



Oakfield House School

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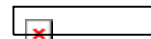
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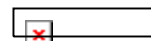
Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

School details

Introduction and summary

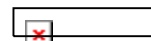


Purpose and scope of the inspection



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.

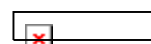
Information about the school



Oakfield House School is an independent day special school for up to 24 boys between the ages of 5 and 11 years of age. All have emotional, social and behavioural difficulties, and some have specific learning difficulties. The school is registered and approved by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). Local Education Authorities (LEAs) fund all of the pupils placed in the school. Pupils come from areas that are within daily travelling distance, such as Blackpool and points of Lancashire. Daily transport to and from the school is provided for all pupils, with key workers playing a major role as drivers.

All pupils have previously attended mainstream schools but many have been permanently excluded, refused to attend, or have shown aggressive behaviour. Almost all pupils have been in the school for less than two years. The school is successful in returning pupils to mainstream education, especially by the time they reach secondary age. Those who continue to find it difficult to respond to a mainstream educational environment transfer to the Crookhey Hall Special School, this is owned by the same company, or an LEA Special School.

Summary of main findings



Oakfield House School is a very good school. It is very successful in meeting the academic, personal, and social needs of its pupils. There is an excellent ethos for learning, with all staff having high expectations for behaviour and politeness. It achieves its stated aims by raising the pupils' self-esteem, improving their behaviour, and helping them to re-engage in learning. Pupils settle very

quickly into the routines of the school. They learn to respect the adults who work with them, one another, and their school environment. The excellent curriculum, based on the National Curriculum, is taught very well by all teachers. Very effective use is made of assessment in all subjects to plan the next stage of learning. The detailed attention given to individual pupils' learning needs, as well as to their behaviour and welfare, helps them to achieve very successfully. This enables some of them to make sufficient progress to transfer back to mainstream education. The managers promote effective teamwork and lead with great enthusiasm.

What the school does well:

- it has established very good teaching and learning where expectations of achievement and behaviour are consistently high and are supported by very good teamwork;
- it encourages pupils to develop positive attitudes to learning and to improve their behaviour;
- it has developed an excellent curriculum in which assessment is an integral part;
- it provides very good quality resources for teaching and learning, and especially for information and communication technology (ICT);
- it provides very thorough annual review reports;
- it has developed excellent policies and practices in relation to welfare, health and safety of pupils; and
- it provides a bright, clean and attractive learning environment which pupils treat with respect.

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

The school meets all the requirements with regard to the regulations for continuing its registration.

Next Steps

Although not required by the regulations to do so, the school may also like to consider the following area, so as to continue improving and developing the educational provision:

- broaden the range, within the curriculum, of multi-cultural experiences.

Compliance with the regulations for registration

1. The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of the curriculum

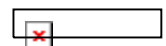
The school provides an excellent broad and balanced curriculum, which reflects the National Curriculum and includes religious education. Policies for all subjects are written carefully and reflect the school's overall curriculum policy. Each subject consists of units of work from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority schemes of work. These have been modified and presented so that they provide staff with a clear framework for lesson planning. Each unit of work clearly states the expected learning for pupils and provides a precise basis for assessment. There is a good balance between subjects, with an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy. The teaching of reading, spelling, and writing is high priority for each pupil, and staff concentrate on developing these skills in all subjects. This helps pupils to achieve very successfully, with many pupils making good progress in a short time.

There is a carefully planned personal, social and health education programme (PSHE), which also includes citizenship. Pupils receive discrete lessons in this subject, as well as aspects being emphasised throughout the whole of the school day. For example, an emphasis on friendship, covered in assembly, was also the basis of a PSHE lesson where less mature pupils identified how it felt to be new to a class. The subject promotes the personal development of pupils very effectively, and has a particularly good influence on pupils' behaviour and attitudes.

Many of the pupils have previously had interrupted education and have missed educational opportunities experienced by pupils of similar age. These include educational visits, and sometimes, participation in sport or practical aspects of subjects. For some pupils this is because their behaviour in these situations is unacceptable or unpredictable. Many pupils, therefore, have a narrow range of first-hand knowledge in some subjects, such as in geography or science, or have little understanding of the routines and expectations for physical education (PE). The school helps to redress this balance by including meaningful and well-planned educational experiences outside the classroom. These experiences make a very positive contribution to the curriculum being taught.

