

The Orchard

Unit 1 Sargon Way, Grimsby Business Park, Grimsby, North East Lincolnshire DN37 9PH

Inspection dates

13–15 March 2018

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Good |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Requires improvement |
| Outcomes for pupils | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Directors, leaders and staff have an absolute passion and commitment to do the best for their pupils. They have created a learning environment where pupils feel supported and safe. Leaders ensure that the independent school standards are consistently met.
- All staff are exceptionally well trained, especially in behaviour management and safeguarding. As a result, pupils who have had unsuccessful experiences in mainstream schools move back into learning and many make strong progress.
- The school has a unique thematic curriculum and assessment model. It proficiently integrates functional skills with personal development, and offers pupils many valuable learning experiences.
- The growing number of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities develop confidence and make strong progress. This is because of the care that teachers take to meet the detailed requirements of their individual learning plans.
- Skilled teachers plan interesting lessons tailored to pupils' needs. Therefore, pupils quickly develop resilience, skills and understanding.
- Pupils have a well-developed understanding of British values. An innovative 'culture club' and thoughtful programme of visits enhance pupils' appreciation of the world.
- Pupils receive high-quality, impartial careers advice. They say that the school has raised their aspirations. Many now have plans to move on to further education or training at the end of key stage 4.
- The calm, supportive and welcoming school ethos enables many pupils to improve their behaviour rapidly. Pupils want to be there, and consequently, attendance quickly improves, often from very low levels.
- Although many pupils change their behaviour significantly while at the school, it is not yet consistently good. Similarly, improvements in attendance are not always sustained by all pupils.

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?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - further developing the school’s policy and strategy in relation to pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities to meet the demands of this growing area of the school’s provision
 - refining the school’s self-evaluation and development planning, so that leaders are astutely aware of what the school does well particularly in relation to the impact of actions on pupils’ progress over time.
- Develop strategies to continue to make rapid and sustained improvements to pupils’ behaviour and attendance.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders ensure that the school consistently meets all of the independent school standards.
- Leaders have developed a unique curriculum and assessment model. This is broad and balanced, with a strong focus on English and mathematics. Schemes of work are in place and illustrate the innovative way in which teachers integrate personal and social development, British values and careers advice. These inspirational programmes encourage pupils to be good citizens.
- A varied programme of motivating visits and activities extends pupils' experiences and has a positive impact on their development and progress. These range from museums and parks to restaurants. Pupils take part in a wide variety of physical activities from ice-skating to swimming and badminton.
- Since registration, the school has invested in staffing, high levels of training and modern resources. There is a welcoming and colourful learning environment. Training has focused mainly on behaviour management, safeguarding and developing staff skills in challenging and stimulating pupils to help them make strong progress both personally and academically.
- Leaders have established a smaller annexe a few miles from the main school. This is the 'nurture centre', where teachers work with younger and more vulnerable pupils, including some with education, health and care plans. It is well resourced and helps pupils to develop confidence and resilience in a safe environment.
- Leaders have expertise in meeting the needs of pupils in care and pupils who have special educational needs, such as autism and attention deficit disorders. As a result, the number of pupils on roll who have special educational needs and/or disabilities has grown to around one-third since registration.
- Middle leaders have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. They are a strong presence around the school. They are also integral to the implementation of the curriculum, behaviour management policy and the performance management of other staff.

Governance

- Directors are an integral part of the life of the school. They are passionate about the school. They work hard to give young people, who have had very poor educational experiences, opportunities for personal development, to learn, and to move to better futures. They know pupils and their needs well, and are involved in safeguarding, monitoring and evaluation.
- A new management committee of independent experts covering key areas of the school's provision is in place. This group has started to conduct regular audits, and acts as a 'critical friend' of the school. They aim to ensure that all aspects are up to date and compliant with the independent school standards, but it is too early to assess its impact on strategic development.

