

Greenfields School

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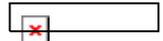
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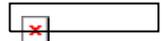
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Introduction and summary

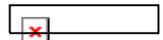


Purpose and scope of the inspection



This inspection was carried out by the Office for Standards in Education under Section 163 of the Education Act 2002 in order to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school



Greenfields School is a small independent special school, offering an educational environment based on therapeutic principles. It is part of the Peper Harow Foundation. The school works closely with the local Peper Harow residential home but also admits pupils who live locally with foster or birth parents. The school, originally established in 1995, moved to its current, purpose built accommodation in 2002. It provides education for up to 15 boys and girls aged between 4 and 11 who have complex behavioural, social and emotional difficulties. Currently there are 12 pupils on roll, all of whom are in public care. Eight pupils have a statement of special educational needs (SEN) and four are undergoing formal assessment. All pupils have experienced disrupted schooling and exclusion.

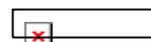
The school aims to re-engage pupils with education, build their self-esteem and develop good social skills. To enable this, it provides a curriculum which aligns with the National Curriculum (NC), group games during playtime and makes break and lunch-times social occasions. Psychotherapy is available for those who require it.

Summary of main findings



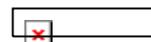
Greenfields School is a small, caring school where individuals are respected, and a good standard of accommodation is provided. Staff know their pupils well and work effectively as a team to try and help pupils resolve their difficulties. Whilst the majority of the teaching is satisfactory, there are some weaknesses in the management of pupils' behaviour. The curriculum is very well planned and the NC features highly in the education provided. Pupils are given sound emotional and academic support to move on to mainstream school or their next placement.

What the school does well



- it provides a comprehensive and well organised induction programme for new pupils;
- it has implemented a very well structured personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme that prepares pupils to develop a better understanding of themselves and their place in society;
- it provides pupils with a broad and balanced range of learning opportunities based on the NC, in order to keep open the possibility for pupils' re-introduction into mainstream schools;
- it has very positive relationships between adults and pupils which contribute greatly to pupils' learning and personal development;
- its class teams work very well together; adults support each other particularly well; and
- it provides staff with detailed information about pupils' academic and personal development.
-

What the school must do in order to comply with the regulations



- review lesson planning, the teaching methods and activities used and the implementation of the school's behaviour management strategy to ensure that time is used efficiently;
- maintain an admission register and attendance registers in accordance with the Education (School Registration) Regulations 1995; and
- address the issues detailed in section 6 of this report.

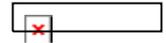
What the school must do to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2002



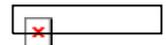
In order to comply with the requirements of the DDA, the school should:

- undertake an audit of accessibility to the premises and draw up a three-year plan to improve access for those with disabilities.

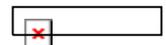
Compliance with the regulations for registration



1. The quality of education provided by the school



The quality of the curriculum



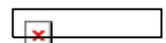
Pupils are provided with a very good quality curriculum that has many strengths. It is based on the requirements of the NC and offers a broad range of learning opportunities. Effective monitoring by the headteacher ensures that the curriculum is balanced and that pupils study all subjects for appropriate amounts of time. The length of the taught week is broadly in line with national recommendations for these age groups.

The school's commitment to equality of opportunity ensures that all subjects are made available to all pupils and that teachers modify and adapt activities to match individual pupils' needs and capabilities. The school is vigilant in ensuring that the curriculum provision identified in pupils' statements of SEN are met fully.

The structure and organisation of the curriculum are greatly enhanced by the quality of planning. All subjects have long-term plans that show the areas to be taught to different age groups. These are supported by termly plans that provide more detail of the topics. These planning arrangements ensure that pupils follow a progressive curriculum as they move through the school and avoid repetition of topics. In particular, there is a strong emphasis on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills through daily English and mathematics lessons. The planning of these subjects is carried out in line with the recommended practice of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. A focus on pupils' personal development permeates the whole curriculum but aspects are promoted especially well through the school's very good PSHE programme. This programme is tailored to the interests of different age groups, and explicitly reflects the school's aims. It includes elements of citizenship, drugs awareness and sex and relationships education that are taught in ways that are appropriate to pupils' ages.

The curriculum prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education as it reflects that being taught in mainstream primary schools. This enables them to transfer into a mainstream primary or to secondary school at the end of Year 6. The PSHE programme and opportunities for pupils to take some responsibility, such as being the class representative on the school council, also contribute effectively to pupils' preparation for moving on to their next school.

The quality of the teaching and assessment



The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. However, there are some weaknesses in the management of pupils' behaviour.

The school has doubled in size since September 2004 with the result that most teaching and support staff are new to the school. Teachers are well qualified and many support staff have qualifications in support or care. A sound staff development programme is in place to ensure that staff are continuing to develop skills in behaviour management.

The best teaching occurs when the subject and the activities required of pupils engage their interest and their behaviour is managed efficiently. This was demonstrated when pupils were studying how quickly, and far reaching the spread of micro-organisms can be following a visit to the toilet. Pupils were engaged in the initial whole group discussion and were highly excited and motivated by the practical, small group work which followed.

