

# Wilsic Hall School

Wadworth, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN11 9AG

## Inspection dates

11–12 November 2015

## Overall effectiveness

**Outstanding**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Sixth form provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- Teaching, learning and assessment are outstanding. Teachers plan and deliver lessons which result in pupils making outstanding progress. They base these lessons on detailed knowledge of pupils' learning and personal needs.
- Personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding. Pupils make significant gains in their personal development, particularly in their self-esteem and self-confidence, which also benefit their learning and progress.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe and report concerns. They have an opportunity to practise democracy and they work together in equality and respect.
- Leaders and managers set an ambitious tone for the school, valuing all pupils and devoting themselves to helping them achieve the best outcomes.
- Pupils make outstanding progress in meeting or exceeding the expected progress for those with similar starting points, including in the sixth form, and by fulfilling the school's aims.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

## Full report

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

- Ensure that all care assistants who support pupils in the classroom receive appropriate training for their role.
- Clarify in curriculum planning which specific skills, knowledge and understanding particular activities should be promoting.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- Leaders and managers have ensured that all independent school standards are met. They successfully share high ambitions with staff and pupils and these permeate the daily life of the school.
- Leaders know the school's strengths and have produced an accurate self-evaluation which challenges them to move towards the next stage in the school's development.
- Leaders fully understand the quality of teaching in the school which is supported by regular monitoring and an extensive programme of continuing professional development. As a result of outstanding teaching, pupils make outstanding progress.
- All pupils have a learning plan which includes personal risk assessment and extra-curricular activities.
- Pupils' outstanding achievement is based on an activity-led curriculum which successfully blends life skills with academic learning. Outdoor activities support learning in science and geography; basic skills are put to practical use in shopping at a supermarket. In these activities, pupils also make valuable gains in self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Currently, leaders have not clarified in their curriculum planning which specific skills, knowledge and understanding particular activities should be promoting.
- The curriculum supports pupils' understanding of British values and citizenship, for example, by being part of the 'Council', a timetabled opportunity for pupils to express their views.
- Leaders strongly promote equality and the school as a multicultural community where mutual respect is clearly seen. A leading member of the local council has visited the school and explained his work to the pupils.
- Leaders and managers ensure that pupils with emotional, social and mental health difficulties make outstanding progress in their behaviour and personal development. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are outstanding.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Leaders and managers in school are challenged and held to account by regular and rigorous monitoring by the proprietor's representatives and the support of a school improvement partner who visits the school termly and provides a valuable external view of the school's progress.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All staff are trained to at least the appropriate level and have read 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', which is available in every classroom.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

- Teaching is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. Planning is detailed and is based on awareness of the learning needs and prior achievement of all the pupils.
- Teachers are highly skilled in managing the personal development of their pupils and in finding appropriate levels of challenge.
- Teachers demonstrate highly effective subject knowledge and use presentational styles appropriate to the needs of their pupils. They match questions to the pupils' ability to respond.
- They use praise and encouragement effectively to engage pupils' concentration and pride in their achievement. They manage pupils' lack of engagement in a non-confrontational way.
- Teaching assistants and care assistants support pupils in their learning well and make a valuable contribution to their progress. However, a minority of the care assistants have insufficient understanding of their role in the classroom and occasionally fail to offer appropriate support.
- Teachers promote literacy and numeracy both in the classroom and in a wide variety of other activities. In the case of pupils with the most severe learning difficulties, speech and language is effectively developed through signing and pictorial communication systems.
- The practical activities in the curriculum are specifically chosen as a preparation for adult life and interaction with real people in the community. In this way, they are extending pupils' learning with a genuine purpose and preparing them well for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils take pride in their achievements and are encouraged to further effort. This is most clearly seen in the school assembly which is a joyous exhibition of togetherness and a shared demonstration of pride in pupils' achievements.

- Parents receive regular reports on pupils' progress. As well as written reports, they are encouraged to visit the school and observe pupils and discuss their progress.
- Some older pupils are appropriately equipped to progress to a local college or to the proprietor's adult provision at Wilsic Hall College at Hesley Hall where they can continue working towards qualifications provided by the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN).

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- The school provides a safe and caring environment in which pupils flourish and develop self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Pupils with speech and language difficulties are supported through a therapy programme to make outstanding progress in their personal development.
- Because of effective strategies, pupils' behaviour improves consistently over time. The school's pupils have forged good relationships with people in the local community at the supermarket and on their visits to places of interest.
- Pupils are well supervised throughout the day. Care assistants ensure a smooth transition between the residences and school.
- Safeguarding procedures fully meet requirements. All staff are trained to at least the appropriate level and have read 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', which is available in every classroom. Pupils understand the meaning of staying safe and know how to report concerns.
- All interview panels include at least one person trained in safer recruitment.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' attendance is high and punctuality is consistently good.
- Pupils have made significant improvement in their behaviour since arriving in the school.
- Pupils engage well with their learning and take a pride in their success.
- Pupils take responsibility in helping and representing others. Members of the 'Council' take their work very seriously and know that their voice is heard.

