

# Cedar Lodge

c/o Hexagon Care Services, Unit 1 Tustin Court, Port Way, Preston, Lancashire PR2 2YQ

## Inspection dates

1–2 March 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Pupils make good progress from their starting points. They achieve well in a wide range of subjects, including mathematics, English and science.
- Pupils' manners are exemplary and show the pride they have in their school. Pupils are welcoming, often overcoming significant social and mental health issues to engage with visitors and share their interests and learning. Pupils have good attitudes in class but are yet still to fully develop their self-confidence in learning.
- The school's curriculum is broad, balanced and designed to meet pupils' needs. It promotes British values well and provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop their academic knowledge and personal skills.
- Teaching across the school is good. Pupils acquire knowledge and understanding effectively because teachers match activities well to pupils' abilities and interests. However, in computing teachers' limited subject knowledge inhibits the level of challenge they present to pupils.
- The proprietor and leaders ensure that the school meets all of the independent school standards.
- Leaders and proprietors share a common vision to provide educational excellence. They have high expectations and place pupils' learning and pastoral care at the core of their school's provision.
- Leaders effectively check pupils' progress and use this information to plan appropriate priorities for improvement. However, the way leaders record pupils' progress sometimes makes it difficult for them to check easily the impact of actions over time. The plans for school development do not always contain sufficiently detailed expectations to allow leaders to evaluate easily how well their actions are working.
- The systems in place to protect pupils from risks, including those online, are extremely well managed and very effective.
- Pupils receive useful advice and guidance about their future education and career options. A range of vocational opportunities informs pupils' choices and prepares them well for their next stages of education or the world of work.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2015 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

## Full report

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

- Improve leadership and management, by:
  - refining school development planning to allow leaders and proprietors to more easily check that actions are having the expected impact on pupils' learning
  - developing the quality of pupils' assessment records to enable leaders to more easily analyse the impact of their actions over time.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to enhance pupils' achievement further, by:
  - developing teachers' knowledge and skills in how to teach the computing curriculum to provide greater opportunities for pupils to study computer science at greater depth.
- Improve the personal development, behaviour and welfare of pupils, by:
  - enhancing the impartiality of advice and guidance provided for pupils relating to their career choices and next steps in education.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The proprietor and leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards are fully met.
- Leaders and managers have a clear vision and passion to provide the best care and education for their pupils. This is shared by all members of staff. Leaders' high expectations of pupils and staff, rooted in the school's ethos of mutual respect, leads to pupils developing excellent manners and good attitudes to learning.
- The school does not have a website. This is a considered and deliberate decision to protect the privacy of pupils attending the school and living in the associated children's home. Leaders, however, ensure that they meet the requirement to provide information for parents, carers and others in hard copy, on request. Leaders regularly and effectively report to parents about their children's learning and school life. Termly reports focus sharply on pupils' learning and identify clearly the next steps for development. Annual reviews of education, health and care plans, completed in line with statutory requirements, demonstrate leaders' and teachers' deep understanding of pupils' needs and the strategies that they use to meet them.
- Correspondence from local authority placement officers affirms the positive work of the school and recognises the impact it has on pupils' education and well-being. One officer commented that a pupil placed by their authority felt valued because of the work done to meet their needs and to consequently gain greater access to learning and improved life chances.
- This is a caring school where pupils develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding well. Pupils learn about a range of faiths, cultures and human relationships through a well-planned personal, social health and economic education curriculum that prepares them well for life within British society.
- Leaders pay close attention to those pupils who are educated away from the school site to ensure that alternative provision is helping them to achieve. Before any placement begins, leaders work closely with alternative providers to ensure that appropriate risk assessments, pastoral support and educational plans are in place to ensure that pupils' needs are met. Frequent communication and visits to alternative providers ensure that school leaders have up-to-date knowledge of the progress pupils are making. Leaders rapidly respond to any concerns or celebrations raised by the alternative provision. This consolidates the effectiveness of the placement. As a result, placements are matched well to the individual and are frequently successful.
- Teachers' professional development is linked closely to the school's priorities, particularly its responsibilities for keeping pupils safe. Good induction processes ensure that staff receive the correct training to help them meet statutory requirements and do their job well. For example, staff have all received up-to-date training in safeguarding. This includes specialist training to meet pupils' needs, and recognised restraint techniques. Staff are able to explain how they would identify and respond to concerns regarding extremism and the possible radicalisation of pupils. They have used this training effectively to support pupils through referrals to appropriate authorities.

- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced. It gives pupils the opportunities to develop their skills through both academic study and a rich diet of other experiences that develop their self-discipline and confidence effectively. Good-quality subject schemes of work support teaching well to meet pupils' needs.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of their school because of their regular and rigorous monitoring. Leaders keep up-to-date records and logs of events within the school, including those that record complaints, incidents of bullying and any use of physical restraint by staff. These records are detailed and well maintained. Leaders evaluate the information they collect during their monitoring activities and use this to inform their judgments of staff performance and the identification of school-development priorities.
- Leaders carefully monitor the progress and attainment of pupils through frequent assessments and use the outcomes to help evaluate the effectiveness of their actions. However, some inconsistency in the recording of this information means that leaders and senior managers cannot easily check the impact of their actions over time. Leaders recognise this is a priority for further improvement and have included it in the school development plan. However, the impact of their actions is not yet evident in the school's records.
- Leaders make effective use of the additional pupil premium funding they receive from local authorities who place pupils in the school, to provide additional enrichment activities that promote and support pupils' learning and achievement. For example, pupil premium funding provides additional music tuition that allows pupils to learn an instrument and collaborate to perform as a band.
- Leaders make good use of the special educational needs funding, which is an intrinsic part of the school fees charged to local authorities, to provide carefully considered provision that meets pupils' social, academic and welfare needs.
- Leaders identify appropriate priorities for development, but their plans do not always contain sufficient detail about the expected outcomes of their actions. Consequently, they cannot always easily check that their actions are having the desired impact.

## **Governance**

- The governance of the school is effective and has ensured that all the independent school standards are met.
- Senior managers from the proprietor company work closely with senior leaders. Pupils trust and know senior managers well because of their frequent visits. Consequently, senior managers have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Senior managers hold the school's senior leadership closely to account through frequent supervisory meetings that link closely to effective performance management procedures.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The proprietors ensure that the school meets all the statutory requirements for safeguarding. There is robust checking of the suitability of adults to work with children in school and appropriate filtering and monitoring of the school's internet provision.

- Highly effective systems, including those to ensure safe and appropriate access to the internet, and meticulous record-keeping ensure that safeguarding information is thorough, detailed and easily accessible to appropriate authorities.
- All staff are vigilant and well trained to protect pupils from potential safeguarding risks, including radicalisation and extremism, because leaders ensure that their skills and knowledge are kept up to date.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Teachers' high expectations, and good subject knowledge, particularly in English, mathematics and science, contribute well to the planning of effective learning. Teachers plan activities carefully to capture pupils' interests and develop skills that will be of use to them in later life. As a result, they capture pupils' attention and focus, and support them well to make good progress. For example, pupils developed their attention to detail by collecting and analysing information and data during frequent practical scientific investigations. The work in pupils' books demonstrates that lessons planned in sequence, particularly in English, mathematics and science, build well upon pupils' prior learning.
- Teachers make good use of questioning to develop pupils' confidence to explain their answers and encourage them to devise strategies to solve many problems they face for themselves. For example, in mathematics the teacher carefully responded to requests for assistance with carefully crafted questions that helped pupils arrive at the answers for themselves.
- Systematic teaching of subjects, including English and mathematics, ensures that pupils build upon their prior learning, increase their levels of confidence and, consequently, make good progress. Pupils, all of whom have education, health and care plans, or a statement of special educational needs, develop a rich vocabulary and communicate articulately because of the effective teaching they receive in English. Teachers effectively help pupils' development of writing by making good use of links to learning in other subjects, such as science, and educational visits to provide pupils with opportunities to apply their writing skills in different contexts.
- Teachers quickly adapt their teaching styles and the curriculum on offer to closely meet the needs of pupils and seize upon pupils' interests so that they make good progress. For example, teachers amended the school's timetable and curriculum offer to provide additional opportunities to study history for those pupils with particular interests in the subject.
- Teachers' effective use of practical activities ensures that pupils consolidate their knowledge and grow in confidence in the application of their skills, particularly in subjects such as science and life skills. For example, pupils worked confidently and safely during a cookery lesson to independently follow complex instructions and apply mathematical measuring skills to create a range of products.
- Pupils' confidence and self-esteem flourish because of the strong relationships they have with their teachers. Staff care deeply for their pupils and ensure that the atmosphere in and out of class is one that encourages pupils' trust and respect. As a result, pupils frequently contribute to class discussions and ask and answer questions maturely.
- Teachers continually assess pupils' progress using well-thought-out criteria linked to

