

## Purbeck View School

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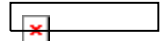
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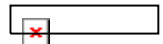
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**Introduction and summary**

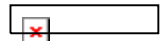


**Purpose and scope of the inspection**



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**



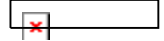
Purbeck View School is an independent residential school for pupils and students aged between seven and nineteen. The school provides termly boarding and education for up to 47 boys and girls. All pupils and students have a statement of special educational need which identifies a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). They are referred and funded by 25 different local authorities as far apart as Glasgow and Guernsey. Pupils and students share key common difficulties in communication, social understanding and sensory impairment. All pupils are boarders and there are currently 41 on roll. Although registered for pupils aged 7 to 19 years there are presently no pupils aged 7 to 12 years. The school is organised into two distinct provisions; one is for pupils in National Curriculum Years 7 to 11 and the other is for students post 16. These operate independently of each other.

The school is part of the Hesley Group of independent residential special schools. Purbeck View is located on an attractive site overlooking the town of Swanage and occupies the premises of a former preparatory boarding school. The school was acquired by the Hesley Group in 1993 and has undergone substantial improvements to its layout and accommodation. This work is continuing. The school is subject to regular inspection by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and it

received a good report following its most recent inspection in September 2004.

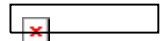
The school aims to enable pupils with special needs achieve their full potential.

### Summary of main findings



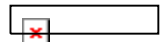
Purbeck View School is an effective and caring school with many strengths. During their time at the school pupils make marked progress in their ability to communicate, and in their personal and academic development.

### What the school does well



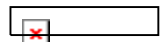
- the head teacher leads the school well, providing guidance for staff which has raised standards since the last report;
- it offers a good curriculum to the greater majority of its pupils and students, with a strong emphasis on the development of communication skills;
- it makes very good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils;
- staff have a common understanding of how their pupils learn and they work well together in teams;
- it gives very good information to parents and other interested parties; and
- it provides a caring ethos and pupils and students make good progress in their social and academic development, including the management of behaviour.

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



The school meets all the regulations for continued registration.

### 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.

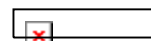
### Next steps



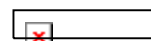
Whilst not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- improve the overall quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better by;
  - planning and using more frequently information and communication technology (ICT) which supports learning by pupils and students;
  - making more accurate use of assessment to inform teaching and learning;
- improve curriculum planning to fully meet the needs of the few higher attaining pupils; and
- make better use of the links with the residential curriculum to further enhance the achievements of pupils.

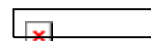
## Compliance with the regulations for registration



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



#### The quality of the curriculum



The school is successful in its aim to offer a broad and balanced curriculum. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught to pupils aged 11 to 16 and there is an appropriate programme of work-related and community based activities to prepare students post 16 for leaving school. The curriculum fulfils the requirements of pupils' statements of special educational need. The PSHE curriculum has a relevant range of topics which includes promoting self-esteem, healthy living, relationships and sex-education. Citizenship and living in the community are taught to older pupils and students and a careers specialist is involved in planning for when pupils or students move on. Science and design technology are taught in designated rooms and the school has plans to improve these facilities in its building development programme. Physical Education (PE) is taught in the school's sports hall and pupils and students make weekly visits to a local swimming pool. There is a very good programme of educational visits, which supports all aspects of the curriculum, although the planning for information and communication technology (ICT) to support subjects across the curriculum is under-developed.

There is a strong emphasis on pupils and students developing self-management skills and strategies to cope with change. This is supported by an excellent and effective communication curriculum designed for the specific needs of individual pupils with ASD. A picture exchange communication system (PECS), a word exchange communication system (WECS) and signed support are used consistently in all aspects of school life. The school has also introduced several activities which promote pupils' and students' self-awareness and capability to function in a group. These include physical exercises known as 'brain gym', yoga, music and drama therapy.

For pupils in Years 9 to 11 planning is based on a scheme for pupils with severe learning difficulties (EQUALS). This curriculum is appropriate for the greater majority of pupils who have complex learning needs and who are functioning within or below level 1 of the National Curriculum. However,

this scheme does not always provide sufficient challenge for the few higher attaining pupils. However, for pupils in Years 10 and 11, as well as students post 16, the curriculum is shaped by courses in the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN). This effectively prepares them for transition to their next stage of education.

