

# Queenswood School

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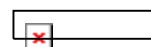
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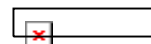
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#### **Introduction and summary**

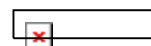


#### **Purpose and scope of the inspection**



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.

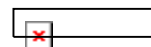
#### **Information about the school**



Queenswood School, which is situated on four sites, provides education for a maximum of 34 pupils with emotional difficulties and challenging behaviour in the age-range 9 to 16. The school has two main sites: Dinmore, located at Hope under Dinmore, near Leominster, providing education for 15 Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 pupils, and Callow Hill, 13 miles away near Ledbury, which caters for 16 Key Stage 4 pupils. Fairview, near Ross on Wye, serves as an assessment unit for pupils admitted with specific needs and accommodates two pupils. Trecorras is an additional unit on the site of the group's headquarters in Ross-on-Wye. It has been purchased recently to accommodate one Year 11 pupil with very specific special needs. In December 2004 the school was taken over by Priory Education Services. At the time of inspection the school had applied for approval as a school for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

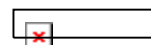
There is an overall head of education and each site has a head of school. Some teachers work at all four sites as peripatetic staff. At the time of inspection there were 14 pupils on roll, 7 boys and 7 girls, all of whom are accommodated in the school's residential provision. The residential provision was not included in this inspection but was last inspected in July 2004 by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and received a positive report. Many pupils are admitted as emergency placements by social services departments from across the country. A small number of pupils come from minority ethnic and racial communities. Nine pupils have current statements of special educational needs (SEN) for emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. The attainment levels of the pupils fall within the normal range of national expectations.

## Summary of main findings



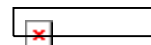
Queenswood School is a good school which is determined to improve further. There is a positive and supportive atmosphere which encourages learning and achievement. The school is organised effectively. It provides an appropriate curriculum which is matched carefully to pupils' needs. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with many very good features. In the few instances where unsatisfactory teaching was observed, behaviour management strategies were not always being implemented effectively. The staff provide good support for pupils' care and welfare. The assessment procedures are very good and used purposefully to plan for pupils' further development. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Strenuous efforts have been made to improve the educational accommodation for the pupils which, in spite of a few shortcomings, is satisfactory overall. The newly purchased and customised provision at Trecorras meets all requirements of accommodation and health and safety. Links with parents and other partners are good.

## What the school does well



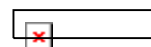
- it provides opportunities for pupils to make very good progress, which is reflected in their academic achievement;
- its provision of activities which enrich the curriculum is a very strong feature of the school and impacts positively on the pupils' learning and social development;
- its good quality teaching provides a positive educational experience for pupils, many of whom are initially resistant to learning;
- the assessment of pupils' educational needs and potential, and the care and support they receive, is of a high quality; and
- its provision for pupils' social, moral and cultural development through a variety of programmes, extra-curricular activities and role modelling by staff is good.

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



- provide all relevant information to parents and partners as outlined in section 6 of this report.

## Next steps

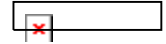


Whilst not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

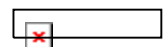
- improve the monitoring of teaching to ensure that good practice is shared and that

- o all teaching is at least satisfactory;
- o continue to improve the teaching accommodation; and
- o ensure that there is a more consistent approach to managing the behaviour of the younger pupils.

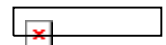
## Compliance with the regulations for registration



### 1. The quality of education provided by the school



#### The quality of the curriculum



At all key stages the curriculum has an appropriate breadth and balance to meet the needs of the pupils. All subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education (RE) and a programme of personal social and health education (PSHE) are taught. The planning draws on National Curriculum guidelines, which are suitably adapted to meet the needs of the pupils. The curriculum for older pupils, whose needs and tolerance of formal schooling vary considerably, has been enhanced by the introduction of the Awards Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) programme. The framework for the teaching of PSHE is good and includes a module on citizenship. Careers education is provided through the PSHE programme and supported by the Connexions service. Work experience for older pupils takes place in the local community and, on occasions, within the school setting.

