

# My Choice School - Maple House

C/o My Choice Children's Homes Ltd, Unit 3a Mill Green Business Estate, Mill Green Road, Hayward's Heath, West Sussex, RH16 1XQ

## Inspection dates

20 May 2014

## Context of the inspection

This inspection was undertaken at the request of the registration authority for independent schools in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan. The school was first inspected in February 2013. At that time, there were a number of regulations associated with the school's curriculum and the quality of teaching and assessment that were not met. An action plan was submitted by the headteacher and evaluated as satisfactory in May 2013. The first progress monitoring inspection visit took place in November 2013, when a number of regulations were found still not to be met. This is the school's second progress monitoring inspection.

## Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

### Good progress

At the time of the last progress monitoring inspection visit, improvements were noted in all areas previously judged inadequate. However, most of the regulations previously identified as unmet were still not met because actions were not consolidated or were not having sufficient impact on students' all-round academic achievements. This is no longer the case.

## The curriculum

The last inspection visit found remaining weaknesses in the planning of the curriculum and also of the content of lessons to meet students' individual requirements and the expectations of their statements of special educational needs. In the school's action plan, leaders had indicated that they would rewrite the curriculum policy to address age-related needs. This has been achieved. The policy has now been revised and in lessons the course content is now appropriately adapted to meet the needs of the students who are placed at the school.

The headteacher also committed the school to review the admission and special educational needs policies so as to reflect the precise nature of the student group that the school aims to serve. This has been addressed. Policies now stipulate what actions will take place within a time-limited period to address individual special educational needs if placements are made without prior consultation or on an emergency basis. Links with placing local authorities and external agencies have been strengthened. Teaching and lesson plans now reflect students' academic targets in relation to their prior

attainment, with clear reference to their individual education plan targets and any statements of special educational needs.

The school's action plan also indicated that training would be provided to improve the quality of assessment and lesson planning while also strengthening the links between care workers and teaching personnel. This has been achieved. Students are regularly assessed and their progress towards targets is monitored. National Curriculum levels now inform the setting of academic targets. Lesson planning shows an appropriate emphasis on securing age-related standards in reading, writing, spelling and mathematics.

Daily meetings between the teaching staff and care workers ensure that students' personal development needs are addressed, including preparation for adult life and how to keep safe. Plans now ensure that links across subjects are developed and exploited. This involves the use of outside visits and newly developed resources to stimulate a broad interest across all subjects. Emphasis on regular school attendance from all staff has led to improvements in this area.

The regulations concerning the curriculum are now met.

### **Teaching and assessment**

The last inspection visit found that a number of regulations were not met because the quality of teaching did not support students' progress effectively. Resources for learning were too limited and there was an over-reliance on worksheets. In the school's action plan, leaders indicated they would strengthen procedures for managing the performance of teaching and non-teaching staff, improve the quality of staff training to meet individual needs and monitor the impact of teaching on learning. This has taken place. Since the previous monitoring inspection, one teacher has left. The headteacher routinely observes teaching and checks lesson plans. Students' work, their progress towards targets and the progress they make in lessons are now routinely monitored. Training for all staff on assessing progress in learning has taken place.

The headteacher also indicated in the school's action plan that there would be an audit of resources with a view to purchasing a suitable range of practical resources so as to reduce the reliance on worksheets. This has been achieved. During this inspection, there was no use made of worksheets and a full range of textbooks and other media was available for students' use.

In the school's action plan, the headteacher further undertook to ensure that advice from educational psychologists and other experts would inform the planning of individual students' programmes and develop teachers' capacity to respond effectively to students' emotional and behavioural needs. This has taken place. The improved attendance and positive response of students reflect the success of these strategies.

The regulations concerning teaching and assessment are now met.

**The school has made good progress and now meets all regulatory requirements**

## Inspection team

Lesley Farmer, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

## Information about this school

- Maple House is a very small independent secondary special school providing education for boys and girls from 11 to 16 years of age with residential provision.
- Most students have a statement of special educational needs related to social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, challenging behaviours and other complex needs.
- The school was first registered in 2009, although it does not always have students on roll.
- Teachers are led and managed by a headteacher who oversees seven other schools.
- The school's aims include 'to raise self-esteem and to promote positive behaviour so that students achieve a place at a college of further education or employment and to work in partnership with carers and parents'.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136045
<b>Inspection number</b>	444645
<b>DfE registration number</b>	938/6278
<p>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.</p>	
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School status</b>	Independent residential special school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1
<b>Number of part time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	My Choice
<b>Chair</b>	Alex Hyland
<b>Headteacher</b>	Annie Murphy
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11–12 February 2013

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