



# Hillingdon Manor School

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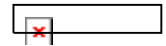
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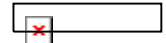
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## Introduction and summary

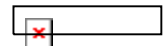


## Purpose and scope of the inspection



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



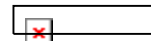
Hillingdon Manor School is a mixed independent day special school for pupils aged from 3½ to 19 years, which opened in 1999. There are currently 67 pupils aged between 5 and 19, all of whom have statements of special educational need and most of whom are boys. All pupils have a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorders and/or complex language difficulties.

The school is on a split site in the London borough of Hillingdon. The lower and middle school occupies a one-story building built as a school. The upper school, opened in 2003, is approximately 2 miles away. The upper school provides teaching accommodation for Key Stage 3 and 4 and post-16 students.

Hillingdon Manor School aims *to provide pupils within the autistic spectrum with a safe, excellent and effective learning environment where they can minimise their disability and maximise their*

ability'.

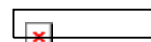
## Summary of main findings



Hillingdon Manor School is a good school and is very effective in meeting the particular needs of its pupils. The teaching is very good in the majority of lessons and at least satisfactory at all times. Pupils receive very good support from the dedicated staff team who know them well and plan specific programmes to meet their needs. The effective work of the multi-disciplinary team ensures that good progress is made by all pupils. The curriculum is enhanced by access to a good range of therapies and extra-curricular opportunities. There are good links with a local secondary school.

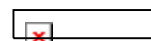
There is a very high level of consistency in applying policies and structures throughout the school. The care and well-being of pupils is paramount throughout the school day and dignity and respect are promoted for all individuals. Staff are provided with very good induction and training and have good access to a range of external courses. The school is developing well and is highly responsive to the changing needs of the pupils. Pupils and staff clearly enjoy learning and working at Hillingdon Manor. The staff work in close partnership with parents, providing good information about the work of the school and pupils' progress, which all parents appreciate.

## What the school does well



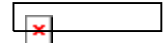
- it provides a communication-centred environment in which the use of symbols, pictures, signing and specific language is very effective and consistent;
- its teaching is very good overall and ensures that pupils and students make good progress in developing their social, problem solving and communication skills;
- its very good assessment procedures measure pupils' and students' achievement accurately and effectively inform future teaching;
- its pupils have positive attitudes to their work and behave very well in lessons and around the school;
- its very good provision for developing pupils' spiritual, moral and social education encourages them to become independent and take increasing responsibility for their work and behaviour; and
- its effective multi-disciplinary work ensures there is a cohesive approach throughout the school and that therapies and teaching complement each other.

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



- ensure that where pupils have a statement of special educational need (SEN) the education provided fulfils all its requirements; and
- provide annual accounts of income received and expenditure incurred by the school in respect of individual pupils for the placing local authorities.

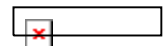
## What the school must do to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2002



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

- devise a three-year plan to improve the accessibility of the premises.

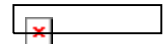
### Next steps



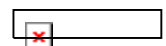
Whilst not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- improve curriculum mapping to ensure progression in pupils' learning;
- increase opportunities and resources for pupils' practical and sensory experiences; and
- develop information and communication technology (ICT) in the lower and middle school.

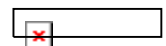
## Compliance with the regulations for registration



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



#### The quality of the curriculum



The school is very successful in achieving its primary aim to create a communication-centred environment, which addresses effectively the needs of pupils with autistic spectrum disorders and those with complex language difficulties. There is a very clear approach which focuses on developing pupils' social skills, their ability to communicate and their capacity to solve problems. This approach informs all areas of the curriculum and is adopted consistently by staff throughout the school.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and most National Curriculum subjects are taught, with the exception of a modern foreign language and music. There are specialist facilities for teaching art and food technology and the school is developing a designated room for teaching science and design and technology (DT). The school grounds are used creatively to support the science curriculum, with pupils growing flowers and vegetables. Physical education (PE) is provided by using the school halls and by visiting local swimming pools, a gymnasium and sports centre.

