

# Begdale House School

**Inspection dates** 25–26 November 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2

## Summary of key findings

### This is a good school

- The quality of teaching is good and results in students' good progress and good attitudes to learning. This is because leaders, managers and governors do all they can to ensure the quality of teaching is maintained through regular monitoring and training.
- A suitably high emphasis is placed upon developing students' literacy and numeracy skills. As a result, students achieve well in these areas of learning, especially those who have fallen behind before joining the school.
- Leadership and management by the headteacher and governors are good. This has led to the development of a rich curriculum that maximises learning opportunities for students. As a result, they have positive experiences that prepare them well for the next stage of their learning or work.
- Behaviour is good. Students take pride in their school and treat resources and equipment with respect.
- Provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Students develop a good understanding of society and their place in it. They are forthcoming in thinking of ways to help others.
- Safety and safeguarding are good and fully meet requirements.
- Leaders and managers have ensured that the school has continued to improve since the previous inspection and that the good quality of education has been maintained.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Students' belief that they can aspire to attain as highly as they want is not consistently promoted by all staff.
- Facilities for students to learn through practical activities, such as woodwork, metalwork and horticulture, are currently limited as they are not yet fully functional in the new accommodation.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school complies with all of the regulations. It meets schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection took place with one day's notice.
- The inspector observed three lessons or part lessons.
- Not enough responses were received by parents on Parent View, Ofsted's on-line survey, to show the results.
- Discussions took place with staff and policies were examined, as was students' work and other evidence about their progress. Records of staff training and development were studied.
- The inspector spoke informally with students, observed their behaviour and examined the school's safeguarding procedures.

## Inspection team

Sheelagh Barnes, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Begdale House School is a small school owned by Direct Care Limited. It previously functioned as Belview School in Wellingborough, Northamptonshire until March 2014 and was last inspected in 2011.
- The school is situated in a rural location in Cambridgeshire, close to the border with Norfolk. It caters for residential students in the local area.
- The school premises have been fully renovated during the past twelve months. Following a material change inspection in July 2014, the school was given the go ahead to admit students from the start of this school year. The first students arrived shortly before this inspection. Work on the outbuildings and garden are not yet completed.
- The school provides education during term time for up to eight boys and girls, between the ages of 10 and 16 years, with severe behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Although the aim is for students to attend the school for at least three months, this is not always possible due to other circumstances.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for its students.
- Most students are likely to have statements of special educational needs and all are looked after by local authorities. Many students have missed significant amounts of school time in the past.
- The school aims to 'fulfil students' academic, sporting, artistic, practical and social potential within a safe and supportive environment'.

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

- Ensure that students have confidence to aim for the very best that they can do by:
  - developing links with other schools and agencies so that students have more access to examples of just how far they may aspire to attaining
  - ensuring all staff consistently give the message to students that they can be the best at whatever they put their mind to.
- Complete the planned development of the garden and workshop areas to enable students to learn through a greater range of practical activities, such as metalwork, woodwork and horticulture.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's leadership and management of the school are good and support a culture of high expectations for students, both socially and academically. Self-evaluation of the school is robust, linked to effective planning for improvement and resulting in a school in which all students can flourish. As a result, the school is well placed to maintain the high standards that students achieve.
- The school strives to maintain the high quality of teaching through regular staff training and review. Performance management and staff appraisal are rigorous and linked to students' progress and welfare.
- Assessment is used well to ensure that students are making all of the progress they can. Extra support is introduced, when needed, to ensure that students do not fall behind. Clear and informative reports are sent regularly to parents and carers; these help them to see the progress each student is making and how they can improve still further.
- The range of subjects taught is broad and well balanced, with a suitable emphasis on developing students' skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics. As a result, students make good progress in literacy and numeracy. The curriculum actively promotes British values, including those of democracy and tolerance for the beliefs of others.
- Guidance about available further education courses and careers is supplied through Connexions and also through the good and developing links with local schools. These help students to make informed choices about education pathways and career options.
- All of the independent school standards are fully met. The arrangements for ensuring safety and safeguarding are robust. The information provided for parents and carers is of good quality. There is a clearly stated complaints procedure that is fully compliant.
- Sporting, practical and artistic skills are used to enhance the curriculum. The new accommodation and grounds are larger than before. However, currently the workshops are not completely set up and the garden has not been cleared ready for cultivation. The headteacher has identified these as priorities for development in order to maintain the high quality and range of opportunities available to students.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - is of high quality and challenges the headteacher and the school to consistently improve
  - supports the regular review of the quality of work in the school, leading to ongoing improvements
  - ensures that training of all staff is regularly reviewed and updated
  - ensures that students are provided for well, to enable good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
  - engages well with key partners, stakeholders and placing authorities
  - ensures that equipment and accommodation are of good quality and that there is efficient management of resources.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. This is because there is a clear behaviour policy which is consistently implemented. It is supplemented with reports and other communication between the students' homes and the school. These reports are detailed and include areas of learning as well as students' attitudes and application. As a result, students can receive praise and rewards for what they have achieved at school when they go home and so are encouraged to try their best at all times.
- Students' attitudes to school and to their work are good. They conduct themselves well and take great

pride in their appearance and the presentation of their work. There are marked improvements in behaviour over time for those with particular behavioural needs.