- Directors make thorough and accurate evaluations of the school's performance. They have detailed improvement plans covering all areas of the school's provision. The school is progressing at a rapid pace. However, current processes do not enable leaders to concentrate on pupils' progress in the fine detail they would wish. Similarly, leaders acknowledge that additional planning is needed to meet the needs of a growing number of pupils on roll with education, health and care plans.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The safeguarding policy is available on the school's website and is compliant with the latest government guidance. Leaders ensure that all staff receive safeguarding training. Staff are knowledgeable about their roles in protecting pupils. All staff receive training about the government's 'Prevent' duty. Pupils learn about radicalisation and terrorism in their personal and social development lessons. Wall displays, for example the 'hot topics' board, help raise pupils' awareness of world events.
- Leaders carry out all appropriate checks on adults who work with children. Leaders record these checks on a single central record.
- Leaders foster a strong safeguarding culture. Pupils say that they feel safe and know that they have staff to speak to if they need help. Staff have an acute awareness of the local risk factors including the criminal exploitation of children. They take every opportunity to teach pupils how to stay safe. A powerful display including pupils' work in the school annexe titled 'Keep your hands off our pants' explores the dangers of child sexual exploitation.
- The school has appropriate filters in place to protect pupils from accessing inappropriate material from the internet.
- Leaders have thorough systems for risk assessment and the management of health and safety. This is particularly evident in vocational areas where potential hazards are many. Teachers provide personal protective equipment for pupils to keep them safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers plan lessons effectively. Every lesson plan considers, in detail, each pupil's needs and how they will make good progress. Where pupils have SEN and/or disabilities, lesson plans state how the teacher will provide support for the pupil. Teachers meet the needs of these pupils and those of children who are looked after seamlessly with those of other pupils.
- Pupils' work matches their ability. The school's uncomplicated system of bronze to platinum levels to recognise achievement encourages progress. Teachers manage well the pace of their lessons to maintain attention and avoid distractions. The high ratio of staff to learners ensures that individuals receive appropriate support to overcome their barriers to learning.
- Teachers are effective at managing behaviour. They are calm, and adapt their voices, questioning and body language to avoid pupil frustration and confrontation.

- Lessons are engaging, often contain a 'fun' element and usually challenge pupils well. A strength of the best lessons is the skilful inclusion of wider issues and ideas relating to personal development. In an English lesson, pupils discussed disability, cultural dress and body language. The same lesson also included numeracy; pupils used a dictionary and read aloud. The teacher also challenged a negative attitude about disability and persuaded pupils to adopt a different point of view.
- Teachers are proficient at ensuring that pupils pay attention to fine details. Thus, in bricklaying pupils' work shows a professional finish. In joinery, pupils pay attention to the accurate sawing of a piece of wood and in English letter writing, how to address different people was discussed.
- Support staff are very effective in their wide-ranging roles. They take part in lessons, for example in role play or working alongside an individual. Support staff also maintain a 'daily log' recording the behaviours and achievements of each pupil. Parents and carers receive these, and leaders check each one against the various plans in place for pupil learning and behaviour. Parents value the regular communication that they have with the school.
- On occasions, teachers work harder than their pupils and parts of lessons lose impact when teachers rely on a script. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally good for the current cohort of pupils who are working up to level 1. Teachers are aware that further subject knowledge development would need to take place if pupils can work at higher levels.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff take every opportunity to promote personal development and welfare. Together with social, moral, spiritual and cultural education, this area is a strength of the school.
- The 'culture club' is a novel way in which the school ensures that pupils engage with religious, cultural and world events. Based on a calendar, the school celebrates each event and incorporates it into activities on that day. Pupils are very aware of items in the news, for example during lunchtime, a group discussed the death of Professor Hawking.
- Throughout the school, there are many displays in both corridors and classrooms. These often contain the very best work that pupils can produce, such as film reviews in English and 'growth trees' showing pupil progress. Displays also celebrate successes, kindness, religious festivals, British values and healthy eating. This reinforces the school's ethos and further extends pupils' appreciation of the wider world.
- Pupils say that there is little bullying. School information confirms this. Pupils are respectful and speak highly of the staff at the school. Many have mature attitudes and value the opportunities that the school has provided in a safe environment.
- The school works hard to promote pupils' emotional and mental health. An independent counselling and mental health worker visits the school each week. There is also a drop-in service which several pupils access. Some pupils receive anger management therapy, which helps them express themselves effectively and calmly.