All pupils have a statement of special educational needs generated by their LEAs. The school meets the educational provision detailed in these very well. All pupils have individual education plans (IEPs) which contain a range of priority targets for each pupil. When planning lessons teachers include experiences that will support pupils' progress towards achieving these targets.

The quality of the teaching and assessment



The quality of teaching was at least good in all lessons observed during the inspection, and in many lessons it was very good. This high quality teaching ensures that pupils achieve well and make good progress in all subjects of the curriculum. Almost all parents or carers who responded to the questionnaire said that the quality of teaching was good and it enabled pupils to learn effectively and make progress. A particular strength of teaching is the high expectation that all staff have for learning, presentation, and the completion of work. This results in an excellent ethos, which is evident throughout the school. Teachers and support staff understand the levels at which pupils are working, and the rate of progress they are making. In order to ensure that pupils engage in learning teachers plan very thoroughly on an individual basis, and can anticipate how each pupil might react to a given situation or task. Because of this pupils are usually co-operative and respond to the efforts of staff to persuade them to take part in lessons.

Teachers set clear learning objectives for each lessons. These are shared with pupils at the beginning, entered into their diaries, and reviewed at the end. Teachers have a good knowledge of the many subjects they each teach, and very successfully develop literacy and numeracy skills in each lesson. There is a great emphasis on the key words that are used in lessons. Attention is given to creating a good balance between different tasks, such as writing, practical activities and discussion and the use of ICT. The latter is used very thoughtfully to support teaching and learning. This is made possible because the school has invested in up-to-date ICT resources, including

interactive whiteboards.

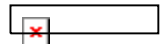
There is very effective teamwork between all adults who work in the classroom. There are many examples of staff anticipating the changing moods of pupils, with key workers or classroom assistants unobtrusively moving to work alongside pupils. They use praise, and firm reminders of class rules and routines, to ensure that pupils adopt positive attitudes to their work. There is a consistency across the school to the way in which pupils' behaviour is managed, the promotion of socially acceptable behaviour and language, the acceptance of routines, and the promotion of good relationships and responsibility. As a result, pupils' behaviour on the week of the inspection was outstanding. They were polite, co-operative, eager to succeed, and took pride and delight in their achievements.

Assessment is very good. The whole school policy for the assessment of pupils' work is clearly stated in each curriculum policy. Detailed assessment of their attainment, especially literacy, and their personal development are initially compiled on entry to the school. This is regularly reviewed and updated. Assessment takes place at the end of each unit of work providing teachers with information on what pupils have learnt. The information is recorded using National Curriculum levels of attainment. The records are extremely well kept and organised, and provide all staff with a complete overview of each pupil's progress and learning needs.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

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



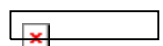
Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils have very good opportunities to be reflective and to think about how their attitudes and behaviour may affect themselves and others. Staff act as excellent role models for pupils' moral development both by example, and by encouraging pupils to make appropriate choices and take responsibility for their actions. As a consequence, pupils develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence while they are at the school.

The range of activities, both within and outside school makes a very positive contribution to pupils' social development. The curriculum provides them with opportunities to look at ways of being 'a good citizen'. For example, in a geography lesson pupils surveyed the amount of litter in the area, and discussed the importance of sorting and recycling rubbish. They participate in fund-raising activities for a variety of charities. Opportunities for pupils' cultural development are good overall. These are well connected to all subjects of the curriculum. However, there is less emphasis on their preparation for life in a multi-cultural community.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

3. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils



Oakfield School safeguards and protects its pupils very effectively. It has policies and practices that

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 excellent standards of care.

Policies are comprehensive and include procedures for child protection, anti-bullying strategies, health and safety issues, fire safety, and educational visits. The school ensures that there is always one member of staff, who is qualified in first-aid, on the premises and included in educational visits. Medicines are stored safely and appropriate records kept. Fire safety precautions are carried out regularly and systematically recorded.

