

# Rossendale School

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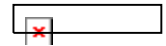
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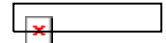
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**Introduction and summary**

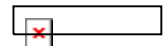


**Purpose and scope of the inspection**



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**

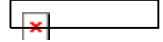


Rosendale School is an independent day and residential school for up to 56 pupils, established in 1989. It is registered and approved by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). There are 55 full-time pupils currently on roll; 51 boys and 4 girls. Eighteen of these are weekly boarders. All have a statement of special educational need (SEN) which identifies emotional and behavioural difficulties. Some pupils have additional needs relating to their learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disorders, attention deficit disorders or mental health problems. Pupils are referred to the school and funded by 14 local education authorities and/or social services departments in north-west England. The school has recently been acquired by The Priory Group but remains under the management of the original proprietors.

The main aim of the school is `to provide a positive education for all of its pupils and to enable them

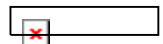
to experience success.'

### Summary of main findings



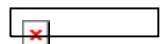
Rosendale School successfully meets its main aim. It provides a broad curriculum based on the National Curriculum and by the time pupils leave the school all achieve accreditation in a wide range of public examinations. Teaching is good. Where teachers have good expertise and high expectations of pupils the impact on learning is very good. Teachers provide tasks which challenge and improve pupils' knowledge and understanding. Most teachers use assessment information effectively to plan pupils' future learning. Behaviour within lessons and around the school is at least satisfactory and many pupils are unfailingly polite and courteous. There are too many incidents of physical restraint of pupils.

### What the school does well



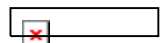
- it helps pupils regain an interest in education and recognise the benefit of academic achievement;
- it enables and encourages pupils to become accredited in a range of public examinations;
- it offers pupils a wide range of opportunities to develop self-confidence and feelings of self-worth;
- it provides good opportunities for pupils' to develop social skills;
- it makes very good provision for pupils' health and safety; and
- it provides specialist facilities which enable pupils to pursue learning to a good standard.

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



- provide the required information listed in section 6; and
- implement a complaints procedure in accordance with regulations as noted in section 7 of this report.

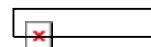
### What the school must do to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2002



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.

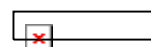
## Next steps



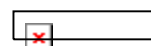
Whilst not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- evaluate teaching and learning more effectively and reduce the use of physical restraint.

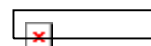
## Compliance with the regulations for registration



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



#### The quality of the curriculum



The school successfully provides a broad curriculum based on the National Curriculum. All subjects, appropriate to pupils in Years 4 - 11 are taught; they have policy statements and appropriate schemes of work. These ensure pupils make progress as they move through the school. Planning for all subjects is at least satisfactory but that for English is substantially better and would serve as a good model. Most planning takes good account of other aspects of pupils' learning; such as use of information and communication technology (ICT), development of skills in literacy and opportunities to apply skills in numeracy.

The school provides careers education which begins in Year 9, along with good opportunities for work experience for its senior pupils. Where appropriate, pupils have opportunities to attend the local college to undertake courses such as Introduction to building.

An appropriate amount of time is given to teaching skills in literacy and numeracy. The majority of pupils are confident in their discussions with others. In lessons they confidently answer questions and in these they show a good command and understanding of vocabulary. Learning undertaken in lessons is complemented by homework and this adds to the achievement of pupils.

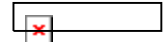
Pupils' needs, as identified in their statements of SEN, are met. Appropriate support is put in place to enable pupils to succeed. Typical of such support is the provision of 1-1 help which works well in most cases. Occasionally, pupils find the manner in which this is provided too overpowering and react against it.

The timetable allows sufficient time for most subjects. The school operates a 7 period day with most of these of 40 minute duration. Pupils are escorted between lessons and little time is lost. Most lessons, however, are scheduled as two periods and some pupils cannot sustain concentration for

this length of time. The adverse effect of this on younger pupils' behaviour is most noticeable.

The school makes good use of the local community and environment to enhance its curriculum. Substantial parts of the physical education provision take place away from the school. The outdoor education programme, for example, is organised well and sets demanding challenges for pupils. Recently some older pupils have successfully completed the 'Three peaks' expedition.

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



The quality of teaching and learning is good. At least half of all lessons seen were either good or very good. There are several factors which combine to provide effective learning for pupils. All teachers are committed to doing the best they can. Many have good levels of subject knowledge and expertise. This enables them to challenge pupils' learning to high levels. All teachers have high expectations of their pupils and they use these, along with good knowledge of pupils' abilities, to provide lessons which are challenging and engaging.

