

Woodland Grange

Loxwood Road, Alfold, Surrey GU6 8HP

Inspection Dates

17 May 2017

Overall outcome

The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e) and 3(g)

- At the last full inspection, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment was found to be inadequate and did not meet the needs of pupils at the school. Staff were not held to account for pupils' outcomes.
- Following the first progress monitoring inspection, some standards remained unmet. Systems put in place in the summer last year were too new to provide leaders with the information needed for them to monitor and evaluate pupils' outcomes. Baseline assessments were in place but insufficient time had elapsed to judge whether the quality of education was fully effective.
- School leaders have now implemented changes to the way in which the quality of teaching is checked. Observations by leaders of the quality of teaching are now based on published teaching standards and areas for whole-school improvement. Leaders take into account a variety of evidence to inform them of where teaching is strongest and where it could be better. For example, leaders observe learning in lessons, look at pupils' work with staff and evaluate the progress made by pupils.
- School leaders and directors have strengthened the procedures for managing staff performance so that it will be clearly linked to whole-school areas for improvement, including improving the quality of teaching and raising pupils' attainment. At the moment it is too soon to evaluate the effect this might have on raising standards.
- Teachers have more opportunity to share good practice with each other and talk about pupils' learning and progress, which helps them to identify how to better meet pupils' needs. Leaders are seeking ways to build collaboration with other schools to share practice and to check that they assess pupils' performance correctly.
- The quality of teaching has continued to improve as a result of actions taken by leaders. Staff appointed at the start of the academic year are more accountable for pupils' progress and attainment, and are, therefore, increasingly effective in planning activities that meet the academic needs of pupils.
- In most subjects, pupils have targets that provide them with guidance about how to achieve the next steps in their learning so that their attainment rises. Some staff provide

pupils with clear guidance about what they have done well and what they need to do to make their work even better. Pupils act upon this advice to increase the progress that they make.

- Pupils are frequently taught in pairs or on a one-to-one basis. Staff provide learning opportunities that closely match pupils' interests in order to spark their imaginations and engage them in learning. Very positive relationships between staff and pupils engender a calm and purposeful environment in which pupils can learn and make progress.
- Where teaching is strongest, pupils acquire knowledge and skills progressively to make certain that they build on what they know step by step. In these lessons, pupils have many opportunities to apply what they know in a range of ways to practise their skills and deepen their understanding. For example, pupils use their prior knowledge of number and calculation to reason and solve mathematical problems.
- The majority of staff have secure subject knowledge, some of whom impart this knowledge to pupils very well. Where this is less strong, leaders are providing staff with additional support and opportunities to visit other providers, to improve their skills and expertise. Encouragingly, staff responsible for teaching have a desire to strengthen their skills because they are ambitious for pupils.
- Most staff make certain that pupils are clear about what they are learning and why, and activities are well matched to helping pupils achieve the learning intention. For example, in a careers lesson, pupils prepared for an interview by scanning an online advertisement for pertinent information so that their response to the job advert was relevant to the needs of the company. Occasionally, when the learning intention is less clear, pupils flit from one activity to another, making less progress as a result.
- The school's timetable is rigidly adhered to. Pupils access a broad curriculum which provides them with emerging opportunities to reinforce their English and mathematical skills in all subjects. The outdoor environment is used very well to enhance pupils' learning experience and to bring learning opportunities to life. For example, pupils gain insights about caring relationships and parenthood by studying the behaviour of birds in the school's aviary. Pupils develop skills in personification by learning how to assign human characteristics to the school's 15 chickens.
- Questioning is used effectively by most staff to deepen pupils' understanding. Staff allow pupils sufficient time to think about their answers and instil trusting attitudes in pupils so that they are prepared to 'have a go' even when they find work tricky.
- Pupils are proud of their achievements, sharing their work and performing musically to adults. This is testament to the tangible transformation in pupils' behaviour and feelings of self-worth during their time at the school.
- Pupils are able to engage in their learning and frequently remain focused on their work. Pupils are resilient and respectful and are increasingly aspirational for themselves. As such, they are developing positive attributes that prepare them well for the next stage in their education.

Paragraph 4

- During the last full inspection, systems to monitor pupils' progress and achievement over time were not effective. Leaders' evaluations of the school's effectiveness were inaccurate and paid little regard to pupils' outcomes.
- At the time of the previous progress monitoring inspection, this part of the independent school standards continued to be unmet. This was because systems to provide evidence of pupils' outcomes were not fully established or proven to be effective.
- A system for tracking the progress and achievement of pupils has been introduced across a range of subjects. This is helping staff to plan more carefully for the needs of pupils because they are able to identify gaps in knowledge and target next steps in pupils' learning. However, there is still more work to do to ensure that staff use this information consistently well to ensure that pupils' progress is strong across all subjects.
- Pupils' ability on entry to the school varies greatly and is often dependent on their previous educational experience. Most pupils are working at a level which is below that expected for a pupils of their chronological age. Pupils make effective progress in reading and writing, and especially in mathematics, as a result of the school's persistent approach to helping pupils develop positive attitudes to learning and improving teaching across the school.
- Pupils typically leave the school with a range of Assessment and Qualification Alliance (AQA) module units, Functional Skills Awards and Entry Level Certificates. Occasionally, pupils achieve GCSEs in subjects that reflect their strengths and interests. Leaders ensure that pupils have access to other providers if they are unable to offer an accreditation at which pupils particularly excel, such as a GCSE in physical education.
- All standards that were checked in this part of the independent school standards are met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)

