

Sheiling School

Horton Road, Ashley, Ringwood, Hampshire, BH24 2EB

Inspection dates 25–27 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Sixth form provision	Good	2

Summary of key findings

This is a good school because:

- Leaders and managers have high expectations for staff performance and students' achievement.
- Teaching is good and makes use of a wide range of subjects and learning activities to promote learning. As a result, almost all students make good progress, and some make rapid progress.
- Leaders and managers use good systems to make sure that students' welfare, health and safety are consistently promoted.
- Students receive good support. This enables them to feel safe and behave well in school.
- The sixth form is good. Students continue their good progress from the main school. They receive good results in suitable qualifications and progress to appropriate continuing education and training when they leave the school.
- All the independent school standards are met. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Improvements to make the systems used to promote students' safety and achievements even more effective have not been completed.
- The way the school analyses students' achievements is not sufficiently developed to make it possible to compare their progress with that of other students nationally, or between groups within the school.
- The proprietor's board has not yet established the procedures it needs to monitor students' achievements or the way the performance of teachers is managed.

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 a day's notice. The inspector observed nine lessons and visited students in the workshops where they develop practical skills. All lessons were jointly observed with the head of school or the Principal.
- The inspector looked at students' work and spoke to them about it. He held meetings with members of the proprietor's board, the senior leaders, staff members and students.
- He looked at documentation including policy statements, schemes of work, teachers' planning and records of students' progress and of staff training.
- The inspectors considered the responses of 15 parents and carers who had completed Ofsted's Parent View online questionnaire. Thirty one questionnaire responses from staff were taken into account.

Inspection team

John Gush, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Camphill Movement and was opened in 1951. In 2012 the arrangements under which it is owned and operated were revised and adjusted. Its proprietor is now the Sheiling School Special Education Trust Ltd.
- The school is located in extensive grounds in a rural situation. The school's proprietor also operates the children's home, where most of the students live, and a specialist further education college which are located on the same site. The children's home was most recently inspected in July 2014, when it was judged to be adequate.
- The head of school is responsible for the day-to-day leadership of the school, under the direction of the Principal. The Principal also provides leadership for the children's home and the further education college.
- The school uses both the National Curriculum and the principles of Steiner Waldorf education in planning the students' learning.
- The school is registered for up to 55 male and female students aged from six to 19 years. its current capacity is for 36 students.
- Currently 27 students of both genders are on roll and 22 of them live in houses situated around the campus.
- All students have moderate, severe or complex learning difficulties, the majority of which are associated with autistic spectrum disorders. All but one has a statement of special educational needs. Seven are in the care of their local authority.
- Students are placed in the school by a wide range of local authorities from across the south of England.
- The school aims 'to provide holistic, innovative and effective learning opportunities to match the interests, skills and aspirations of our students'.
- The students are divided into the main school and the sixth form, known as the upper school. The latter is for students above the statutory school leaving age.
- The school makes use of the Fortune Centre for Riding Therapy to extend the range of therapies available for students.
- The school was last inspected in June 2011, when the quality of education was judged to be good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality and impact of leadership and management by:
 - further developing the processes the school uses to analyse information about students' achievements so that they can be compared with the achievements of students nationally
 - continuing the development of improvements to make the systems used for promoting students' welfare, health and safety even more effective.
- Improve the quality of teaching in order to raise students' achievement still further by:
 - ensuring that students from disadvantaged backgrounds have every possible chance to achieve as well as other students at the school.
- Improve the effectiveness of governance by:
 - ensuring that the proprietor's board establishes suitable the procedures to monitor students' achievements and the way the performance of teachers is managed.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- School leaders and managers set high expectations for the performance of teachers, therapists and support staff. This results in good teaching, a wide range of subjects and effective pastoral support. Students who have severe and complex learning difficulties receive the support they need to behave well so that almost all make good progress.
- Leaders have good systems that are effectively used to make sure they know how well all areas of the school are supporting the needs of the students. These include robust arrangements for the recruitment and training of staff to ensure students are kept safe. A review of the school's systems has identified areas where effective procedures need to be strengthened, and this is already underway.
- Leaders have ensured that the National Curriculum subjects are used well and appropriately adapted in line with the learning abilities of the students. In addition, they make good use of the Steiner Waldorf approach to help students engage in their work. Clear messages to support students' personal, social, health and citizenship education are consistently woven through all the subjects. This supports students' personal development and prepares them well for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders regularly visit classrooms and other learning settings to gauge the effectiveness of teachers' work. As a result, they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They manage the performance of teachers well and provide valuable guidance that results in improved practice and outcomes for students. Very effective support provided by middle leaders ensures that the large staff group work well together to enhance students' experiences and achievements.
- There is a good range of buildings and equipment which are adapted as required and used well to meet students' needs. These include classrooms, facilities for therapies, craft workshops and gardens as well as a wide and varied range of information and communication technology.
- All the required information for parents, carers and others is made available on the school's informative website or in the extensive parent information pack. The school's complaints policy meets requirements and is well publicised. Parents and carers have a good range of opportunities to communicate with the school and they use these well.
- **The governance of the school:**

