

Denby Grange School

Off Stocksmoor Road, Midgley, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, WF4 4JG

Inspection dates 8–10 March 2016

Overall effectiveness **Good**

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and managers establish and sustain enthusiasm and dedication to improve pupils' lives.
- The proprietor supports the school well and holds leaders to account. All the independent school standards are met.
- From a very low base, pupils make good progress in English and mathematics and achieve well in a wide range of other subjects.
- Pupils, who join the school with severe social and emotional difficulties and exhibit challenging behaviour make good progress in developing self-esteem and the confidence to accept responsibility for their actions. In turn, this leads to improved behaviour for learning and good progress.
- Teaching and learning are effective in enabling pupils to make good progress in academic and personal development. Assessment information confirms this progress.
- The school is successful in meeting its aim to prepare pupils for the next stage of their lives.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' attendance, although significantly improved, is still low.
- A minority of teachers do not maximise pupils' learning opportunities because they do not recognise pupils' thresholds of concentration.
- There is inconsistent development of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.

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?

- Continue to improve the levels of pupils' attendance.
- Ensure that pupils make progress in literacy and numeracy in all curriculum areas.
- Plan all lessons and activities to meet and develop the concentration span of pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management **is good**

- The proprietor has ensured that the school meets all the independent school standards.
- Leaders and managers ensure that adults share their deep commitment to enabling pupils to meet their aim to function positively in the real world as fully participating adults.
- The curriculum is extensive and makes opportunities for all pupils to develop their strengths in a range of subjects and particularly to raise their standards in English and mathematics.
- However, the development of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum is not consistent.
- The school offers a range of accreditation suited to pupils' individual needs. Pupils work towards qualifications at GCSE, Entry Level and the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN).
- Pupils extend their learning by participating in a range of visits and in-school events. For example, they learned about the meaning of Remembrance Day in school and followed this up with a visit to York to see the ceramic poppies.
- The provision in personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship promotes British values and prepares pupils to protect themselves against extremism and radicalisation.
- Leaders and managers have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. This informs the school's improvement planning.
- Leaders and managers are aware of the quality of teaching in the school, and appraisal systems inform appropriate professional development opportunities.
- Adults challenge racist, sexist and homophobic language and behaviour consistently and calmly.
- The proprietor ensures the welfare, health and safety of everyone in school through comprehensive policies and effective practice.
- The school premises are spacious, warm and bright. Teaching accommodation provides the opportunity for pupils to take part in a full range of curriculum activities and there is good leisure and break-out space.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The school does not have a specific board of governors.
 - Members of the proprietorial body visit the school regularly, participate in self-evaluation and improvement planning and hold leaders and managers to account.
 - The proprietor provides effective and comprehensive guidance in developing key policies and their implementation.
- **The arrangements for safeguarding**
 - The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
 - The single central register fully meets the regulations.
 - The school's safeguarding policy is published on its website and meets requirements.
 - All staff have current training at the designated levels in child protection. Pupils have recently been trained to recognise and prevent child sexual abuse and entered a follow-up poster competition.
 - All recruitment procedures include at least one person trained in safer recruitment.
 - All staff have signed to confirm that they have read *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (July 2015), as required.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **is good**

- Teachers plan lessons well to meet the academic, social and personal needs of their pupils.
- Most teachers have a good understanding of the learning history of their pupils and teachers make appropriate demands on their concentration.
- As a result, pupils make good progress from very low starting points, particularly in English, mathematics and science. There are often blurred subject boundaries in lessons that promote pupils' wider knowledge and understanding. A good example was seen during the inspection in a mathematics lesson on percentages which engaged the pupils well with statistics about poverty, malnutrition, sanitation and the divisions of wealth in the world.
- Teachers challenge inappropriate language and behaviour and promote equal opportunity in learning.
- Parents receive biannual reports which contain a good range of information on pupils' progress.