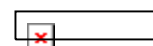
The provision for students post 16 is located separately from those classrooms used by other pupils. It is named 'Northbrook College' in order to emphasise to students that they are making the transition from being simply school pupils to being young adults. The ASDAN 'Towards Independence' course is taught and is well supported by visits to local shops, library, parks and leisure centre. As part of their business enterprise activities, students make and sell a range of small items, such as Christmas cards and papier maché bowls. There is a good programme of work experience for more independent students, which includes cleaning in a local church and a public house, delivering newspapers and undertaking tasks around the school.

The timetable provides a good balance of time for subjects and the cycle of topics. This ensures there is no unnecessary repetition of work for all pupils and students as they become older and move up through the school. There is sufficient taught time during the week, although some of the short PSHE sessions between lessons lack focus and purpose; this results in missed opportunities to extend this aspect of pupils' and students' development.

Curriculum leadership is developing well. There are curriculum policy statements and schemes of work for all subjects. English and mathematics are taught by class tutors and the school has recently arranged for other subjects to be taught by subject specialists. This is a positive step, which has resulted in more effective subject development.

Links between the school and the residential curriculum are under-developed. Homework is not used to extend or consolidate what has been learned in lessons. This could particularly benefit those pupils and students of higher attainment. The lunch time sessions also represent missed opportunities to promote further learning as well as personal and social independence.

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



The quality of teaching throughout the school was never less than satisfactory. It was good or very good in almost one quarter of lessons. Teaching, overall, is satisfactory.

Lessons are planned well and include targets for each pupil and student. Some classes have pupils or students with a wide spread of attainment. It was a feature of the very best lessons that teachers recognised the prior knowledge and experiences of pupils and students and included this information in planning the tasks which supported further learning. These lessons also included introductions which made pupils and students fully aware of what it was they would be expected to learn. Where weaknesses exist in planning, tasks and targets for the higher attaining pupils are not appropriately identified or provided. In several lessons these pupils completed work ahead of the allotted time and lesson plans did not include activities or tasks which would further extend their learning.

Common weaknesses in teaching were that information and communication technology was used insufficiently to support and extend learning, also that summaries of what pupils had learned were missed in the conclusions to lessons.

Work is carefully assessed over time and meticulously recorded. This enables senior management to monitor the year-on-year attainment of pupils and students. The accuracy of some of these assessments is insecure and it would be helpful to all staff if the definition of attainment levels were more rigorously identified. A further weakness in assessment occurs because not all lessons

include this as an element. Too often pupils were unsure of what it was they had learned because lessons ended abruptly.

Staff carry out their tasks with humour, expertise and consistency which benefits all pupils and students. Where teachers are more assured in their management skills they deploy their team in ways that more effectively support learning; for example in a very good physical education lesson the teacher enabled teaching assistants to use their considerable skill in developing the task for pupils to 'move over, through and under'. Some of the methods used by the assistants to keep these pupils concentrating on their task were, at times, inspirational. A general strength of the learning support lies in the behaviour management skills of teaching assistants; their timely interventions enable learning to continue uninterrupted. Staff have built up good relationships with pupils and students; these are seen in the considerable trust which the pupils and students place in those who work with them. This makes their learning more effective.

The links between what pupils learn in school and their life within the residences are tenuous. The quality of information passed between the two groups of staff is insufficient to give each group a clear idea of what pupils and students have achieved and how this learning might be further enhanced.

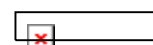
When pupils and students are admitted to the school their attainments are very low. All work at levels which are well below those expected for their age. Pupils and students make steady progress in most subjects but most particularly in their communication and social skills. The school provides a rich environment of communication; symbols and signs are everywhere and the personal attention given to the communication needs of pupils and students is consistent in both school and residential settings. During all lessons, teachers and assistants go to great lengths to ensure that pupils understand what is being said.

Teaching is successful in encouraging pupils and students to develop their independence as learners. Effective communication skills are the bedrock of this learning and staff, without exception, provide good quality opportunities for this to be developed within each pupil and student.

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

Yes.

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



The provision for pupils' and students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The school supports pupils' and students' spiritual development well through the religious education (RE) curriculum and daily acts of collective worship. The daily act of collective worship includes a short prayer and time for reflection. Lit candles are used to encourage spiritual awareness, for example when celebrating Divali, and there is good use of pictures, symbols and signing to encourage pupils and students to consider their emotions and feelings. Within the RE curriculum, spiritual awareness is developed through the study of the major faiths and pupils' understanding is enhanced through the use of associated artefacts.

