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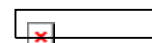
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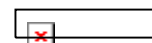
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## Introduction and summary

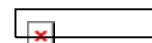


## Purpose and scope of the inspection



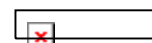
This inspection was carried out by the Office for Standards in Education under Section 163 of the Education Act 2002 in order to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

## Information about the school



Ringwood Waldorf School was originally opened in 1974. It has four kindergarten groups for 3½ - 6 year olds and eight classes for pupils aged between 6 and 14. A building programme is nearing completion. The school is part of the Sheiling Trust which owns the main site. It is a charitable trust which runs a special school (boarding), the Lantern residential community for people with special needs and Sturts Farm, a residential farming community for people with special needs. The school follows the Steiner Waldorf curriculum and is a member of the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship. At the age of 14, most pupils either go on to other Steiner schools nationally or enter the local comprehensive schools. The school provides for children across the full ability range.

## Summary of main findings



This is a good school. The approach taken by all staff is very consistent in supporting pupils' personal and educational development. It is a very caring community which enables the pupils to develop positive attitudes towards other members of their community as well as to their learning. Careful use of assessment and monitoring supports this work. The quality of the curriculum and teaching is good. The school has successfully managed its growth. There is a strong sense of community in partnership with parents.

#### **What the school does well**

- it promotes pupils' self-confidence, co-operation, consideration and sense of community;
- it has an effective Kindergarten;
- it provides effective help to pupils through the Learning Support Team;
- It provides musical and dramatic opportunities for performance at a high standard; and
- it provides worthwhile, additional experiences and facilities through links with the Sheiling Community.

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

- provide appropriate facilities for pupils who are sick or injured (paragraph 5(l)); and
- meet the requirements noted in section 7 of this report.

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

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

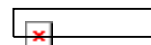
- devise a three-year plan to improve the accessibility of the premises.

#### **Next steps**

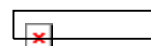
Whilst not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- continue to raise the quality of all teaching to that of the best; and
- consider developing further facilities for science and music.

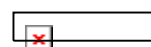
## Compliance with the regulations for registration



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



#### The quality of the curriculum



The school follows the Steiner Waldorf Curriculum, and successfully provides a good, broad and well-structured programme of study related to pupils' development.

The planning in the Kindergarten classes provides a clear structure for each day throughout the year and is developed jointly across all four classes. Learning is supported by careful lesson planning and evaluation of the lesson content as well as of individual pupil's responses. The kindergarten establishes clear expectations of behaviour which are carefully modelled by the adults. The curriculum successfully promotes pupils' self discipline and initiative. The kindergarten works well together as a unit. There is an emphasis on personal development through a good variety of creative and expressive arts.

In line with the Steiner Waldorf approach, formal writing and mathematical skills are taught after the age of six. Skills in English and mathematics are introduced through the main lesson, lasting two hours each morning. This focuses on a theme which is defined by the Steiner Waldorf Curriculum. Individual teachers plan lessons based on this program of study. The lessons cover mathematics, English, history, science, geography, singing and poetry recitation. A cross curricular approach to teaching is taken. Additionally, individual subject lessons include English, reading, story-time, mathematics, French, German, religion, music, orchestra, choir, art, handwork, woodwork, clay modelling, drawing, games, Eurythmy, drama and dancing. As in the main lesson, there is often a cross-curricular element to the teaching.

Technology is taught as part of the main lesson. Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills teaching is available to the oldest pupils, but ICT is not used to support learning across the curriculum.

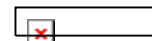
Aesthetic and creative study is a strength of the school and pupils have many opportunities for creative work. The green woodworking, for example, gives pupils an excellent opportunity to experience the transition from tree to fashioned wood. Pupils have extensive opportunities to learn to play musical instruments, working on art projects and musical and dramatic performances of a very high standard.

Personal, Social and Health Education is taught across the curriculum, particularly in the main lesson. Games and Eurythmy incorporate health education. Sex education is taught to pupils above the age of 12 (classes 7 & 8).