Physical exercise is seen as an important means of reducing pupils' anxiety and improving their ability to concentrate. There are regular dance and movement classes and daily aerobic exercise and relaxation sessions. History, geography and religious education (RE) are taught through a series of 'World Studies' topics. There is a good personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum in place which covers relevant topics including making choices, sex education and healthy living. Citizenship is provided for older pupils and students through the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) programme. A Connexions adviser attends annual reviews and conducts individual interviews to give advice on future work or training.

The school is committed to providing a therapeutic environment, which helps to build pupils' self-confidence and improve their social skills. Several pupils take part in massage and yoga sessions and receive music, speech and language and drama therapies.

The curriculum addresses the social and communication needs of the pupils very well. However, it does not meet fully the requirements of pupils' statements of SEN, where these often specify access to the National Curriculum.

In the lower and middle school, classes are organised to provide for pupils' level of need and ability to communicate. There are classes for pupils who have general needs on the autistic spectrum and classes for pupils with more complex communication needs. Many classes have an age range of wider than one year. In all classes, there is a well-established communication curriculum, which is supported by pictures, symbols and signing. Also, work is matched carefully to pupils' individual needs. However, the wide age range of pupils in most classes, often spanning two key stages or three academic years, presents a challenge to curriculum planning. The 'World Studies' topics make reference to, but do not cover fully the National Curriculum programmes of study for history and geography for both Key Stage 2 and 3.

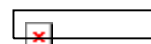
In the upper school, there is one class for pupils aged 14 and two mixed-age classes for pupils in Key Stage 4. One Key Stage 4 class follows an ASDAN course and the other studies General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) courses. Subjects currently offered are English, mathematics, human biology and art and design. The GCSE courses have been introduced recently. They are planned effectively and enable pupils to study modules over three years. One pupil studies additional GCSE subjects at a local secondary school. There are two post-16 students who are following an ASDAN course supported by appropriate work experience.

Time provided for teaching is generous and the balance of time allowed for different subjects is generally sound. However, the timetable leaves limited time for teaching history, geography and RE.

There is good curriculum leadership, which ensures that the school's approach to communication is embedded in all areas of the curriculum. Appropriate policies and schemes of work are in place for most subjects and some are being adapted to reflect the recent changes in school organisation. A newly-appointed specialist is updating the schemes of work for art and DT and the school has plans to introduce music. Planning for ICT is included in the ASDAN course followed by older pupils at the upper school, however curriculum planning for ICT is at an early stage in the lower and middle school. Mapping of the curriculum does not yet ensure sufficient progression in learning for pupils as they move through the school.

Trips and visits are used well to support the curriculum. Several pupils in the lower and middle school take part in a school choir. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme in the upper school is particularly effective in supporting the PSHE and citizenship curriculum. Homework provides an important extension to learning and is set and marked regularly.

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



In the majority of lessons teaching is very good and in all lessons the strengths outweigh the weaknesses. Teaching incorporates consistent communication strategies and, as a result, progress is good. Support given to pupils is sensitive. There is a good balance between individual help and encouraging pupils to develop independent attitudes to learning and problem solving. Expectations are usually high. In the best lessons the strong communication structure underpins the use of a range of teaching styles, ensuring that a good pace is maintained. Pupils have opportunities to work as part of a group as well as individually. In all classrooms pupils have access to discrete learning areas which assist them in remaining focussed when working independently. Within these areas, individual reward charts, timetables and expectations are displayed in a way that is meaningful to the pupil. In a very few lessons, strategies to maintain pupils' engagement are not used sufficiently to maintain a good pace for their learning. In a small minority of lessons, pupils with more complex learning difficulties do not always have sufficient access to practical and sensory learning opportunities.

Very good team work from class staff and therapists ensures that pupils' individual learning and behavioural needs are otherwise met effectively. The lessons are very well planned with clear learning outcomes identified for all pupils. These are always shared with pupils in a way that they can understand. This helps pupils to build upon previous learning and understand how their learning will progress.