## **Outcomes for pupils are outstanding**

- Pupils' outcomes are outstanding. From very low starting points, almost all meet, and most exceed, the expected progress for similar pupils nationally.
- Pupils with speech and language difficulties make outstanding progress in articulating knowledge by signing or pictorial aids.
- Pupils meet the aims of the school by developing independence because of the school's supportive environment.
- Outstanding teaching meets pupils' learning and personal needs through understanding and individual challenge.
- Pupils are safe and proud of their achievements. Their personal development flourishes in a caring community, especially in building their self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Pupils benefit from the activity-based curriculum which fully meets their needs. They learn a wide range of subjects through outdoor activities and excursions into the local community, such as shopping at a supermarket.
- Pupils succeed up to and including diploma level in the qualifications provided by ASDAN. Many continue to extend these qualifications at a local college or in the on-site adult college.
- Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their lives.
- Pupils above compulsory school age make outstanding progress from a very low baseline and have often only recently joined the school.

**Sixth form provision****is outstanding**

- Pupils in the sixth form make outstanding progress, often in a relatively short time, because of the stability offered in the school after they have had a period of disrupted education. They continue to improve their standards in literacy and numeracy.
- Teaching is successful in providing opportunities for pupils to develop self-confidence and to relate their learning to real-life situations. Because of this, pupils flourish.
- Pupils' personal development and self-esteem are successfully fostered by the school so that they are prepared for the next stage in their lives.
- Leaders and managers of the school enthuse pupils with ambition and in generating a 'can do' culture. All pupils are valued for their personal contribution.
- Over half of the pupils continue their education by following work-related or ASDAN courses after leaving school.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	106814
<b>Social care unique reference number</b>	SC008015
<b>Inspection number</b>	10006036
<b>DfE registration number</b>	371/6005

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, 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>	Independent special school
<b>School status</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19 years
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	25
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	18
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Number of boarders on roll</b>	23
<b>Proprietor</b>	Hesley Group
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Stephen Lloyd
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Geoff Turner
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£62,332
<b>Annual fees (boarders)</b>	£228,000 to £364,578
<b>Telephone number</b>	01302 856382
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.hesleygroup.co.uk/content/wilsic-hall-school">www.hesleygroup.co.uk/content/wilsic-hall-school</a>
<b>Email address</b>	geoff.turner@hesleygroup.co.uk
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25–26 September 2012

## Information about this school

- Wilsic Hall is an independent special school, located in a rural area close to Doncaster. It opened in 1996, is part of the Hesley Group and caters for up to 36 pupils between the ages of 11 and 19 years.
- Residential placements are provided on a 52-week basis for almost all pupils. The school admits pupils throughout the year and there are currently 25 full-time pupils. There are 22 male and three female pupils, and 23 are looked after by their local authority, which funds all the placements. Eighteen pupils are above compulsory school age.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education and health care plan to address their needs, mostly associated with autism. Most have severe learning and communication difficulties. Many have previously had a disrupted education, some with considerable periods out of school.
- Although a large majority of the pupils are aged 16 to 19 years, there is no discrete sixth form. Pupils are taught in five mixed-age classes organised to respond to their specific needs and prior attainment.
- Some pupils leave the school to attend the proprietor's adult provision, Wilsic Hall College, at Hesley Hall.
- The school aims to ensure that all students develop independence through a broad learning experience in

an environment that offers warmth, security, consistency and understanding’.

- The school was previously inspected in September 2012.
- The school has dual registration as a children’s home. An inspection of this provision took place at the same time and the full report is published separately.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- The inspector checked the school's compliance with the independent school standards, including scrutinising school policies and other documentation.
- The inspector observed learning across a range of subjects and classes. In two of these observations, he was accompanied by the head of education.
- The inspector viewed the school's website.
- The inspector analysed the school's assessment records and scrutinised samples of pupils' work during lesson observations.
- The inspector attended 'Council', spoke with staff, the head of campus, the site manager, the head of education, the activities organiser and the speech therapist.
- Two meetings were held with the social care inspector.
- The inspector analysed staff questionnaires.
- There were insufficient responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, to generate a report.

## Inspection team

Peter McKenzie, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector



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