The school has recently introduced a diary for new pupils to keep, which encourages self-evaluation of their social progress and helps develop their self-awareness. Tutorial periods are timetabled for the beginning of each day, these enable pupils and students to consider plans for the day and discuss any difficulties. The 'brain gym', yoga, music and drama therapies effectively promote pupils' and students' self-awareness and their ability to function in a group. Annual visits to an outdoor activity centre provide pupils and students with opportunities to take part in confidence-building activities such as canoeing, abseiling and walking. Assemblies are used to celebrate pupils'

and students' achievements and raise their self-esteem. Photographic evidence and press cuttings are used successfully to remind pupils' of their achievements; for example when one student, having seen a member of the public fall from a cliff, alerted the emergency services and received a medal for his action. Pupils have also had their art exhibited in a gallery in Poole.

Pupils' moral education is supported very effectively by the values and ethos of the school, which has high expectations for their behaviour towards adults and towards each other. Staff explain to pupils and students why others may behave in a particular way and discuss how they might modify their own actions to help them resolve conflicts. Pupils and students are treated with the utmost respect and given appropriate support in their communication to help them reach decisions. A good example of this was the inclusion of pupils' and students' views in the inspection process through the use of 'symbol writer', a programme which enabled them to have an understanding of the questions and convey their views. There is a high degree of trust between staff and pupils and students, which enables staff to work closely with pupils and students when they are distressed and help them shape their behaviour.

The school is very successful in promoting pupils' and students' social development. Pictures and symbols are used to help pupils control their behaviour, make choices and follow school routines. There are detailed behaviour programmes for individual pupils who experience difficulty when working in a group. All staff follow these guidelines. The accent is on positive intervention, with pupils and students being taught the necessary skills to help them behave appropriately and overcome anxiety in social situations.

Pupils and students are involved in decision-making through the school council, which meets termly. Issues relevant to pupils and students are discussed, for example concern about teasing or requests to buy crisps in the dining room. The minutes of these meetings are displayed using symbols. The PSHE curriculum addresses the specific social and independence needs of pupils with ASD for example, when pupils learn about their teeth in preparation for a potentially stressful visit to the dentist. Social awareness and independence is very well supported through the extensive range of visits, which includes local cafés, shops, a leisure centre and adventure park, and through work experience placements for older students. Pupils and students are also encouraged to consider others, for example through charitable acts when they sell poppies for the Remembrance Day Appeal, or host the providers of their work experience placements.

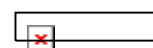
Pupils' and students' behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good. They learn to ignore the anxious and inappropriate behaviour of others. Pupils and students show interest in their work and are pleased with their achievements. Their work is attractively displayed in classrooms and around the school. None of this is damaged or defaced even when pupils or students become distressed.

The school promotes pupils' and students' cultural awareness very effectively through a range of topics taught within the curriculum. These include the study of world religions, food from different countries, the cultural traditions of Native American and African peoples, and the history of Purbeck. There is a very good programme of visits to local places of cultural interest, such as the quay at Wareham, electricity museum at Christchurch and local steam railway. Assemblies are used well to celebrate cultural and religious festivals.

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

Yes.

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



The school provides good quality care in both the school and residential settings. This enables pupils and students to flourish in their personal and academic development. All staff are very aware of the care needs of individual pupils and students and ensure through their plans and provision that these are met at all times. The questionnaire distributed to pupils and students prior to the inspection shows that they feel safe in the school and that they enjoy the company of the staff who care for them. Parents, also, have justifiable confidence in the ability of the school to care for their children.

There is a comprehensive range of detailed policies covering all aspects of health, welfare and personal guidance. These are used consistently in both the school and residential settings. The behaviour management system is firmly rooted in positive interventions and rewards. Where misbehaviour by any pupil or student occurred each and every situation was managed in a way that brought the incident to a successful conclusion and which left the dignity of the pupil very much intact. Individual social and behaviour targets are identified for every pupil and student. Personal strategies are devised which fully involve the pupils and students in managing their own behaviour.

The system for recording and analysing behaviour incidents is meticulous. The senior management team carry out annual evaluations of trends in the behaviour of pupils and students. Information from this suggests that incidents where physical intervention was necessary have decreased since intensive staff training has been undertaken. The school also attributes this decrease to the developing skill of pupils and students to communicate more effectively their needs and wishes. In addition to analysing behaviours in the whole school the management can also identify trends in the behaviour of individuals.