The outdoor pursuits programme is well managed and taught by a specialist instructor. It is used effectively to promote pupils' self-esteem and enhance their personal, physical and social development. The school makes good use of the local community to extend curricular experiences for all its pupils, for example a small number of the more vulnerable pupils attend a local football club. There are frequent visits to local supermarkets, the library and other places of geographical and historical interest. Pupils develop, with varying levels of support from education and care staff, the daily living skills needed for adult life. In addition good links with local colleges enable an increasing number of pupils attend vocational courses.

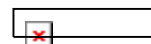
Since the last inspection the school has made significant progress in introducing external accreditation for its older pupils. Pre-vocational and vocational courses are available, including Entry-level programmes for the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), and the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ). The ASDAN modules have a positive impact on the curriculum, particularly in encouraging pupils to work with others to develop their independent skills and take responsibility for their own learning.

The school is making good use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning across a range of subjects. Displays of pupils' work show a good level of skills in this subject. Many of the older pupils use the internet skilfully as a research tool. Specific and individual literacy lessons have been introduced to help younger pupils improve their reading and writing skills.

The school aspires to work more closely with the care staff to extend and reinforce pupils' learning.

Activities after school are run mainly by the care staff and are appropriately organised. Teachers and care teams communicate effectively with each other through daily handover meetings and they share weekly written reports. There is some joint objective setting. The teachers set homework which is supervised by care staff.

### **The quality of the teaching and assessment**



The quality of teaching is good overall. The majority of lessons seen were good or very good. Two unsatisfactory lessons were observed. The most significant feature of the very good teaching is the high expectations teachers have about what pupils can achieve. This has a very positive impact on their learning. In spite of their histories of disrupted education and, for some, their initial resistance to learning, the majority of pupils quickly show a strong impetus to learn, enjoy their lessons and are proud of their achievements. The outcomes are that, by the time they are sixteen when they are entered for the GCSE examinations, well over half the pupils achieve five A\* - G passes, and all achieve at least two. This is in line with many of their peers in mainstream schools.

The knowledge the staff have of each pupil's abilities, needs and potential underpins the good and very good teaching achieved in the majority of lessons. This knowledge is used skilfully to fill in the many gaps in pupils' education. Work is modified appropriately to the needs of each pupil and outcomes of lessons routinely evaluated. Assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is very good and a strength of the school. Data on pupils' achievements is electronically recorded and analysed effectively to set detailed and specific targets in individual education plans and to plan work. These assessments are used informatively when planning new activities.

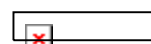
Cross-curricular links are used very effectively in lessons. For example, a younger pupil was set the task of designing and building a waterproof shelter for some model figures. The exercise required skills in mathematics, science, design and technology (DT) and ICT. Having completed the small prototype, the task was extended to building a shelter in the grounds. Elements of history and geography were then introduced to explore the variety of shelters used by different groups of people throughout time. The whole project was successfully planned to provide the pupil with a wide range of learning opportunities, through a stimulating activity which was also fun.

Relationships between adults and pupils are good overall and based on mutual respect. Staff treat all pupils fairly and sympathetically. Where lessons were unsatisfactory it was because the attitude and behaviour of a few younger pupils were very inappropriate and went unchecked. Some staff do not have the skills to manage such challenging behaviour and teaching and learning are adversely affected as a consequence. Where behaviour is managed well, staff are consistent in their practice. They have effective strategies to avoid major incidents of seriously challenging behaviour by dealing immediately with minor ones. This is more apparent with older pupils, where high expectations of appropriate behaviour results in pupils showing maturity and good manners. They improve their behaviour and social skills, learning to associate their success with praise and rewards which they value.

#### ***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

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



The school makes good provision overall for the pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It is enhanced by the well-structured programmes of personal, social and health education. Pupils are given opportunities to explore issues such as behaviour, relationships, and feelings, as well as guidance on how to care for themselves. RE, art, music and history lessons provide appropriate opportunities for pupils to learn about their own culture and the faiths, beliefs and cultures of other nations. Lessons in citizenship provide pupils with an awareness and knowledge of public institutions and services and care of the environment.