Although there is no formal careers guidance, class teachers provide individual guidance to pupils and assist them in making decisions about the next stage of their education. Choices of GCSE examinations are usually made in consultation with the destination school. There are good opportunities for pupils to be prepared for adult life. Pupils demonstrate great personal confidence

and good standards of behaviour and responsibility. They appreciate the breadth of the curriculum and the extensive learning experiences that it provides.

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



The quality of teaching was good or better in the majority of lessons and none was unsatisfactory. Pupils make good progress across the intellectual, physical and creative aspects of their work.

The quality of teaching in the Kindergarten classes is consistently good and effectively supported by shared planning, lesson evaluation and assessments of the pupils' needs. Adults work skilfully to ensure that the pupils are engaged in appropriate tasks. Clear routines support pupils' learning and lead to good self-discipline. The great majority of pupils use their initiative appropriately.

Good teaching is well-paced with a variety of well-chosen activities in the younger classes. A very good range of activities promotes pupils' skills and knowledge. Successful teaching in the older classes ensures that pupils are fully engaged. In a minority of lessons, too much time settling pupils caused some to lose interest. Where activities are challenging and the pace of teaching is good, the pupils respond well and make good progress. Teachers know their pupils well and have a good understanding of the subject matter being taught.

Pupils in the Kindergarten classes work and play effectively, developing extremely good social and personal skills. These aspects are further developed throughout the school and remain significant factors in the school's success. The school makes effective use of specialist teaching in several subjects, especially in creative and practical areas, including Eurythmy. Aesthetic and creative work is a strength of the school.

Teachers can receive support from Steiner Fellowship advisers to raise the quality of teaching to that of the best. There is good support provided by the College of Teachers for new staff and all teachers have a College companion with whom they can share ideas and discuss concerns.

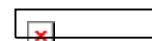
Assessment in classes is at least satisfactory. Teachers' verbal feedback is supported by written comments, although this is variable in quality and the usefulness of information provided. Assessment provides a clear means by which pupils' progress can be seen in the context of the school's aims.

The work of the Learning Support Team is a strength of the school. Their work includes pupil assessment, support in classes and pupil withdrawal. There is liaison with outside agencies such as the school doctor and educational psychologists. There is a clear programme of assessment for all classes including individual, whole class and group tests. A good range of up-to-date measures are used, covering literacy and numeracy skills and dyslexia. Good reports are maintained and shared with staff and parents as appropriate. Liaison with parents is a feature of this work.

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

Yes.

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



This is a strength of the school in enabling pupils to develop confidence and self-esteem. Pupils are encouraged and supported from the beginning of their school experience to gain confidence and be motivated in learning. This is evident throughout the school. The exceptionally high standard of drama productions and the very good work in music, in which all pupils have a role, demonstrates this.

Standards of behaviour around the school are high and pupils have extensive social skills. They are polite and considerate. The school's behaviour guidelines are comprehensive and pupils understand clearly what is expected of them. Pastoral care is of a high standard as teachers know the pupils well and promote moral values effectively.

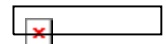
The daily main lesson specifically reinforces the community nature of the school so that all pupils behave responsibly towards each other. Pupils engage in fundraising activities together and there are collective festivals which are celebrated through the school year.

There is no specific lesson in citizenship for older children, but all areas of the curriculum reinforce issues about social responsibility and the nature and organisation of society. Pupils are encouraged to use public libraries for research. There are cultural trips and visits made by pupils which enhance their awareness of society and public institutions. The school provides pupils with the opportunity to appreciate and respect a range of cultural traditions across the whole curriculum, for example, in the use of stories, festivals and art. Good relationships between all pupils were observed throughout the school.

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

Yes.

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



The school has implemented a comprehensive range of policies to promote the welfare, health and safety of its pupils. These have a strong and consistent emphasis on promoting positive behaviour. Good consideration is given to the needs of pupils who are unable or unwilling to participate in activities, including ways of ensuring that they join in appropriately as soon as possible.

