

Knole Development Centre

Cygnets Hospital, Godden Green, Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 0JR

Inspection dates

30 September–2 October
2015 and 24 November 2015

Overall effectiveness

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

Requires improvement

Requires improvement
Requires improvement
Requires improvement
Requires improvement
Requires improvement
Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not ensured that teaching is consistently good. Pupils' progress therefore varies between subjects and over time.
- Teachers do not always make good use of their assessment of pupils' current levels of learning to plan for future progress.
- Parents and carers are not kept as well informed about pupils' academic progress as they are about pupils' well-being.
- Programmes of study are not always well adapted to some pupils' short stays at the centre or to the needs of sixth-form learners.
- Pupils are not always well supported to develop their independence or to improve their attendance.
- Governance structures are in the early stages of development.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils feel safe and are kept safe, due to the dedicated care and attention of all the staff. Good links between teachers and medical staff support pupils' welfare well.
- The proprietor has an accurate view of where improvement is required and has recently appointed an able consultant leader, specifically to coordinate this work. Further improvements are already evident in teaching and pupils' progress.
- Some pupils already make steady progress in mathematics and English, learning at levels expected for their age. Those who attend regularly are supported well to study towards public examinations.
- The centre is a calm and well-ordered environment which promotes learning. Pupils enjoy lessons and behave well. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength.
- Most pupils leave the centre better able to engage with education.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that all pupils make the best possible academic progress from their different starting points, by ensuring that teachers use assessment information consistently well to plan accurately for pupils' next steps.
- Improve the sixth-form provision by developing engaging educational opportunities that support learners to continue their academic development.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - teachers receive regular developmental feedback to support continuous improvement
 - parents, carers and future settings are as well informed about pupils' academic achievement as pupils' health and well-being
 - programmes of study are readily adapted for pupils who attend the centre for only a short period of time
 - pupils are supported to develop their independence and, where necessary, to improve their attendance at lessons
 - governance continues to develop.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders have not ensured that teaching is consistently good in all subjects and over time. Until recently, leaders' checks on teaching were informal. However, capable interim leadership is now ensuring that helpful feedback and guidance are resulting in continuing improvements in teaching.
 - Some programmes of study need further adaptation to ensure good progress for pupils who attend the centre for only a limited period. Nevertheless, recent changes to the way teachers plan for pupils' learning are already improving pupils' engagement and progress during lessons.
 - An appropriate curriculum is available for pupils, including courses leading to public examinations. Where appropriate, staff discuss with pupils their future options for education or training.
 - The centre's reports to parents and discussions about plans for pupils' future provision focus mainly on pupils' mental health and welfare. Parents are not always informed equally well about pupils' academic progress. The same often applies to reports provided to pupils' future educational settings when pupils transfer.
 - Pupils' social development is supported well during teaching and at lunchtimes. However, opportunities for pupils to develop independence in their daily life at the centre are limited.
 - The proprietor expresses a clear vision to maintain improvement in pupils' learning and achievement. Appointed for this purpose, the interim consultant leader has established a clear plan, which staff are implementing successfully. Staff appraisal has been linked well with learning and achievement. Leadership has been further strengthened by the recent recruitment of an experienced teacher to oversee the induction and forward transition of pupils, although the impact from this appointment is yet to be established.
 - The programme of study for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is a strength of the school. This rolling programme ensures that pupils experience a wide range of cultural influences and are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Moral questions affecting personal choices are dealt with well, in partnership with therapeutic staff. Good communication between education and medical teams supports pupils well in considering the consequences of their feelings, choices and behaviour.
 - The fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, freedom of speech and individual liberty are promoted well. Regular meetings allow pupils an effective voice in their care and treatment. Clear rules ensure that everyone understands the behaviour expected of them. Pupils are well educated about their rights linked to disability or mental health issues they may experience. A clear model of respect and consideration for all is provided consistently by all the staff whom pupils encounter around the school and on the wider site.
 - Effective, daily communication is well established between centre staff and hospital colleagues. Recent changes to record-keeping in the centre have enhanced these procedures further by ensuring that information about pupils' daily learning is promptly included in ward notes.
- **The governance of the school**
- The proprietor and consultant leader are steering continuing improvement in provision.
 - An executive improvement board, recently introduced by the proprietor, reviews regular reports from the consultant leader about pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching, keeping the proprietor well-informed about developments at the school.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Procedures are securely in place, staff are well trained, and ready links with external agencies are in place when referral is required. Record-keeping is efficient. Pupils are rightly confident that staff will respond promptly and appropriately to any concerns. All staff maintain high levels of vigilance for the safeguarding of each pupil. Daily meetings ensure that information is shared well between medical and education colleagues. Risk assessments are completed as required, and the safety and security of the site assured by regular checks.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Over time, the quality of teaching has been inconsistent.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils' learning have not been consistent or systematic. Targets are now set, especially for pupils' achievement in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. However, these are often expressed in terms of the work to be completed rather than the learning to be achieved, and do not always bear in mind the short length of time some pupils are likely to attend the centre.
- Teachers consistently provide helpful oral feedback and encouragement to pupils during teaching.
- Teachers and support staff know pupils well individually. They care patiently and with commitment for pupils' personal needs. Pupils value the relationships they establish with adults and the calm, conducive environment created by staff at the centre. This supports good attitudes to learning.
- Teachers' planning for pupils' learning is increasingly detailed. Teachers reliably identify relevant activities for each pupil in the mixed-age class. As a result, pupils work purposefully and make progress over time. In an English lesson, pupils showed that they had already gained sufficient understanding of the play *An Inspector Calls* to discuss and agree the personal traits of the main characters. In a mathematics lesson, different pupils gained and applied new understanding of decimal numbers and how to convert miles into kilometres.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils' days are carefully managed by medical staff, including supervised access out of doors and some unescorted time when deemed appropriate. However, opportunities for pupils to develop their independence are limited.
- Staff care well for pupils' personal needs and well-being. This is assured by close liaison between education staff and medical colleagues and by the medical expertise of some centre staff. Parents and carers are able to attend ward rounds and planning meetings, and are kept in touch about pupils' welfare through ready contact with key staff.
- Centre staff liaise closely with therapists to ensure pupils receive the blend of provision they need. The centre timetable includes a range of classroom and therapy activities each day. Therapeutic art sessions are a popular choice for pupils after school.
- Pupils told inspectors that there is no bullying, and they are confident that adults would resolve promptly any concerns that did arise. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy learning at the centre. Pupils are alert to the risks of social media and are well educated about the risks of smoking, alcohol and illegal drug use.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' fitness to attend lessons is appropriately monitored and supported by medical staff. Nevertheless, high rates of absence from lessons by some pupils limit their academic development and readiness for transition forward from the centre. Pupils told inspectors that they do sometimes 'choose' whether or not to attend lessons.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the centre, contributing well to the calm and purposeful ethos. Pupils were courteous to inspectors, including when sharing a table at lunchtime. Pupils are helped to consider intelligently the consequences of their actions and choices. Pupils are considerate and supportive of one another.
- Pupils and staff agreed that recently, behaviour in lessons for some pupils has improved significantly due to improvements in teaching.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Over time, pupils have not always made good progress in their academic studies. They are now beginning to make better progress.
- Pupils who attend well make steady progress, especially in English and mathematics. Individual pupils are set work at levels appropriate for their age, including at GCSE. The centre supports well pupils who express clear aspirations to succeed in public examinations. The centre is less successful, however, in enabling reluctant learners to attend and engage.
- Owing to successful support for their mental health, most pupils leave the centre needing reduced levels of care and are therefore better able to engage with their future education.