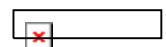
The pupils have opportunities to study other cultures through the programme of international visits, where they learn about the customs, food and language of other countries. The school has recently introduced an international day where pupils study some of the social aspects of a European country. Multi-cultural awareness is addressed appropriately and the school endeavours to prepare the pupils effectively for life in a multi-cultural society. The provision for pupils' moral development is supported well by the school's system of sanctions and rewards. The adults in the school provide very good role models which help pupils to distinguish between right and wrong. A spirit of mutual respect exists between pupils and staff. Pupils are fully aware of the behavioural difficulties they were experiencing when they first started at the school and recognise how much they have improved. Pupils' attitudes toward staff and visitors are generally good.

Provision for pupil's social development is promoted effectively, both in school and in the wider community. The outdoor pursuits programme provides opportunities for them to observe and reflect on the natural world and on their physical environment. Effective measures are taken to encourage pupils to work co-operatively in groups within the school and in the wider community, including fund-raising activities for charities. Staff reported that all pupils observed a three minutes silence for the victims of the tsunami disaster, and one of the pupils is a fundraiser for the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils participate well in group music therapy sessions where they learn to listen to each other and gain some self-awareness through practical activities. Weekly assemblies provide opportunities for pupils to share their successes and celebrate their achievements. The one assembly observed did not provide pupils with an opportunity for reflection or an act of collective worship.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

**3. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils**



The school safeguards and protects its pupils effectively. Policies and practices are in place to minimise the health and safety risks to pupils and meet the registration requirements fully. All staff undertake their responsibilities in relation to pupils' welfare, health and safety thoroughly and with care. Child protection procedures are a priority in the induction process for all new staff.

School policies are comprehensive and include anti-bullying strategies, procedures for child protection, health and safety issues, fire-safety and educational visits. The school ensures that risk assessments are carried out for all off-site activities and there is always one member of staff qualified in First Aid on the premises, as well as on educational visits. Fire safety precautions are carried out regularly and systematically recorded. Supervision of pupils is effective and consistent.

Policies and procedures for the management of behaviour are good. They are specific to the needs of pupils with challenging behaviour. Separate policies on handling and restraint of pupils are detailed and staff are trained in these procedures. The school has access to the company's own psychologist and its psychotherapist visits regularly to support and advise staff on appropriate

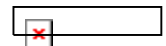
psychotherapy techniques they may use with pupils. Sanctions and incidents are recorded appropriately and logged in pupils' files. Overall, parents and carers are satisfied with the school's behaviour management policies.

The school has undertaken an accessibility audit of the building and produced a plan of action to improve ease of access for those with disabilities to all the sites.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

**4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff**



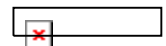
The school has very effective administrative systems in place to ensure the suitability of newly appointed staff on all its sites. Appropriate checks have been made prior to the appointment of all adults employed by the school who are in contact with pupils. Thorough checks are carried out, before appointments are confirmed, on the authenticity of references, medical checks and qualifications.

There are sufficient and suitably qualified staff to meet the needs of the pupils in all settings. Induction procedures for newly appointed staff are effective.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

**5. The suitability of the premises and accommodation**



The accommodation is satisfactory, despite being located either within old buildings or in temporary buildings. The school now occupies four sites since the acquisition of 'Trecorass', a house especially purchased to accommodate a pupil with very specific needs. The site provides a good standard of educational accommodation and resources. All the units are located in very pleasant rural settings and each has been adapted imaginatively to meet the needs of the pupils. The standard of decoration in all classrooms is good and enhanced by attractive displays of pupils' work. In all settings, maintenance work and repairs to buildings and furnishings are carried out promptly. This encourages the pupils to respect and look after their environment.