DfES data shows the school to be one of the most successful of its type in enabling pupils to succeed in public examinations. In 2004 almost 20 per cent of its pupils achieved 5 or more A\*-C grades in GCSE. In the same year all pupils, who were entered for public examinations, achieved at least at least 3 GCSE qualifications.

Learning support staff provide good help for pupils. Some of these staff are very skilled and pupils benefit from their timely and appropriate interventions. Support is less effective, and at times detrimental to the success of the lesson, when assistants are not deployed well. Their role becomes one of behaviour control and occasionally causes confrontations with pupils.

Most lessons are well planned. It is a general strength of planning in the curriculum that staff have a good awareness of the links that can be made with other subjects. Where this planning includes a range of methods for learning and appropriate tasks are used to support this, pupils' achievements are commensurately high. In ICT, for example, Year 8 pupils were required to produce an information booklet about the school. Part of the challenge was to include information relevant to the audience who might read it. Most pupils were wholly engrossed in the task and produced good quality booklets which showed a clear understanding of what they were expected to do. The considerable expertise of the teacher combined with good support from other staff made the lesson purposeful and enjoyable.

Good relationships provide a bedrock of the learning. The quality of these underpins the attitudes pupils bring to their work and they attempt new learning simply because the teacher has asked them. They do this enthusiastically. Numerous examples were seen of pupils' pleasure at their success. In this the school fully achieves one of its central aims - to successfully re-engage pupils in their education.

A majority of teachers manage pupils' behaviour well through a combination of challenging learning, appropriate tasks and good pace to their lessons. Where behaviour management is less effective, this is the result of over-fussy attention, by some support staff, to trivial misdemeanours. This interrupts the flow of learning.

Assessment practice in most subjects is satisfactory and the information derived from this enables the school to identify the attainment of pupils according to national norms. Most teachers use this information to identify progress and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding with appropriate tasks and new challenges. Consequently the work of each pupil is suitably modified and outcomes to lessons routinely evaluated. Summaries at the end of each lesson are used well by most staff

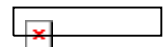
and add to the effectiveness of learning.

The school has a policy for the marking of pupils' work but this is not followed in all cases. Only in the best examples are constructive comments included. These explain to the pupil what it is they need to do next in order to improve their work. The school has good procedures to identify the starting points of pupils when they are first admitted to the school. Frequent monitoring enables the school to substantiate pupils' achievements as they move through the school.

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

Yes.

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



The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It successfully develops pupils' self-esteem and confidence, through a comprehensive personal, social, health and citizenship programme. The school has considered well how these aspects can be incorporated into the wider curriculum.

There is a strong commitment to improving pupils' self-esteem. The provision for sport and outdoor education in particular makes a very effective contribution to pupils' feelings of self-worth. A wealth of photographs on display throughout the school demonstrates the commitment to providing opportunities for pupils to test themselves in challenging and demanding situations. For example, pupils have undertaken activities such as rock-climbing, canoeing and gorge-walking. Pupils also compete against other schools in a range of sports.

Regular assemblies provide opportunities for pupils to reflect sensitively on their life and those of others. These moments of reflection, together with prayers and the frequent encouragement to consider the impact of their behaviour on others, provide good opportunities for pupils' spiritual experience and social development.

The provision for pupils' moral development is good. Pupils are effectively taught the difference between right and wrong. This is achieved mainly through the school's approach to management of behaviour. Where this is applied consistently and sympathetically the impact is even greater. The school is a place of calm and order where respect for others is actively encouraged. Regular fundraising for local, national and international charities enables pupils to contribute to, and to gain understanding of, the lives of others less fortunate than themselves.

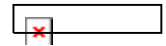
Pupils' social development is fostered very well. The strong ethos of teamwork among staff provides a good role-model for pupils' social development. Pupils', sometimes fragile, relationships with their peers are supported well. Their social development is enhanced through the school's regular routines, modelling of appropriate social skills by staff and participation in activities where they can practise taking turns and sharing. Pupils are also given opportunities to take responsibility for small tasks which promote their independence and satisfaction in doing things for others.

The programme of citizenship education provides pupils with a broad, general knowledge of public institutions and services in England. Pupils can now enter for the GCSE examination in citizenship. This is complemented by visits to places such as the Magistrates Court and local library and by visitors to the school, such as local and national politicians. The school provides a good range of opportunities to develop cultural awareness and understanding through assemblies, the study of different lands and cultures in humanities, the appreciation of drama and literature from other cultures in English and the celebration of festivals from the major world faiths.