The newly reformed proprietorial board is developing a good range of procedures and is able to hold the school leaders to account for many areas of the performance of the school.

However, the board has not yet established the procedures it needs to monitor students' achievements or the way the performance of teachers is managed.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- **Behaviour**
- The behaviour of students is good. They are very well supported both in lessons and around the school by teaching assistants and learning support workers. They attend school regularly and are almost always on time for lessons and other learning activities. In lessons they take part to the best of their abilities and engage well with their learning tasks. This enables them to achieve well and to make good progress.
- The learning difficulties experienced by some of the students sometimes result in unsettled behaviour. Staff members are well trained to respond to these situations. They use a good range of approaches to deflect and redirect students' attention. When necessary they use appropriate techniques effectively to help a student move to a more suitable location. In this way any disruption to the learning of other students is kept to a minimum.
- Very good relationships exist between students and all staff members. This helps to create a positive learning environment that boosts students' self-confidence and enables them to progress as well as they can.
- The procedures for promoting good behaviour are well understood by staff and are rigorously put into practice. These include a consistent approach to responding to inappropriate behaviour and a strong focus on suitable rewards for good conduct. The school works consistently and well to make sure that bullying does not take place and that students do not feel bullied by the behaviour of other students.
- Incidents of unsettled behaviour and the way staff respond to them are very well recorded and analysed. This makes it possible for staff understand what has happened and to try to avoid it happening again. Records of individual students frequently show that the number of incidents of unsettled behaviour

decreases during their time at the school.

- Students take part in a good range of activities that promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students learn about right and wrong as they respond to the school's expectations for appropriate behaviour, both in school and in the wider community. These are made clear with the aid of suitably adapted teaching materials and the effective use of assistive technologies. Students learn about and gain an appreciation of other cultures. They also learn that, as well as the disabilities they experience, there are other forms of difference, including sexual orientation and gender identity. Students help others, such as the elderly members of their community, and are active fund-raisers for a variety of charities. All these activities prepare them well for life in modern Britain.
- The school has a clear policy that staff members understand and follow, which prohibits the promotion of any partisan political views in any activity associated with the school.

■ Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students indicate clearly that they feel safe in school. All of the parents and carers who responded to the online survey or who contacted the inspector directly, agreed with this.
- Effective security arrangements make sure that students are safe from intruders within the school grounds. Visitors to the school are carefully checked and recorded.
- All staff members receive regular training in child protection and have many opportunities to refresh and deepen their understanding and knowledge in this area. The Principal and the head of school are the designated safeguarding leads and have both received the advanced level of training that is required. Senior staff are trained in safe recruitment. Checks to make sure that staff members are suitable to work with children are carried out and recorded in a single register, as required.
- When students visit the Fortune Centre for Riding Therapy, they are consistently supervised by staff from the school. In addition, the school has made sure that appropriate checks regarding the suitability of their staff have been carried out and correctly recorded by the centre.
- Robust systems are used to make sure that all the buildings and equipment used in the school are safe and that any risk of fire is minimised. All the fire safety equipment is regularly checked and well maintained. Arrangements to record all the checks that take place are currently being revised and improved to make them even more effective.
- Very good processes ensure that all trips and visits away from the school's site are well planned and that any risks are carefully thought about in advance. Detailed records are kept so that the school has a clear record of where all students are at all times. A suitable number of staff members are trained in first aid and well-resourced medical facilities are available to meet the varying medical needs of the students.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teachers use effective procedures to gain a good understanding of what the students know and can do. They utilise this well in planning lessons and activities that help students to learn and to overcome some of the difficulties they experience.
- In all lessons each student's targets specify what they are aiming to achieve in that lesson. Teachers and support staff guide students well to understand and achieve the target. They help them to recognise what they have learned and what they need to do to increase their understanding and skill. This approach, using and recording very small steps of progress, enables almost all students to make good progress from their starting points at the school.
- Teachers help those students who can read and write to extend and improve their abilities. Other students are supported well to build up their skills and capacities. All students have daily opportunities to develop their abilities in communication and in the use of number.
- Teachers work with school leaders and with colleagues from other schools to check that their understanding of students' progress is accurate. This helps them to make sure that they are setting targets that are realistic and that will stretch all students to achieve as well as they can.
- All teachers in the school make good use of support staff to enable students to focus well on their learning tasks. Some teachers deploy the support staff in their classes outstandingly well. They provide precise instructions as to what is needed to help each student move to the next step in their learning. In so doing they make it possible for those students to make excellent progress in their lessons.
- Information technology is used often and well in classrooms. Teachers and students use interactive whiteboards to enhance learning and build confidence. Specially adapted information technology equipment makes it possible for some students to communicate where they would otherwise struggle to