All staff at the school demonstrate appropriate knowledge of the subjects they are teaching. They have a very good knowledge and understanding of teaching pupils with autistic spectrum disorders. There is good quality induction and training for staff ensuring that consistent and appropriate teaching approaches are in place. Many staff undertake additional training and the school enables them to do so.

Resources are adequate overall. There are very good resources for communication and for the development of appropriate social skills throughout the school. These include a good range of books in the school library. Provision for ICT is good in the upper school but less well developed in the lower and middle school. Staff at the school are constantly extending the resources available but are aware that these are insufficient to fully support a more practical and sensory approach to the curriculum.

All staff have an encouraging, enthusiastic approach and take every opportunity to reinforce good behaviour and appropriate social skills. Pastoral support plans (PSP) identify the structures and positive interventions required by individual pupils. Encouraging language is used consistently throughout the school to describe expectations of pupils' behaviour. Termly reviews of the PSP demonstrate very good progress in pupils' social skills. Strategies used to promote good behaviour are consistently applied, rewards and praise are meaningful and even the most difficult behaviour is managed well. As a result, pupils' behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school.

There is very good ongoing assessment, building on an initial baseline assessment when pupils start at the school. All members of each class team take responsibility for assessing pupils' skills and understanding. Pupils' learning is moved on at an appropriate time and activities which reinforce understanding are planned carefully. Pupils' progress against their individual education targets is recorded daily. Termly reports, with levels cross-referenced to National Curriculum or P levels (performance descriptors used for recording the attainment of pupils with SEN working towards the first level of the National Curriculum), are provided for parents and used by teaching staff to inform further work. Each pupil has a work portfolio where annotated copies of work or photographs of achievement are kept. The assessments and portfolios of pupils' work show good progress over time.

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

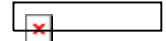
The school complies with all but one of the requirements.

### ***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:

- ensure that the education provided fulfils the requirements of a pupil's statement (paragraph 1(2)(e)).

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



The school supports pupils' spiritual, moral and social development very effectively and makes satisfactory provision for their cultural development.

Pupils' spiritual development is supported through daily reflection times and the PSHE curriculum. Pupils are actively taught how to consider their emotions and to understand the feelings of others. They receive tokens for demonstrating qualities such as empathy or trust and these contribute towards a class reward. This is a very effective method of helping pupils with communication difficulties to increase their self-awareness.

Pupils' self-esteem is enhanced through the regular dance, yoga and aerobics exercise sessions. Several pupils receive drama and music therapy, and pupils in the upper school have weekly sessions with a trained counsellor, which they value. All Key Stage 4 and post-16 students take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. This provides a series of challenging outdoor pursuits, such as abseiling, orienteering and climbing. Pupils speak highly of these activities and they clearly generate excitement and increase self-confidence.

There is a positive ethos in the school which is very effective in supporting pupils' moral education. Staff set a good example. They always treat pupils with respect and make them aware of acceptable behaviour. In the lower and middle school, certificates are awarded in weekly assemblies for thoughtful behaviour, for example 'being kind' or 'sharing'. In the upper school, as part of a programme of 'special qualities', a key word is selected every three weeks, such as honesty, compassion or determination. These are discussed in class and provide a theme for assemblies.

The development of pupils' social skills is a high priority for the school. Lessons are carefully structured to give pupils successful experience of working in groups. They learn to take turns and listen to the contributions of others. Pupils are encouraged to become increasingly independent and take responsibility for their work and personal development. Younger pupils have a 'responsibility list' on the classroom wall, listing daily tasks such as hanging up their coat and putting their work in a folder. A 'health chart' lists daily personal hygiene tasks, such as washing hands and brushing teeth. Secondary aged pupils learn to review their own progress at the end of the day in relation to their individual targets. In the upper school a school council provides pupils with a forum in which to raise issues. Pupils have discussed dinner time behaviour, the use of computers and homework. They feel their views are listened to by staff and they receive a reasoned response to their suggestions.