Sixth-form provision

requires improvement

- Leaders oversee closely the provision for learners of sixth-form age. Teachers and therapists work together closely to plan appropriate provision. The academic progress of learners over the age of 16 varies according to their health and well-being. Studies relevant to public examinations are available for learners, but at the time of the inspection, none was engaged in these particular courses.
- During the inspection, a group was observed cooking during an occupational therapy session. Inspectors saw clearly how much learners value opportunities to plan menus, purchase ingredients in escorted visits to local supermarkets, and then return to cook full meals. Experiences of this kind build personal confidence well. They allow for the development of relevant mathematical skills, for example, in handling money or weights and measures. Learners also develop their reading and vocabulary appropriately by following recipes, and encounter the cultures of the world through the variety of food they prepare.
- Learners are cared for well; they feel safe and are safe. Regular opportunities are provided for older learners to discuss personal and social issues with staff. As a result, learners' personal development is well supported and learners engage well with the carefully planned programmes provided for them. As is the case with younger pupils, parents and carers are kept well informed about learners' medical progress, but less so about their academic learning.
- Staff help learners to consider their options for the future. A high proportion of sixth-form learners leave the centre with a significantly reduced need for mental health care. Nevertheless, leaders rightly recognise the need to enhance further the impact of sixth-form educational provision on learners' academic development.

School details

Unique reference number	140960
Inspection number	10006351
DfE registration number	886/6142

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.

Type of school	Other
School status	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	12–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	20
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	7
Proprietor	Tom Ware (Cygnet Healthcare Ltd)
Chair	Tom Ware
Headteacher	Danmore Padare
Telephone number	01732 763491
Website	www.cygnetkdc.co.uk
Email address	knoledvelopmentcentre@cygnethealth.co.uk
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Knole Development Centre is a small special school for pupils who attend the on-site Cygnet Hospital. The school caters for pupils who have mental illness; cognitive and learning needs; behavioural, emotional and social development needs; communication and interaction needs; and those who are on the autistic spectrum.
- The school is registered for 25 pupils aged 12 to 18 years of age. Currently, 20 pupils attend the school. No pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Five pupils are looked after by local authorities.
- The school's aims are to deliver, 'Therapeutic education by bridging the difficulties between education, health and well-being that young people face by helping them to overcome challenges and create positive futures'.
- The school does not receive any additional funding for disadvantaged pupils.
- The school opened on 22 May 2014. This was its first Ofsted inspection.

Information about this inspection

- The first inspection visit was carried out over two and a half days, with one day's notice. The inspection was completed in a further one-day visit on 24 November 2015.
- Inspectors observed a total of seven lessons, most of which were joint observations with the headteacher. Inspectors spent time with pupils during social times and visited occupational therapy and art therapy sessions.
- Samples of pupils' work were scrutinised. Curriculum documentation and teachers' planning for pupils' learning were considered, together with records of pupils' progress.
- Records connected with safeguarding were examined, including incident logs and information relating to leaders' contact with external agencies, including social care and the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with teachers, care workers, therapists, the headteacher and the proprietor. There was a conference call with those responsible for governance. Governance terms of reference and information about meetings were considered.
- There were insufficient responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and to the centre's own parents' survey for these to be considered. The lead inspector spoke with one parent who was visiting at the time of the first inspection visit.
- Inspectors examined the premises, and school policies and documentation to check for compliance with the independent school standards.

Inspection team

Liz Bowes, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Siân Thornton

Her Majesty's Inspector

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