- At the last full inspection, the quality of leadership and management of the school was found to be inadequate. Many of the independent school standards were not met.
- The first progress monitoring inspection found that there had been many improvements at the school since the last full inspection, but because not all of the standards checked as part of that inspection were met, the standards in part 8 were also not met.
- Leaders have galvanised staff in their determination to bring about improvement. Senior leaders and directors have responded proactively to the findings of the previous full inspection and first progress monitoring inspection. As a result, all standards that were previously unmet are now met.
- Leaders have engendered a culture of learning throughout the school. Their ambitious hopes for pupils' future lives, academically and socially, are shared by staff, directors and, importantly, pupils.
- Particular progress has been made with regard to the behaviour and welfare of pupils. Leaders have introduced a system to track the progress pupils are making in their

personal development and transferable skills for effective learning, such as resilience and growing healthy attitudes towards themselves and others. The school's effective work in these areas has paid dividends. Pupils are learning to regulate their own behaviour and emotions. Consequently, the number of behaviour incidents and the use of derogatory language have dramatically reduced. During this inspection, no incidents of poor behaviour were observed.

- The effectiveness of the board of directors has improved. The chair of the board has worked hard to recruit directors who have the skills and expertise necessary to challenge leaders about the school's improvement journey and to offer practical support. Directors help leaders to identify areas of the school's work that could be better, for example in relation to the performance management of staff.
- Robust procedures are in place to ensure that safeguarding is effective. Safeguarding practice is buttressed by strong relationships. Staff know the needs of pupils and their families very well.
- Leaders have made certain that policies relating to child protection and wider safeguarding issues, such as anti-bullying, are in line with current legislation and guidelines and that they are implemented consistently by staff.
- Leaders have taken action to ensure that staff access training relating to protecting young people, such as training about child sexual exploitation. Because of this, staff confidently follow school policy and practice. Leaders are tenacious in their pursuit of best outcomes for the most vulnerable pupils. They work very closely with families to ensure that pupils attend school as often as they should so that they make positive progress in their learning and to protect them from harm. For example, leaders have regularly gone to great lengths to visit pupils' homes to reinforce the message of good attendance to pupils and their families.
- All standards that were checked in this part of the independent school standards are met.

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 that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

School Details

Unique reference number	135999
DfE registration number	936/6277
Inspection number	10026611

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 day school
School status	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	7 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	8
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	2
Number of part-time pupils	1
Proprietor	Sussex Educare Limited
Chair	Amanda Rogers
Executive principal	Simon Reynolds
Annual fees (day pupils)	£45,000–£70,000
Telephone number	01403 752350
Website	www.woodlandgrangeschool.com
Email address	info@woodlandgrangeschool.com
Date of previous standard inspection	1–3 December 2015

Information about this school

- Woodland Grange School is situated in extensive grounds in a rural setting close to the village of Alford in Surrey. The school has a range of animals, such as chickens and rabbits, which are cared for by staff and pupils.
- Woodland Grange is a day school providing education for up to 18 pupils aged between seven and 19 years of age, all of whom have special educational needs relating to social,

emotional and mental health difficulties. Some pupils have very complex needs. All pupils joined the school with challenging behaviours and have experienced disruption to their education.

- The school aims to 'create a caring community where a young person achieves their potential academically, socially and emotionally'.
- There are currently eight pupils on roll, aged between 10 and 19 years, who all have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. All pupils are referred and funded by local authorities.
- Few pupils are disadvantaged and qualify for additional funding (for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after).
- Both the executive principal and vice-principal have been in post since January 2016, joining the school after the last full inspection when the school's overall effectiveness was judged to be inadequate.
- There have been a number of changes to the board of directors since the last full inspection. Most staff at the school have been appointed since the last inspection.
- One pupil who is under 16 years of age is dual-registered with another school.
- One student in the sixth form attends a registered provision on a part-time basis.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- This was the second progress monitoring inspection since the last full inspection.
- As a progress monitoring inspection, this inspection was carried out without notice.
- The school's action plan to address the failings identified in the last full inspection was approved by the Department for Education on 2 June 2016 and prior to the first progress monitoring inspection.
- The inspector observed learning in all classes. Visits to lessons were jointly conducted with senior leaders.
- Discussions were held with the executive principal, the vice-principal, the pastoral manager and the school administrator. The inspector also met with the chair of the board of directors.
- The inspector examined a range of school documents, including those relating to school improvement, the school's own evaluation of the quality of teaching, and pupils' outcomes.
- The inspector spoke to pupils informally during the school day.
- The inspector looked at pupils' work in books in writing; mathematics; enterprise; and personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education.
- The inspector reviewed the checks made on staff about their suitability to work with children and discussed the effectiveness of safeguarding with the school's designated safeguarding lead.
- The inspector examined the quality of the information provided by the school on its website.

Inspection team

Abigail Birch, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Parent View

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2017