Pupils behave very sensibly in lessons and around the school. They respond to the respect shown by adults and relate well to each other. They are also polite and courteous with visitors. Some pupils, who easily become anxious, are learning to manage their own behaviour by sitting out of the lesson for short periods of time. The school is very successful in engaging parents in joint programmes to improve pupils' behaviour.

Pupils learn about public institutions and services through the citizenship curriculum. Older pupils also participate in the community through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. The school has

established useful links with a local church, where one pupil helps clean as part of his work experience. Visits to shops, a rural studies centre and a leisure centre are used to increase pupils' knowledge of their local environment.

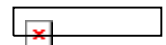
The 'World Studies' topics provide pupils with opportunities to learn about different cultures, which include Greece and South Africa. Pupils cook different foods linked to these topics in food technology lessons. Religious festivals are celebrated in assemblies. The curriculum for cultural development is limited by the minimal time allocated for teaching RE and insufficient artefacts available to support learning.

Girls form a minority at the school but they are well supported and participate fully in lessons. Aspects of the PSHE curriculum are taught in single sex groups for older pupils.

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

Yes.

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



The school is a caring community in which the health and welfare of pupils is of the utmost importance. There are written policies which comply with regulations for all the required areas. Very good leadership ensures that staff are familiar with these policies and apply them with a very high level of consistency. Levels of supervision are very good at all times throughout the school day and during extra-curricular activities.

A good range of policies safeguard the welfare of the pupils and these are in line with the most recent guidance. The principal and headteacher have responsibility for child protection; this ensures that a designated member of staff is based on each site. The child protection policy reflects local inter-agency arrangements and requires designated personnel to update their training every two years. The school's policy in providing child protection training on induction and annually for all staff reflects its very good practice in such matters. All guidance and training is appropriately designed to protect pupils with additional needs. There are clear guidelines for the confidential reporting of staff concerns.

The 'anti-bullying', 'promoting good behaviour' and 'physical intervention' policies are separate and complement each other. 'Promoting good behaviour' is based on making expectations, actions and consequences clear and helping pupils to learn to make the 'right' choice. The structures are highly effective in assisting pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour and to be aware of the consequences of choices they make. The policy details the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupils misbehaving. Any incidents of behaviour requiring sanctions are recorded in satisfactory detail and kept in a bound book. The physical intervention policy and training for staff is in line with Department for Education and Skills (DfES) guidance.

The school takes its responsibility for health and safety seriously and all related policies have regard to DfES guidance. Regular maintenance checks are carried out on the premises, emergency lighting and the fire alarm system. The most recent fire officer's report identified the need for some minor changes to the procedures followed in the school; all have been put in place. Fire drills are held every half term and details of these are recorded appropriately.

The school has a good First Aid policy and ensures that training for named First Aiders is updated appropriately. In addition many other staff are trained in basic First Aid.



Admission and attendance registers are maintained in accordance with regulations.

The school gives regard to the DDA and is currently undertaking a feasibility study to inform a three-year access plan to develop the upper school premises and access to information about the school. The curriculum is already adapted to support the needs of disabled pupils.

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

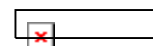
Yes.

***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:

- o devise a three-year plan to improve the accessibility of the premises and information about the school.

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



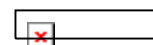
The school has a thorough vetting, recruitment and retention policy. There are clearly-established procedures for the recruitment of teachers and other staff. These ensure that members of staff are subject to enhanced level checks with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). References and medical information are sought appropriately. These background checks are carried out before any individual takes up a post in the school.

The policy for visitors, volunteer workers and students requires students on long-term placements and volunteers to be subject to an enhanced CRB check before they undertake their placement. All other visitors and students are supervised by school staff at all times.

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

Yes.

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



The standard of the premises and accommodation is satisfactory. The school is located on two sites approximately two miles apart. The lower and middle school provides education for pupils aged 5 to 14 years, and an upper school provides for pupils and students aged 14 to 19 years. On both sites, the premises are well maintained and there is a high standard of hygiene and cleanliness. The school provides an attractive environment for learning, which is enhanced by displays of pupils' work and pictures, symbols and sentences to aid their communication.

