations of the school. Excellent attention is given to the individual emotional needs and reactions of each student. The quality of planning is good and the expected outcomes for learning are well planned in advance. In addition, the staff are flexible in their response to students' changing attitudes and patient in the support they provide. Students learn individually, sometimes with two adults present, and work on a range of imaginative activities which motivate and engage them. There is a strong emphasis on reading and previously reluctant readers are now choosing books and enjoying the progress which they are making. All students make good progress with their literacy and numeracy skills, and these are appropriately reinforced through, and learning in, a range of subjects. Good arrangements by leaders to support and challenge staff about developing their planning and teaching so that achievement is outstanding are having a positive impact on students' learning.

The staff have a good understanding of the approaches required to support students with autistic spectrum conditions. For example, classrooms are organised with suitable visual prompts and aids to communication. Students are keen to learn and benefit from the continuous reward systems and reinforcement of small steps of success. The assessment of students' progress is thorough and robust across all age groups and all subjects. Realistic targets are set for students' progress, taking appropriate account of their statements of special educational needs. A variety of assessment methods are used; evidence of progress is recorded regularly and supported by illuminating photographic records. Teachers are beginning to benefit from opportunities to share and compare their assessment of students' work but do not yet have a consistent understanding of what constitutes outstanding work for such a diverse group of students.

Quality of curriculum

Outstanding

The school provides an outstanding curriculum which has a positive impact on the engagement, interest and achievement of students. Individual students' timetables include subjects covering all the required areas of learning. Good attention is given to the requirements of students' statements of special educational needs and appropriate targets are written into their individual education plans. Parents, carers and the main placing local authority confirm that the school 'thinks outside the box' in setting up a programme of work which is unique for each student. All students are provided with one-to-one tuition, and in a number of cases an additional support assistant also contributes to the learning. The school takes excellent account of the difficulties which students have experienced previously in coping with relationships in a larger teaching group and places strong emphasis on creating suitable conditions to support each student's emotional stability.

The walls of the classrooms and corridors are vibrant, for example, with the display of high-quality posters produced by students in projects combining art and ICT. Similarly, the outcomes of individual historical research at venues as diverse as a premiership football ground and a local castle illustrate the imaginative opportunities provided to make school interesting and rewarding. A recent addition has been the provision of further accommodation, including a classroom, kitchen and a sensory room to provide for the needs of students with autistic spectrum conditions. As with all students, the school provides a flexible and personal programme for each of these students.

At the heart of each student's timetable is a range of opportunities to develop skills in literacy,

numeracy and science. The school has experienced recent success through the introduction of a scheme to accelerate students' reading skills. Off-site venues, for example, for fishing, archery and working with horses are used successfully to engage the interest of students who have previously refused to take part in education. Where students' extreme emotional needs require, the staff work with them in their homes to build up trust and confidence. Programmes of work ensure that students' individual needs and interests are taken into account while also ensuring that they have access to a range of external accreditation, including Entry level Certificates, GCSE examinations and National Open College Awards. Students are provided with good opportunities to develop personal vocational interests, for example at the school's motor-cycle and woodworking site. This, together with a range of additional providers, enables students to take part in work experience. The school has firm plans to extend the range of vocational opportunities provided. Excellent support is also given by the staff for students considering moving on to courses in further education colleges. The school can demonstrate significant success in turning around the lives of disaffected young people and ensuring that they develop sufficient self-esteem and confidence to continue in education beyond school.

Pupils' welfare, health and safety

Good

The school's arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of students are good. The school's leaders have ensured that all the regulatory requirements are met. The staff work tirelessly to ensure that students are safe at all times and the school's policies for the management of behaviour and the prevention of bullying are implemented consistently. A number of students come to the school with significant behavioural issues and staffing levels take full account of any potential outbursts. Any incidents of serious misbehaviour are managed and recorded appropriately and the risk of further similar incidents is minimised.

All the required checks on the suitability of staff are completed as a result of safe recruitment practice. The school maintains a single central register of checks on staff suitability and all entries are up to date. All staff are trained at the required levels in child protection, including the designated lead person. The headteacher ensures that there is effective communication with the placing local authorities, social workers, parents and carers; effective and prompt action is taken to respond to any concerns about students' welfare. The school makes good provision for the training of staff and all staff, for example, are trained in first aid. The school is diligent in completing risk assessments to ensure the safety of students both on and off the school site. A suitable fire risk assessment has been completed and the regular, routine checks on all fire safety equipment are completed and recorded robustly.

Leadership and management

Outstanding

The quality of leadership and management is outstanding and the school's leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards are met. The headteacher has set high expectations for what students can achieve and of the responses required from staff to make this possible. The school's policies and procedures, including arrangements for teaching and the planning of learning, are exemplary. The extent of the school's improvement since the last inspection is impressive. The range of subjects and activities offered has developed rapidly through a willingness to 'think outside of the box', a feature commented on by parents, carers and placing authorities. The staff have been encouraged to take on responsibilities and are well supported with innovative and imaginative developments, such as the introduction of an accelerated reading scheme or the production of creative posters combining skills in art and ICT. The headteacher has led the development of high-quality provision for students with autistic spectrum conditions and these students demonstrate good progress in their learning and their personal development. School leaders and managers work tirelessly to ensure robust monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of the school's work. This results in a keen focus on the quality of teaching and learning, effective training for staff and a constant desire to improve. The proprietor has effective systems in place to

hold the school's leaders to account and to ensure that the school is fulfilling its aims.

As a result of outstanding leadership, the quality of teaching and learning is good, providing extremely challenging students with the tools needed to make a success of their future lives. The premises and accommodation are well maintained and welcoming and good use is made of additional off-site facilities. All the required information is provided for parents and carers, including suitable procedures for managing any complaints. Parents and carers interviewed during the inspection, and representatives of placing authorities speak highly of the school and the open and frequent communication with all external partners. The staff state unanimously that they are proud to be members of staff at this school. The extent of progress since the last inspection and the quality of the school's provision and outcomes indicate that the school's leaders have the capacity for continued improvement.

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	135240
Inspection number	422789
DfE registration number	850/6088

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	Day special school for students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, and autistic spectrum conditions
School status	Independent School
Age range of pupils	11–19 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	9
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Fairways Care (UK) Ltd
Chair	Thomas McHugh
Headteacher	Gareth Webb
Date of previous school inspection	20–21 October 2010
Annual fees (day pupils)	£42,956–£83,294
Telephone number	01489 579011
Email address	admin@fairways-school.org

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