- The school has an effective framework for assessing pupils' progress and this is used well to ensure that lessons are appropriately planned and that the support of other adults helps pupils acquire knowledge and skills.
- At the end of every lesson, pupils' individual contribution is assessed jointly by the teacher and each pupil. Pupils value the contribution they make to this process.
- Teachers recognise that pupils sometimes find concentration for long periods difficult. In most cases, lessons move on quickly to keep pupils interested. In a small number of lessons, teachers fail to recognise pupils' limits and there is low-level disruption.
- Although pupils make good progress in English and mathematics, there is insufficient planned integration of literacy and numeracy in lessons in other subjects.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Most pupils have attended several schools. Some had been permanently excluded early in the primary phase and most have had long periods out of education. In the early stages at Denby Grange, this can have a negative impact on their readiness to learn and give them a feeling of insecurity in the classroom.
- Pupils quickly develop trust in their teachers but are more wary of changed routines and other people. Over time, pupils become more acclimatised to the school environment and their learning benefits considerably.
- These pupils return positively to an education system that they say had previously failed them. One pupil said, 'I was kept out of normal lessons'.
- Parents of past and present pupils acknowledge the school's success in developing pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem. A former pupil said, 'Thank you for putting my life back on track'.
- Because of their previous disengagement with education and personal and social issues, pupils often begin life at Denby Grange as persistent absentees. However, as confidence grows, their attendance reaches expected levels.
- Consequently, attendance is low. However, the data for the current term show a significant increase over previous terms.
- Pupils understand safeguarding issues and how to keep themselves safe. The school's safeguarding provision is thorough and the focus on safety is constantly refreshed in pupils' minds. Pupils were praised for their response by the organiser of the recent in-school event on child sexual abuse.
- PSHE and citizenship lessons prepare pupils well for the next stage of their life in British society.
- The school's health and safety policy and practice keep everyone safe. This includes fire safety, first-aid provision, electrical safety and risk assessment for both activities and individual pupils.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- All pupils have a history of challenging behaviour. However, the number of incidents decreases significantly as behaviour shows sustained improvement over time.
- Although some pupils can sometimes be instantaneously aggressive, this behaviour is quickly overcome. There is little evidence of bullying. All incidents are well resolved, based on pupils accepting responsibility and the need for restoration.

Outcomes for pupils are good

- Pupils enter the school with very low prior attainment. Their reading, writing and spelling ages are well below their chronological ages. In English and mathematics, many only meet the expectations for the beginning of the previous key stage.
- When they start at the school, pupils' social and emotional difficulties prevent them from re-engaging immediately with the learning process as many have had long periods out of school.

- Once they are settled, a high proportion of pupils make rapid progress in English, mathematics and science, exceeding national averages. However, their attainment remains well below age-related standards.
- Pupils with English as an additional language reach high standards of fluency in English.
- Pupils often enter the school with a lack of enthusiasm for reading. Once their skills develop, they begin to read for pleasure and overcome their inhibitions by reading aloud in class.
- Pupils take advantage of the breadth of the curriculum, producing high-quality work, especially in food technology, art and sport-related activities. They also develop self-esteem and self-confidence through the strong provision in PSHE and citizenship.
- The school's restorative justice approach enables pupils to understand right and wrong and to realise that they must always accept responsibility for their actions.
- Pupils are given the skills and knowledge to take to the next stage of their education or work. Last year, all pupils left with a clear direction for their next steps. Most succeeded in sustaining that interest. It is a great tribute to the school that almost all those who did not find success in their first choice successfully sought other suitable opportunities.
- At Denby Grange, pupils find people who believe in them and successfully encourage them to believe in themselves and their talents. Pupils who had given up on learning now take pride in their achievements.

School details

Unique reference number	131136
Inspection number	10006063
DfE registration number	384/6120

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	Independent special school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11–18 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	35
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	0
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Keys Care Group
Chair	Heather Laffin
Headteacher	Jennie Littleboy
Annual fees (day pupils)	£39,100
Telephone number	01924 830096
Website	www.keyschildcare.co.uk
Email address	Jennielittleboy@keyschildcare.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	16–17 October 2012

Information about this school

- Denby Grange is situated in a semi-rural setting, between Wakefield and Huddersfield, and is a small day school for pupils aged from 11 to 18 years who have severe social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Some have additional mental health needs.
- The school opened in 2000 and was last inspected in October 2012. It is registered for up to 36 pupils and there are currently 35 pupils aged 11 to 16 years on roll; 31 are boys and four are girls. No pupil is above compulsory school age.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. Five are looked after in care placements. Three have English as an additional language.
- Pupils are placed at the school by their local authority. Most have been excluded from previous schools or have persistently failed to attend and may have had long periods without any education provision.
- The school is run by the Keys Group.
- The school aims to enable all pupils to become emotionally and academically prepared to function positively in the real world as fully participating adults.

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. He viewed the school's website and school policies, schemes of work and other documentation.
- The inspector observed lessons covering a range of subjects and activities and analysed the school's assessment records.
- He scrutinised a selection of pupils' work, read case studies on a group of pupils and analysed records of trends in pupils' behaviour.
- The inspector met with senior leaders, the company's director of education, the school's careers adviser and a group of pupils. He had a telephone discussion with the representative of a placing authority.
- The inspector analysed staff questionnaires. There were insufficient responses to Ofsted's online survey on the Parent View website to generate a report.

Inspection team

Peter McKenzie, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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