The lower and middle school is located in a former special school which has been adapted creatively in recent years to accommodate an increasing number of pupils. There are nine classrooms, specialist rooms for teaching art, a daily living skills room with a kitchen and dining area, a hall, a small but well organised library, medical room and offices. There are separate therapy rooms for music, drama and speech and language therapy and the school is developing a

specialist room for teaching science and DT. There is suitable space for outside play provided by two playgrounds with climbing apparatus and a slide. There is also a landscaped garden where pupils grow flowers and an area for growing vegetables. Several classes have use of a small swimming pool adjoining the school, which is owned by a charitable organisation.

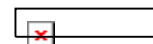
The upper school was established in a converted office building in September 2003. The premises have been refurbished to a high standard and provide four classrooms, a therapy room, medical room, small kitchen, offices, staff room and a hall with a small library area. There are no specialist rooms for teaching science or DT, music or art, although pupils visit the middle and lower school site to use the facilities for art and DT. Provision for outdoor play is satisfactory and consists of a hard surface with picnic benches and space to play football.

Classrooms on both sites are of adequate size for the numbers of pupils using them. The provision of work stations for individual study and tables where pupils can engage in group work, supports effectively the school's approach to teaching pupils who have communication difficulties.

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

Yes.

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



The school provides good information for parents and meets almost all the requirements for provision of information to other partners.

The prospectus is comprehensive and sets out the school's aims and its distinctive approach to teaching pupils with needs on the autistic spectrum. It also contains details of systems for promoting positive behaviour, admission procedures, therapy provision, school organisation and details of staffing. Parents are also informed that they will receive on request the complaints procedure and copies of the anti-bullying, child protection and health and safety policies.

Once pupils have been admitted to the school, parents are given a handbook which contains useful information, such as details of the curriculum, uniform and term dates.

Parents receive daily information regarding their children's progress through the use of home-school books. This is a valuable means of communication and helps the school and home to work together to help pupils improve. Individual education plans are discussed termly at open evenings and contain targets for improvement. The annual reports give detailed information on pupils' academic and social progress and include comments from the various therapists. In response to the parental questionnaire sent out prior to the inspection, all parents report that they are well informed about their children's progress.

Local authorities receive information on the review of pupils' statements and some are given an annual account of the use of funding. To meet the regulations fully, the school needs to provide details of the expenditure incurred for each pupil and provide this information annually to all the referring local authorities. The school is aware of this issue and it is already being addressed.

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

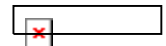
The school complies with all but one of the requirements.

### **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:

- where a pupil wholly or partly funded by a local authority is registered at the school, submit an annual account of income received and expenditure incurred by the school in respect of that pupil to the local authority and on request to the Secretary of State (paragraph 6(7)).

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

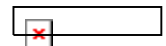


The complaints policy includes all the necessary information and procedures to meet regulations. The school records and monitors details of any complaints in the appropriate manner. Parents are issued with a copy of the policy as part of an admissions pack when their children start at the school. The majority of parents reported that they were familiar with the school's procedure for dealing with complaints.

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

Yes.

### **School details**



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Name of school:	Hillingdon Manor School		
DfES ref number:	312/6063		
Type of school:	Special school catering for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders and or complex language difficulties.		
Status:	Independent		
Age range of pupils:	3½ to 19 years		
Gender of pupils:	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils):	Boys 58,	Girls 12,	Total 70
Number on roll (part-time pupils):	Boys 1,	Girls 0,	Total 1
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need:	Boys 59,	Girls 12,	Total 71
Annual fees (day pupils):	£32,646		
Address of school:	Moorcroft Complex Harlington Road Hillingdon Middlesex UB8 3HD		
E-mail address:	hillingdonmanor@hotmail.com		
Telephone number:	01895 813679		
Fax number:	01895 813679		
Principal:	Ms Angela Austin		
Proprietor:	Moorcroft Manor Limited		
Lead Inspector:	Ms Janet Thompson		
Dates of inspection:	21 - 24 February 2005		

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