- Students' self-esteem is promoted well through involvement of such activities as creating welcoming displays in the school entrance, creating achievement award certificates for the school and representing the school at sports days.
- Students are encouraged to discuss and reflect upon worldwide issues each morning. They have a good and developing knowledge of public institutions and services in England, together with a good understanding of British values and the importance of being tolerant of the views of others.
- Students are encouraged to accept responsibility for their actions and reflect upon their own achievements. They contribute towards the lives of others, such as making and delivering Christmas cakes and mince pies to people in a local home for senior citizens.
- Healthy lifestyles are promoted effectively. Students learn about healthy eating, diet and nutrition, sensible shopping and food preparation. Provision is made for physical activity every day and students are encouraged to take part in a range of different activities.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Systems are fully in place to protect students from harm. Staff training ensures that all staff can respond swiftly in case of accidents. The building is kept in a clean and tidy manner, reducing risks.
- The school has effective procedures to prevent bullying. Students have a good awareness of the different forms of bullying, including cyber bullying and how to protect themselves. They are taught to be aware of the dangers of drugs and alcohol, and health awareness. This has a positive impact on students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Systems to safeguard students are good and are fully enforced in daily activities. For example, the school promotes students' understanding of e-safety well in lessons using information and communication technology (ICT). Leaders and managers are rigorous in completing the appropriate checks on all staff and visitors to the school.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching over time is good and leads to students' good progress. Learning in lessons is effectively reinforced through extra-curricular activities and homework.
- Lessons are planned carefully to meet the needs and interests of students, and to tie in well with the requirements outlined in their education plans. Careful assessments of what students know and can do are used effectively to ensure that work is suitably challenging but achievable. As a result, students develop their confidence in learning, and successfully acquire and develop a range of skills.
- Teachers set out clearly what they expect in terms of behaviour and application. As a result, students know what to do and settle quickly into school routines. They develop good attitudes to work and the confidence to move onto the next stage of their learning.
- Students' progress is monitored carefully throughout each lesson as well as over time. Small adjustments are made to ensure that learning progresses as swiftly as possible or that weaker aspects are reviewed, if needed. This results in students' good progress from their starting points, which are sometimes low due to missed schooling in the past.
- Students are involved in the evaluation of their work so that they can celebrate their successes and also understand how work might be improved still further. For example, one student evaluated the mitre cornered picture frame he had made, of which he was justly proud, by noting that straighter saw cuts

would have improved the final finish.

- Teaching places strong emphasis on developing students' skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics. There is also a strong practical emphasis for students who find written work challenging; they are encouraged to learn through measuring, drawing plans and costing projects as well as by more formal methods. The most-able students are challenged to attain their very best by work that requires them to apply a range of skills and knowledge in different situations.
- Lessons capture students' enthusiasm by building on their interests. For example, a student who was less interested in practising reading and writing than mathematics was successfully persuaded to change his mind by reading and writing about the Tudors, in whom he had a particular interest. This had a positive impact on the progress he then made in reading and writing.
- Students are prepared effectively for the next stage in their education or work. The school can point to many success stories of students who are now in regular work and apprenticeships. Teaching successfully promotes in students the belief that they can aspire to and attain the highest possible standards.
- Support staff make a positive contribution to students' behaviour management. They are encouraging and friendly, which all helps to contribute to a calm working atmosphere in the school. However, they do not always promote the very highest possible aspirations in students, sometimes taking a more pragmatic approach to career possibilities. This contributes to students' good rather than outstanding aspirations and progress.

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- The progress made by students of all levels of ability, including the most able, is good and enables them to swiftly catch up with the levels expected for their age. Students exceed the progress expected in literacy and numeracy because lessons are tailored very carefully to their specific needs and interests. They make progress at a faster rate than nationally over a sustained period during their time at the school.
- The attainment and progress of disadvantaged students consistently improves in relation to that of other students nationally. The school sees that it is imperative for students to become literate and numerate and fosters these skills at every opportunity, for example by developing mathematics skills by costing a week's food. As a result, students see their lessons as meaningful and enjoyable; they participate fully, making good gains in skills that will ultimately sustain them in independent living and employment.
- The achievement of students who are disabled or who have learning difficulties is good. For example, the school encourages students with woodworking skills to use these skills to make and sell goods for profit, using the proceeds to build up their own set of tools. This helps them at the next stage in their careers or apprenticeship. It also has a positive impact in helping them to achieve their creative potential and develop their sense of self-esteem and worth.
- Reading is encouraged and students are mainly positive about refining their reading skills. They read for a wide variety of purposes, including following plans and instructions as well as those who read for pleasure.
- The school ensures that students acquire a wide range of skills to support them in the next stage of their education, training or work. All students learn how to open a bank account, how to manage money and how to write formal letters and job applications. As a result, students are successful in academic examinations, developing life skills and gaining work.
- Computing skills are taught and practised throughout the day. As a result, students become competent users of technology and use it well for such things as writing evaluations of their work or researching information. For example, students found the relative size of different countries, such as Russia and Andorra, in a geography lesson.

- The school ensures that students are enabled to take part and enjoy a good varied range of extra-curricular activities, including artistic and sporting opportunities. As a result, they gain in self-confidence and are willing to take on eventual challenges, such as living on their own and gaining work.

## What inspection judgements mean

School	
Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Non-association independent school inspection handbook* which is published on the Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140053](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140053).



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136236
<b>Inspection number</b>	446393
<b>DfE registration number</b>	928/6038

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as inserted 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 school for students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties
<b>School status</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	10–16
<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>	Direct Care limited
<b>Chair</b>	Candy Shaw
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mark Naylor
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 July 2011

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