national curriculum and examination board expectations. Teachers use their assessments effectively to amend their planning to address misconceptions.

- Teachers' effective guidance helps pupils to improve their work, while the sensitive manner in which it is delivered ensures that pupils feel safe to fail and learn from their mistakes.
- Teachers make good use of the support from care staff in the adjacent home to continue learning beyond the boundaries of school. Care staff frequently participate in supporting school activities and effectively supervise breaktimes.
- Teachers have more limited knowledge and skills in the teaching of computing. As a result, the opportunities for pupils to study computer science at greater depth are limited.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils overcome many obstacles to their learning, including those relating to their mental health and self-esteem, because of the school's supportive ethos, carefully considered curriculum and effective use of professionals to provide one-to-one support and guidance. Consequently, pupils become committed learners who eagerly talk with visitors about their learning and interests, for example sharing their new-found skills in playing reggae music on the guitar – a skill acquired in additional lessons provided through the pupil premium funding.
- Pupils value the excellent relationships with staff and the effective care and guidance they receive. As a result, pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain and ready for their next stages of education. The wide range of additional activities allows pupils, where possible, to develop their skills for employment and future life. For example, work experience with a local veterans group and work in a college bistro ensures that pupils develop their self-confidence, while learning social and team-building skills. Pupils develop further their social skills and self-discipline through engagement with local youth schemes provided by the local emergency services.
- Leaders emphasise fundamental British values, including the rule of law, respect and tolerance of others and knowledge of British institutions. Pupils participate in democratic processes to choose elements of their curriculum and undertake debates on current affairs at the school's breakfast-club meetings. Pupils develop a balanced view of the rule of law and the need to be personally accountable for actions through teachers' consistent application of school rules. The effective use of the school's reward systems helps pupils to learn right from wrong, and to develop a clear understanding of the consequences of their actions.
- Opportunities for pupils to enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding are ample throughout the school. Pupils study a variety of faiths as well as Christianity, and visit a number of different places of worship. Personal, social, health and economic education lessons ensure that pupils know how to adopt a healthy lifestyle and develop budgeting and other life skills. As a result, pupils are working towards and expected to achieve a recognised qualification in life skills. The effective use of

educational visits, such as those to a variety of museums, places of historical and cultural interest and outdoor adventurous activities, complements and enhances further the lessons taught in school.

- Pupils receive careers guidance from a range of providers. However, the impartiality of this is at times limited due to reliance on it being provided by visits from advisers from a local authority some distance from the school. Leaders recognise that further enhancements to the provision of impartial advice and guidance are still required. Pupils visit a number of different employers and educational establishments to ensure that they are able to make informed choices about their next steps in education or employment. Older pupils are given, where appropriate, good opportunities to apply their learning and develop new skills through placements with employers, or other alternative providers. These carefully chosen, suitably checked, and closely monitored placements meet the needs and expectations of each individual pupil.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils' conduct around the school is good and their manners frequently exemplary. Pupils are polite, welcoming and respectful of adults and each other.
- The school's behaviour policy is highly effective in modifying many pupils' previously challenging behaviour. The effective and consistent use of the behaviour policy reinforces and rewards positive behaviour, while also making clear what is and is not acceptable. This has resulted in significant reductions in any pupils' inclination to behave poorly. As a result, there have been zero exclusions from the school since the last inspection, and a substantial reduction in the number of physical interventions performed by staff in line with the school's policy.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the different types of bullying, including the use of homophobic terms and online abuse, and know that bullying is wrong. For example, in one lesson where a pupil used a homophobic term, other pupils were quick to act to condemn its use. Pupils say that they nearly always get along well with each other but are confident that teachers and other adults would deal quickly and effectively with any instances of bullying if they did occur.
- Pupils are keen to attend and most absences from school are for appropriate reasons, such as medical or legal appointments.
- Leaders and the proprietor monitor attendance closely. They ensure that they quickly check and meticulously record reasons for absence and that all appropriate authorities receive notification of the pupil's absence.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning. However, pupils' development of more advanced skills, for example in managing and driving their own learning in order to achieve their aspirations, are not yet fully developed.