do so.

- A good range of therapies is very well used to support learning. They help students to build the specific skills they need, such as in speech, language and communication. Other therapies in use include those using movement, art, music and riding. These therapies help students to develop self-awareness and confidence, and to become ready for further learning and to extend their achievements.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Students' achievements are carefully recorded and analysed. The records show that almost all students make good progress from their starting points when their overall abilities are taken into account. Students make progress in all their subjects including in English and mathematics. Some make outstanding progress. A small number are not able to make progress because of their medical conditions.
- The school's recording processes are currently being developed and improved in collaboration with other schools locally. At present they do not allow accurate comparison between the achievements of students at the school and other students nationally.
- Although only a small number of students are able to read, all students have regular chances to respond to a wide range of stimulus provided at the school. They do this with interest and enthusiasm. Students work every day to improve their literacy and communication, making good use of the wide range of materials available.
- A good variety of approaches is used to help students to understand and extend their ability to use number. This might include learning to recognise coins and using them to buy the mid-morning snack; also, measuring the length of a piece of firewood they are cutting so that it fits into the stove in their house. All these activities extend their understanding and abilities well.
- The most able students respond well to their individual targets and to the advice and encouragement of teachers and learning support staff. As a result they make good progress.
- Female students make slightly more progress than their male counterparts. This is a change from the last inspection.
- The first analysis of the difference in achievement between those from disadvantaged backgrounds and others has recently been made. This has allowed the school to direct additional attention to this group. The next analysis will show whether the gap between their achievements and those of other students has narrowed.

The sixth form provision

is good

- The upper school is led well by one of the school's middle managers, under the direction of the head of school. The upper school benefits from the full range of facilities available for the whole school. These include the recording, monitoring and analysis of students' progress and achievement and of their behaviour. This information is used well by teachers in the upper school to enable their students to continue and develop the progress and achievement they made previously in the main school. It also enables students to prepare for moving on from the school.
- Teaching in the upper school is good. Careful planning and the effective use of support staff enable students to make good progress in their work. Students continue to develop their skills and abilities in English and mathematics and also take part in a variety of other subjects aimed at extending their knowledge and awareness of the world around them, in particular the world of work.
- Nationally recognised accreditation provides a valuable incentive for each student and all achieve good results in up to three different qualifications.
- These achievements are supplemented by work experience. The school takes advantage of local partner organisations to ensure that all students have appropriate experience of the workplace. This includes working in a nursery school, in a market garden and in an office environment. In addition, students take part in mini-enterprise, for example selling the craft goods they have made at school at a local country fair.
- Almost all upper school students continue their placements for the whole of the period agreed by their local authority. Most leavers move on to continuing education and training when they complete their time in the upper school. Some transfer to the specialist further education provision operated by the school's proprietor and others take up places in further education colleges in their home areas.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	113952
Inspection number	446381
DfE registration number	835/6004

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.

Type of school	Special school for students with complex learning difficulties
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	6 to 19 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	27
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	9
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Sheiling School Special Education Trust Ltd
Chair	Jeremy Morris
Headteacher	Corine von Barneveld
Date of previous school inspection	9–10 June 2011
Annual fees (day pupils)	£27,500
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