- Pupils' attitudes to learning and the quality of their written work is variable. Most take pride in their work and can write neatly. However, a small proportion of work is untidy and unfinished.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Many pupils come to the school having behaved very poorly in their previous schools or pupil referral units. School staff are very well trained in behaviour management and school records show that incidents of poor behaviour have reduced rapidly. Disruption in lessons and damage to property is now at a very low level. The need for physical intervention has dropped dramatically and pupils now rarely abscond from lessons.
- The lack of graffiti and damage emphasises the pride that pupils take in their school. Pupils respect the many wall displays, art, photographs and work of others in both corridors and classrooms.
- When received, attendance information from pupils' previous schools shows that most pupils had very poor attendance records. In several cases, pupils have not attended school for significant periods. Some pupils have now significantly improved their attendance and have sustained their progress. More pupils are now completing full weeks at the school. Several pupils say that they now want to come to school and parents have confirmed this.
- The school works hard to encourage good attendance. This includes regular, often daily, contact with parents and incentives at school. The school operates a fleet of cars to bring pupils to school and take them home. This has been significant in improving punctuality and attendance. Drivers also work as support assistants in the school and use the journey to talk to pupils and assess their mood. This helps to manage pupils' behaviour during the school day.
- Leaders agree that while attendance is improving rapidly for some pupils, there is work to do to ensure that attendance improves and persistent absence declines further for all pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Teachers support pupils very well in preparing for their futures. The school has made substantial progress towards the Gatsby Career Benchmarks. This is in line with the new government careers strategy. Leaders embed careers education throughout the school curriculum. Pupils receive impartial advice and support with applications to colleges and training companies.
- Due to the time the school has been open, there are no external tests or examination results to compare pupils' progress to that of their peers nationally. School assessment information and pupils' work seen during the inspection shows that pupils make strong progress in English and mathematics. Progress in other subject areas, including science, though weaker, is good. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress. Assessment folders show that many pupils make strong progress and some make very rapid progress.

- Progress in bricklaying and joinery is very good. Pupils' skills develop rapidly and they soon develop the necessary dexterity to use a variety of tools effectively. Artefacts and photographs highlight the success that pupils enjoy. Many pupils have increased confidence and now aspire to move onto traineeships or apprenticeships in construction. Pupils' artwork is strongly creative. They use a variety of techniques and colours and are proud to see their work on display.
- In English, human and social studies, and personal and social development, pupils' workbooks show progress in extended writing. Sampled work shows increasing sophistication in the use of language. There are also improvements in the use of punctuation, spelling and the ability to give opinions.
- Pupils read with moderate fluency and have good comprehension skills. However, leaders agree that resources are limited and a wider range of material would further support pupils in developing their reading skills.
- Where progress is less secure because of poor attendance, the school's efforts to personalise learning, for example through one-to-one tuition, help individuals to catch up.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 144366 |
| DfE registration number | 812/6005 |
| Inspection number | 10043663 |

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.

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| Type of school | Other Independent School |
| School category | Independent school |
| Age range of pupils | 12 to 16 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 52 |
| Number of part-time pupils | 14 |
| Proprietor | Orchard Training & Education Ltd |
| Chair | Peter Macleod |
| Headteacher | Michael Burton |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | Range from £13,152 to £34,781 |
| Telephone number | 01472 898498 |
| Website | www.orchardhumber.co.uk |
| Email address | info@orchardhumber.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- The Orchard is an independent day school, which is part of Orchard Training and Education Limited. The school is registered as an alternative learning provider to admit up to 50 pupils. The local authority or their mainstream schools, where they remain on roll, refer pupils.
- The school was first registered by the DfE in January 2017. This is its first standard inspection.
- The school currently has two pupils on roll over the registered maximum. This is a temporary event because two places for the reintegration of pupils to a mainstream

school were withdrawn at short notice.

- The school is located on an industrial estate in Grimsby. The school also runs a smaller 'nurture centre' in the town, approximately 3.4 miles from the school.
- Most of the pupils have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and have been excluded or are at risk of permanent exclusion from their mainstream school.
- There are currently 16 pupils on roll who have education, health and care plans.
- Pupils take part in physical education at off-site purpose-built facilities.
- The school does not use any alternative education provision.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out over two and a half days with half a day's notice.
- The inspector toured all buildings currently used by the school, both inside and outside.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning in a range of lessons and made some shorter visits to classrooms. The principal observed lessons jointly with the inspector.
- The inspectors held meetings with the principal, middle leaders, pupils and The Orchard directors.
- The work of several pupils was reviewed.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school was observed. The inspector met formally and informally with pupils.
- The inspector evaluated a range of documentation, including leaders' evaluations of the school and development plans, admissions and attendance registers, policies, monitoring information, child protection and safeguarding information, and minutes of directors' meetings. The inspector also looked closely at all other documents and policies as required as part of the Independent School Standards.
- Consideration was given to the school's evidence of communication with parents. There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. However, the inspector spoke with several parents. Thirty-six staff responded to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

Steve Rogers, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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