## Outcomes for pupils

Good

- All pupils make strong progress from their starting points in a wide variety of subjects, particularly in English, mathematics and science, because of the effective teaching, support and guidance they receive. As a result, the gaps between their attainment and that of other pupils nationally are closing quickly.
- The school's assessments and work in pupils' books show that pupils' progress since joining the school is rapid, particularly in reading, mathematics and science. Gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding are diminishing quickly and securely. Consequently, although their attainment is below that of their peers nationally, nearly all pupils are making up ground.
- Pupils have good basic skills in literacy and are able to communicate effectively and with confidence. Pupils have good basic number skills and are able to apply them confidently, for example in answering questions requiring them to analyse information represented in graphs or to solve written calculation problems relating to time and money.
- Pupils benefit from additional therapeutic support provided by the school, which complements the high levels of effective support in the classrooms. Pupils participate in activities, including outdoor education, water sports, catering, and horse-riding skills, and programmes that link to their personal interests and promote social development and self-discipline.
- In 2015 and 2016, there were no pupils who completed key stage 4 or key stage 5.
- Pupils currently in Year 11 are completing accredited qualifications in English, mathematics, science and life skills. Additionally, some pupils are expected to achieve further qualifications, for example in catering, from their alternative placement.
- Pupils make good progress in reading and quickly improve their reading skills. They become proficient readers because of effective support and appropriate resources provided for them.
- Pupils' progress and attainment in computing is less strong than in other subjects because there are limited opportunities for pupils to study at greater depth the more technical elements of computer science in order to equip them for the modern workplace.



## School details

Unique reference number	131379
DfE registration number	354/6036
Inspection number	10012914

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 independent special school
School category	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	4
Number of part-time pupils	1
Proprietor	Hexagon Care Services
Acting Headteacher	S Jarvis
Annual fees (day pupils)	£25,740
Telephone number	03336 006600
Website	None
Email address	<a href="mailto:cedarlodge.headteacher@hexagoncare.com">cedarlodge.headteacher@hexagoncare.com</a>
Date of previous inspection	18–19 June 2013

## Information about this school

- Cedar Lodge, formerly known as Primrose Cottage, is a small independent special school with associated residential accommodation for pupils with complex needs, including learning needs, from 11 to 18 years of age. It moved to its current site in 2015.
- There are currently four pupils on roll. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. At the time of the inspection, there were no pupils in key stage 5.
- The acting headteacher took up their post two days before the inspection to cover the maternity leave of the substantive headteacher.
- The school does not have a website.
- The school uses Tameside College as an alternative provider of education.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was conducted with one day's notice to the school.
- The inspector observed learning throughout the school, checked the school's compliance with the independent school standards and looked at samples of pupils' work across a range of subjects.
- The inspector held meetings with leaders, senior managers of the proprietary company, and teachers in the school. The inspector held a telephone conversation with a senior manager of the alternative provision used by the school.
- The inspector scrutinised an extensive range of school documentation, including policies, planning, information provided to governors, documentation relating to training and information about the progress, behaviour and attendance of pupils in the school. He looked at the school's single central record of employment checks.
- There were no responses to the online parent questionnaire, Parent View.
- There were no responses to the staff questionnaire. There were no responses to the online pupil questionnaire.
- The inspector made a thorough tour of the school.

## Inspection team

John Nixon, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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