The new company plans to develop and improve the educational provision for the younger pupils. Classrooms are ample in size when compared to the number of pupils who use them at any one time. Washrooms facilities are located in all teaching areas and satisfy all requirements. Three of the four sites have specialist rooms for food technology and ICT and the two main sites each have small libraries. However, facilities for teaching science, design technology, art, and indoor games are limited across the whole school. Some of the sites have hard court areas specifically designed for safe play. The grounds around each unit are used appropriately, not only for physical activities, but for science and other curriculum areas. Good use is made of the community facilities, including the local youth club and leisure centre, and the swimming pool in Hereford.

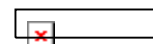
Three of the sites have no access for wheelchairs and none have toilets for the disabled. However,

the company has commissioned a survey to see how the accommodation can be made more accessible for the disabled and a three year plan to address this issue is in place.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

**6. The quality of information for parents and other partners**



Less than half of parents and carers completed and returned the parents' questionnaire. The majority feel well-informed about their children's progress and are comfortable about contacting the school. Parents and carers receive comprehensive termly information about their child's academic and social development, as well as reports through the annual review process.

The school prospectus and the statement of purpose give parents, carers and other partners some basic information about the care and education provided by the school. However, there are significant omissions. The names, addresses and telephone numbers of the head teacher and school proprietors are not included. It does not provide information about the education and welfare provision for pupils with statements and those with English is an additional language. Neither does it make clear in what circumstances a pupil may be temporarily excluded from the school into the residential setting.

The school has detailed guidance for staff on managing behaviour, including the use of physical restraint. However, it does not provide sufficient information for parents and carers on these aspects of its policies and procedures. Whilst the recently revised complaints procedure meets requirements, the school does not provide parents and carers with details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure in the previous school year. Brief information is given in the prospectus about the staffing structure, but it does not indicate the number of staff employed or give a summary of their qualifications.

The school responds to requests from local authorities for information about the expenditure for each pupil. However, it does not routinely provide an account of income and expenditure to all placing authorities.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

No.

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

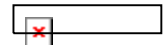
In order to comply with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the school should:

- make available the school's address and telephone number, the name of the head teacher and the full name, address and telephone number of the school proprietors (paragraph 6(2)(a) and paragraph 6(2)(b));
- provide particulars of the school's policy on admissions and arrangements for exclusions (paragraph 6(2)(e));
- provide particulars of the school's educational and welfare provision for pupils with statements and for pupils for whom English is an additional language (paragraph 6(2)(f));
- provide particulars of policies relating to bullying, child protection, health and safety, the promotion of good behaviour, and the sanctions to be adopted in the event of misbehaving (paragraph 6(2)(h));



- provide particulars of academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations (paragraph 6(2)(i));
- provide details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year (paragraph 6(2)(j));
- provide information about the number of staff employed at the school, including temporary staff, and a summary of their qualifications (paragraph 6(2)(k)); and
- submit to local authorities an annual account of income received and expenditure incurred by the school in respect of pupils placed by them at the school (paragraph 6(7)).

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

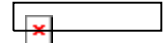


The school has a clear policy for handling complaints, which meets fully the requirements of the regulations. Alongside initial informal measures, there are well-structured formal procedures by which complaints can be considered fairly and objectively. The complaints panel includes an independent member of the local community.

### ***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

## School details



Name of school:	Queenswood School		
DfES ref number:	884/6011		
Type of school:	Special school for pupils with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties		
Status:	Independent		
Age range of pupils:	9-16 years		
Gender of pupils:	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils):	Boys 7,	Girls 7,	Total 14
Number of boarders:	Boys 7,	Girls 7,	Total 14
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need:	Boys 7,	Girls 3,	Total 10
Annual fees (combined):	£24,500 - £26,500		
Address of school:	The Old Rectory Hope-under-Dinmore Leominster Herefordshire HR6 0PW		
E-mail address:	thomass@solutions-childcare.co.uk		
Telephone number:	01568 620403		
Fax number:	01568 620403		
Headteacher:	Mr Spencer Thomas		
Proprietor:	Mr Chaitanya Patel		
Lead Inspector:	Mrs Helen Maskew		
Dates of inspection:	28 February - 3 March 2005		

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