The school maintains an appropriate admissions register and attendance registers are completed satisfactorily. A recent visit by the local fire-safety officer confirmed the satisfactory arrangements for fire safety. Emergency evacuation drills are carried out regularly and staff are fully aware of their responsibilities. First-aid staff are available at all times and a majority of all staff have attended recent courses to update their knowledge of this. The school has not yet written a draft accessibility plan in relation to the Disability Discrimination Act requirements.

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

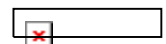
Yes.

***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:

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

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



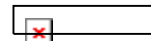
The Hesley Group has set out thorough and secure procedures for the appointment of staff. These are implemented within the school. Prior to appointment, a comprehensive check is carried out on all boarding and education staff at the school with regard to identity, medical fitness, references and previous employment. All staff have received clearance from the Criminal Records Bureau at an enhanced level and files are regularly updated as staff circumstances change.

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



Yes.

## 5. The suitability of the premises and accommodation



The school and its grounds provide well maintained and good quality facilities for pupils and students. In addition, the residences are of good quality, providing rooms in which pupils and students can feel at home. The majority of pupils and all students have their own room. The residential accommodation is arranged broadly by age. Where pupils are required to share a room the staff take great care to ensure they get on with each other. Residences are very clean and well furnished.

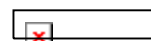
There are specialist rooms for science, art, music, ICT, design and technology and also a sports hall. Some of these are undergoing renovation and improvement. The grounds are used well to extend pupils' educational experiences; a garden area is currently under development which will enable pupils to gain horticultural knowledge and expertise. Students look after the small garden areas attached to their own residences.

There are attractive and informative displays around the school. Most of these are of work completed by pupils and students. Where possible pupils and students are encouraged to personalise their rooms with personal items as well as work they have completed and this brings about a feeling of belonging and homeliness.

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

Yes.

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



The school provides very good information to parents and other partners. The school prospectus and information pack given to the parents and carers of pupils new to the school contains all the required information. The prospectus sets out the school's aims, philosophy, organisation, admission arrangements, approach to behaviour management, child protection procedures and provision for pupils' welfare. A separate copy of the school's complaints procedure is also given to all parents. The prospectus contains useful additional information about a help-line which provides advice to parents and professionals about learning disabilities.

All parents receive a weekly report on their child's progress and a newsletter at the end of each term outlining significant events and developments at the school. The school also invites parents to attend an open-day each term, which gives them the opportunity to meet staff and view their child's work. Parents receive detailed annual reports giving information on pupils' academic and social progress. There is an appropriate emphasis on the information relating to pupils' and students' communication skills and the steps they make towards greater independence. In responding to the parental questionnaire sent out prior to the inspection, almost all parents felt they were well informed about their child's progress and all felt comfortable about approaching the school with questions, suggestions or a problem.

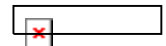
Appropriate information for the review of statements of SEN and of the use of funding is provided to

local authorities as required by regulations.

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

Yes.

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

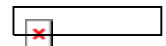


The school bases its complaints procedure on that commonly used throughout the Hesley Group. The school's complaints policy is very precise and complies fully with requirements. When pupils and students are first admitted to the school copies of this document are provided to their parents and carers as well as other relevant parties. Pupils and students are also provided with a pupil-friendly version of the policy. Where pupils or students are unable to understand written versions of this they are provided with different adaptations which use symbols to explain its contents. The school also publicises around the school the names and contact details of independent visitors to whom pupils could turn in the event of them having a complaint.

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

Yes.

**School details**



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Name of school:	Purbeck View School		
DfES ref number:	835/6016		
Type of school:	Residential special school		
Status:	Independent		
Age range of pupils:	7 - 19 years		
Gender of pupils:	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils):	Boys 35,	Girls 6,	Total 41
Number of boarders:	Boys 35,	Girls 6,	Total 41
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need:	Boys 35,	Girls 6,	Total 41
Annual fees (boarders):	£113,295		
Address of school:	Northbrook Road Swanage Dorset BH19 1PR		
E-mail address:	purbeckadmin@hesleygroup.co.uk		
Telephone number:	01929 422760		
Fax number:	01929 427627		
Headteacher:	Mrs Susan Goulding		
Proprietor:	Hesley Autism Services Ltd		
Lead Inspector:	Mr Tom Smith		
Dates of inspection:	8 - 11 November 2004		

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