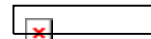
There is a very good ratio of pupils to staff. Pupils are supervised at all times in the building, outside in the grounds, and on school trips. The reward system for pupils is balanced by an appropriate range of sanctions, the combination of which promotes good and improving behaviour. Misdemeanors are dealt with fairly and effectively. This holistic approach provides a calm and safe environment for pupils and staff. On those occasions when physical control is required, all staff have been trained in appropriate procedures, which are based on clear policies. All serious incidents are recorded, and monitored by senior staff.

Meals are prepared on the premises, and pupils and staff take their lunch together in a dining room that is bright and clean. A range of healthy options is included on the menus and pupils earn points for choosing them. Arrangements for the registration of admissions and attendance meet the requirements fully. Attendance is monitored daily, and any absence, which has not been notified, is followed up immediately.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff



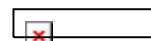
Oakfield School is owned by a limited company, Crookhey Hall Ltd. The proprietor is the headteacher, with lengthy experience of working in, and running schools, for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The proprietor, as headteacher, has a clear strategic vision for the development of the school and has provided very good resources to achieve it.

Teaching staff are suitably qualified and all are trained to teach primary-aged pupils. There is a good balance between experienced teachers and those who have recently qualified. Appropriate checks have been made, prior to the appointment, of all adults employed by the school and who are in contact with pupils.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

5. The suitability of the premises and accommodation



The school is in a very attractive setting and is very carefully maintained, both internally and externally. Classrooms are bright and attractive, appropriately furnished and carpeted, and

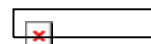
resourced according to the age and needs of the pupils. Pupils are encouraged to respect the building and there is a complete absence of litter and graffiti. There are attractive displays of pupils' work throughout the school. The high standard of maintenance and decoration contributes significantly to pupils' progress, especially their personal development.

Specialist accommodation includes a good-sized art room and an ICT suite. Outside space includes a fenced hard play area and a small playing field. Pupils use the garden for a variety of activities connected with their lessons. There is a small indoor games room, which is also used as a changing room for PE. There is a well-resourced medical room. Security arrangements, heating, lighting and ventilation all meet regulations. The dining room and kitchen are maintained to a high standard of cleanliness and hygiene.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

6. The quality of information for parents and other partners



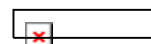
The school meets all of the regulations concerning the provision of information for parents. The prospectus is clear and laid out attractively. It contains information concerning admissions, details of health, safety and welfare of pupils and procedures for complaints. The school has also included an explanation of its anti-bullying policy and sanctions. During the inspection the full address, telephone number of the school and the name of the headteacher, together with the full name, and contact number of the proprietor, which had been omitted from the prospectus, were added.

Annual reports are of an excellent quality and provide comprehensive information about pupils' academic and personal development which is used to evaluate progress and set new targets for the pupils. Parents are pleased with the progress made by their children. Over three-quarters of the parents in the questionnaire were very confident that the school was efficiently run and that they were kept fully informed about their children's progress.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

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

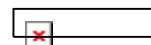


The school has a clear and succinct policy for handling complaints which meets the requirements of the regulations fully. Alongside initial informal measures, there are helpfully-structured formal procedures by which complaints can be considered fairly and objectively. The chair of the complaints panel is an independent member of the local community. Complaints procedures are set out in a simplified form in the school's prospectus.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

School details



Name of school:	Oakfield House School		
DfES ref number:	888/6037		
Type of school:	Primary day special school		
Status:	Independent		
Age range of pupils:	5-11 years		
Gender of pupils:	Boys		
Number on roll (full-time pupils):	Boys 17,	Girls 0,	Total 17
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need:	Boys 17,	Girls 0,	Total 17
Annual fees (day pupils):	£23,526		
Address of school:	Station Road Salwick Lancashire PR4 0YH		
E-mail address:	reception.oakfield@lineone.net		
Telephone number:	01772 672630		
Fax number:	01772 672631		
Headteacher:	Mr G Holliday		
Proprietor:	Crookhey Hall Ltd		
Lead Inspector:	Mrs F Gander		
Dates of inspection:	27 - 30 September 2004		

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