All teachers communicate a sense of enthusiasm, respect and concern for pupils which is acknowledged by parents. They plan their lessons using a range of activities and resources. On occasions, however, planning does not take adequate account of the age or the individual needs of each pupil minimising the impact of this enthusiasm. When teaching is less effective it is usually because the school's behaviour management strategies are implemented too late. This results in behaviour which deteriorates to an extent where other pupils' learning is affected and it takes time to re-engage them.

Teachers are supported effectively by classroom assistants who have a clear role in supporting academic work as well as behaviour management. They are knowledgeable about the pupils and the work planned. They take a full and active role during playtime and social meal times.

Resources for teaching are satisfactory and in the best lessons are used very effectively to stimulate pupils' investigative and intellectual skills. For example, when they were making electronic circuits in science, and in history when they tried on gas masks used in the 1939-45 World War and then watched and discussed a television programme on daily life during the war. There are computers in each classroom which, when used, fully engage pupils. Currently they are underused.

The well-structured induction period for each pupil allows a range of academic, emotional and behavioural assessments to be carried out. This provides a firm foundation for measuring pupils' achievement. Termly assessments linked to NC levels of attainment allow pupils' progress to be tracked efficiently. Individual education plans and individual behaviour plans facilitate the monitoring of improvements in behaviour. Pupils make satisfactory progress over time, both academically and behaviourally.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

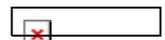
No.

What does the school need to do to comply with the regulations?

In order to comply with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the school should:

- ensure that lessons are well planned to include effective teaching methods, suitable activities, and that time is managed wisely (paragraph 1(3)(c)).

2. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils



Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. The school's commitment to pupils' personal development is evident in the statement of its aims and values and in much of its work.

Teachers provide activities that give pupils a sense of wonder, such as when the teacher of a group of Year 5 and 6 pupils simulated the spread of bacteria with coloured paint. Emotional literacy sessions and circle time put pupils into situations where they have to consider the views and feelings of others. However, on other occasions opportunities are missed. For example, assemblies have a moral or social theme but they do not include a short prayer or a few moments for pupils to think quietly, about the story they have heard. The school's behaviour policy requires pupils to go to a blue chair in the room or to the quiet room when their behaviour is in danger of becoming disruptive. They may take the initiative to do this or be asked to do so by staff. However, at these times teachers do not require pupils to sit quietly and reflect upon their behaviour. Instead, all too frequently, they continue to make comments and behave in ways that disrupt others.

The school's behaviour policy encourages pupils to recognise which behaviour is acceptable and which is not, and to recognise right from wrong. Elements of the PSHE programme also contribute to developing pupils' moral awareness; topics such as 'interpreting right and wrong' and 'making rules and laws' help to develop respect for rules and the law.

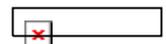
The school's philosophy is designed to promote social awareness through developing pupils' knowledge of the idea of individual responsibility and their understanding of living in both the school and the wider community. There are many successful social occasions in school, such as morning tea and toast sessions and lunchtimes. These are pleasant occasions where pupils show good manners and a developing understanding of social conformities such as sharing, helping others and taking turns. Pupils learn about features of the wider community in which they live through trips out of school and taught sessions on aspects of citizenship. They study community services, the idea of local democracy and the role of pressure groups.

Pupils are exposed to a variety of influences from their own and other cultures in English, art, music and religious education. Focused topics in the PSHE programme, such as 'different customs' and 'stereotypes' also contribute effectively to pupils' multi-cultural awareness and appreciation of other faiths. Other school activities also complement their cultural understanding, for example, the recent Art Week included Chinese art, Gambian drums and Indian dance, and Book Week had as its theme 'Stories from around the World', which included a performance of a South African fairy story from a visiting puppet theatre group.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

3. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils



The school makes good provision for the welfare, health and safety of its pupils. It has an appropriate range of policies and procedures that are designed to ensure that pupils are well looked after and safe. Staffing levels are high and staff are deployed efficiently providing sufficient adults in each classroom and in supervision at breaks and lunchtime. It is a caring community, taking its responsibilities seriously.

A detailed policy promoting good behaviour identifies a varied and complex system of rewards that pupils can achieve and explains the sanctions that are used in the case of misbehaviour. However, the policy does not indicate sanctions for extreme cases; there are no references to procedures for

excluding pupils, on a fixed term or permanent basis. The school maintains a written record of sanctions applied, along with logs of minor incidents and restraints that have been applied.

All child protection procedures are in place and recent staff training supports their implementation. A comprehensive anti-bullying policy ensures that pupils know how to respond to being bullied and outlines how the school will deal with such matters. The medical care policy includes First Aid procedures and identifies those staff members who have been trained in basic First Aid.

The school has a range of effective policies covering all aspects of health and safety. Records show that electrical appliances are checked routinely and fire safety equipment is tested and inspected regularly. A similar level of care is taken when pupils go off site. The school has produced clear guidelines that show explicit procedures staff must follow when arranging and conducting trips and visits out of school.