There are good opportunities for support and supervision, including meetings with parents, class discussion sessions and college surgeries which parents can attend. Records are well maintained and include risk assessments, records of sanctions imposed on pupils for disciplinary offences, and admission and attendance registers.

The school has not yet drawn up a three-year plan of action to meet the requirements of the DDA. Such a plan needs to be drafted.

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

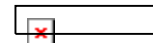
Yes.

***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



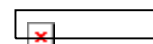
The School Council is a delegated committee of the Sheiling Trust and is composed of members of the school community and at least one trustee. The Council meets periodically, vets all school policies and ratifies all staff appointments.

The necessary Criminal Records Bureau checks are made on staff before appointment and other necessary checks, such as references and professional qualifications, are also carried out.

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

Yes.

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



The school occupies a large site with a good range of purpose-built premises, linked to outdoor areas which are well used

The premises are well maintained, clean and easily accessed. Classrooms which are purpose-designed are of good size for the numbers of pupils. The classrooms for the younger children, including the four kindergarten classes, have ready access to outside play areas. At present the accommodation for pupils who may be ill does not meet the regulations.

There is specialist accommodation for movement and movement therapy, a science laboratory, handwork room and woodwork shop. The hall, music room and administrative offices are in temporary buildings which are due to be demolished when the new accommodation is completed. This will significantly extend the school's facilities to include hall and theatre, a eurhythmy studio and new administrative offices.

Good use is made of the facilities of the Sheiling Trust as well as the surrounding environment and woodlands.

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

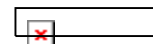
The school meets all but one of the requirements.

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

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

- provide appropriate facilities for pupils who are sick or injured (paragraph 5(l)).

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



The school provides a good range of information for parents and prospective parents. The school prospectus is an attractive and accessible document which provides an overview of the Steiner Waldorf approach and outlines the curriculum. The parents' handbook contains a full range of information about school regulations, policies and management. The school provides a regular newsletter for parents which includes updates to policies, announcements and a list of events. A good quality magazine is published each term which contains articles, news, old scholar news and examples of pupils' work. Further information and access to school policies is available on request.

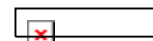
The school provides an annual written report to parents on the progress and attainment of their children. These cover the main lesson and other subjects taught across the curriculum. Partnership between parents and the school are considered to be very important and parent evenings are held once a term together with other regular opportunities for parents to meet with teachers.

The school maintains a strong sense of community in partnership with parents and there are many opportunities for parents to participate in the life of the school. These include fundraising, maintenance of buildings and school performances. Questionnaires issued to parents before the inspection indicate a high level of satisfaction with the school.

### ***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 policy and procedure for dealing with complaints which is made available to parents of pupils and prospective pupils. This meets the majority of the regulations, however it does not make clear that a written record will be kept of all complaints and the stage at which they were resolved. The procedure does not explain that all records, correspondence and statements will be kept confidential. The summary information provided in the Parents' Handbook should be updated to include this additional information.

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

The school meets most but not all of the requirements.

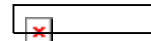
### ***What does the school need to do to comply with the regulations?***

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

- provide for written records to be kept of all complaints, indicating the stage at which they were resolved (regulation 7(j)); and
- provide for all correspondence, statements and records of complaints to be kept confidential (regulation 7(k)).



## School details



Name of school:	Ringwood Waldorf School
DfES ref number:	835/6022
Type of school:	Steiner
Status:	Independent
Age range of pupils:	3 - 14 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time pupils):	Boys 99, Girls 99, Total 198
Number on roll (part-time pupils):	Boys 13, Girls 7, Total 20
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need:	Boys 2, Girls 0, Total 2
Annual contributions (day pupils):	Based on promises - average around £2,500
Address of school:	Folly Farm Lane Ashley Ringwood Hampshire BH24 2NN
E-mail address:	mail@ringwood-waldorf-school.fsnet.co.uk
Telephone number:	01425 472664
Headteacher:	College of Teachers
Proprietor:	Sheiling Trust Ltd
Lead Inspector:	Dr Ian Draper
Dates of inspection:	23 - 26 May 2005

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