Although the school maintains an admission register and attendance registers for each class, these are not complete or up-to-date. All the details required upon admission are not entered, and pupils' absences are not recorded consistently in the required format. The school has not yet produced a draft accessibility plan in relation to the Disability Discrimination Act 2002.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

The school meets all but one of the requirements.

What does the school need to do to comply with the regulations?

In order to comply with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the school should:

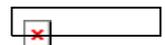
- maintain an admission register and attendance registers in accordance with the Education (School Registration) Regulations 1995 (paragraph 3(9)).

What does the school need to do to comply with the DDA?

In order to comply with the requirements of the DDA the school should:

- undertake an audit of accessibility to the premises and draw up a three-year plan to improve access for those with disabilities.

4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff

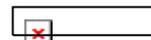


Peper Harow South Ltd is the proprietor of the school. Prior to appointment a check is carried out on prospective members of staff to confirm their identity, medical fitness, references and previous employment. All staff have received clearance from the Criminal Records Bureau at an enhanced level.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes

5. The suitability of the premises and accommodation



Overall the quality of the premises and accommodation is good. They are maintained to a high standard and are clean and hygienic.

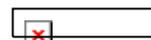
The school is located in a two-storey, purpose-built building close to the market town of Tenterden. It provides three classrooms, two small rooms used for therapy and one-to-one work, a small dining room, two administrative rooms and a staffroom. There are sufficient toilets for boys and girls, and a separate toilet and shower for staff which has disabled access. To the front of the school is an enclosed, large, hard-core playground which is used for games and at the rear is a smaller enclosed grassed area with patio which can be used for play in dry weather.

The decoration is bright and cheerful and the furniture and flooring are of a good quality, suitable for pupils of primary age. The numerous display boards in the corridors and classrooms display and celebrate pupils' work and there is no evidence of maltreatment or abuse by pupils.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

6. The quality of information for parents and other partners



The school provides parents and carers with a comprehensive pack of information that generally meets the regulations. This explains in detail the school's therapeutic philosophy, with clearly stated aims and ethos. In addition, parents are given information about the school's approach to the management of behaviour and the sanctions that will be applied in cases of misbehaviour. However, this section does not state the school's policy on exclusion. No information is provided about the nature of behaviour that might trigger a fixed term or permanent exclusion and nor are there details about the procedure that would be followed in such circumstances.

The overwhelming majority of parents believe that they are kept well informed about their children's progress. The school achieves this through annual reports to parents, although these do not contain information about pupils' attainment. Parents receive this information from reports the school submits to reviews held for Looked After Children and at annual reviews of statements of SEN. All pupils either have a statement of SEN or are undergoing formal assessment in order for their local education authority (LEA) to determine whether one is required. The school plays a very active role in this process, both by carrying out a number of assessments itself and by co-ordinating the procedure in liaison with the LEA.

Parents are much less certain about their understanding of the school's procedure for dealing with complaints. The prospectus contains details of the complaints procedure but the school does not make available the number of formal complaints it has received during the preceding school year. Neither does it provide sufficient detail about the income received and the expenditure incurred to LEAs who are funding pupils.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

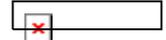
The school meets most but not all of the requirements.

What does the school need to do to comply with the regulations?

In order to comply with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the school should:

- provide parents of pupils and of prospective pupils with particulars of the school's policy for exclusions (paragraph 6(2)(e));
- provide parents of pupils and of prospective pupils with details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year (paragraph 6 (2)(j)); and
- provide local education authorities with a breakdown of the income received and the expenditure incurred for each pupil they fund (paragraph 6(7)).

7. The effectiveness of the school's procedures for handling complaints



The school has a comprehensive complaints policy which meets the regulations fully. It allows for a complaint to be made and considered on an informal basis, initially, but there are also appropriate formal procedures in place to ensure that complaints are considered fairly and objectively. Time-scales for action and the procedure which will be followed if a complaint is received from a pupil, parent/carer or agency are made clear and a flow chart is included for quick and easy reference. At the formal complaint level, the school involves an independent person, accessed through an agreement with the Charterhouse Group of Therapeutic Communities. The interests and well being of the pupil are considered to be of fundamental importance.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

School details



Name of school:	Greenfields School		
DfES ref number:	886/6084		
Type of school:	Special School		
Status:	Independent		
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11 years		
Gender of pupils:	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils):	Boys 6,	Girls 4,	Total 10
Number on roll (part-time pupils):	Boys 1,	Girls 1,	Total 2
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need:	Boys 5,	Girls 3,	Total 0
Annual fees (day pupils):	£27,504		
Address of school:	Tenterden Road Biddenden Kent TN23 8BS		
E-mail address:	greenfieldsschool@bopenworld.com		
Telephone number:	01580 292523		
Fax number:	01580 292354		
Headteacher:	Ms A Waterhouse		
Proprietor:	Peper Harow South LTD		
Lead Inspector:	Ms M Bowden		
Dates of inspection:	17 - 20 January 2005		

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