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

Yes.

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



The school works effectively to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety. There are generally good relationships and respect between staff and pupils. Discussion with pupils confirms they appreciate this concern. Pupils are supervised well because staff are vigilant. This minimises the potential for problems with behaviour.

Where serious misbehaviours may occur there are rigorous procedures and guidelines for the use of physical intervention. Meticulous records are maintained of every incident requiring such intervention. However, these records also indicate that while there has been a reduction from 174 incidents in 2003/04 to 66 in the current year, the headteacher acknowledges that this number is unacceptably high. There is no agreed strategy to secure a reduction in this number nor is it identified as a priority in the school improvement plan.

The school has comprehensive, written policies to safeguard pupils' welfare. A detailed child protection policy sets out clearly the roles and responsibilities of all staff, including the headteacher, who is the named Child Protection Officer. This policy is supplemented by informative guidance to help staff identify and respond to the signs of any child protection issue.

There is a comprehensive policy to prevent bullying. Pupils are given a helpful booklet when they join the school and posters are displayed around the school that provide advice on how to seek help if they are being bullied. A record book for sanctions is kept in line with regulations.

There are extensive and effective arrangements which ensure pupils' health and safety. The school's new proprietors have carried out a detailed audit of the site and facilities. However, there is insufficient provision for forced air ventilation in either the design and technology (DT) room or the science room. There is a succinct First Aid policy and there are trained First Aiders available at all times. The policy for visits away from the school meets requirements and this is implemented consistently. Appropriate fire risk assessments have been undertaken and these have been validated by the Fire Service.

Attendance and admission registers are kept appropriately. School policies reflect compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act (2002) and the school has produced an appropriate three-year access plan which sets out how it will make adaptations to the curriculum and to teaching. It does not however, set out in sufficient detail how the site and accommodation will be adapted over time to ensure equal access.

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

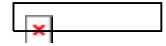
Yes.

***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

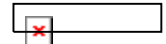


The staff of the school includes 12 teachers, all of whom have qualified status. Learning support is provided by a mix of staff from the residences and others employed for the purpose. The procedures to obtain clearance from the Criminal Records Bureau for all staff, prior to confirmation of their appointment are secure. Up to the time the school was taken over by the Priory Group no medical checks were undertaken to determine the fitness of all staff. Arrangements for this are now in place.

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

Yes.

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



The school is located in three buildings on the same site. These provide very good accommodation to support pupils' learning. The oldest, the original farm house, provides residential accommodation and ancillary facilities as well as two classrooms for younger pupils. The former proprietors undertook a major building project which more than doubled the space available. This new development provides high quality and generously sized teaching accommodation as well as facilities for the disabled. This building also provides specialist classrooms such as those for science, DT, food technology and ICT. A third building comprises well-maintained, temporary accommodation.

Externally the five acres of grounds provide safe and satisfactory areas in which pupils can play. A small all-weather surface is a valuable facility, enabling pupils to play outside during inclement weather.

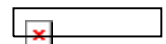
Fittings and resources throughout the school are good and these fully support pupils' learning. Pupils care for their surroundings and generally treat these with respect. Where any damage might be caused this is quickly repaired.

Pupils' work is exhibited throughout the school. The care used to assemble displays indicates an appreciation of pupils' work and underlines the quality of pupils' achievements.

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

Yes.

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



The school has a wealth of information which it could provide to parents and others but, in some instances, parents may be unaware that this exists. The school prospectus does not contain all of the required information which should be made available to parents. Details of this are listed below.



Further omissions, which the school is obliged to make available to parents but does not have to send out, are also listed.

The school provides annual reports to parents. The quality of these is good and they enable parents to have a good understanding of how well their child is progressing. Nine out of ten parents who replied to the inspection questionnaire agreed with this.

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

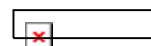
No.

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

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

- provide the contact details of the company which owns the school. These details should include the address and telephone number of its registered or principal office (paragraph 6(2)(b));
- provide the name and address for correspondence of the chair of governors (paragraph 6(2)(c));
- provide particulars of the school's policy on and arrangements for admissions, discipline and exclusions (paragraph 6(2)(e));
- publish to parents and prospective parents the availability of policies relating to bullying, child protection, health and safety, the promotion of good behaviour, and sanctions adopted in the event of pupils misbehaving (paragraph 6(2)(h)); and
- publish to parents and prospective parents the availability of particulars of academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations (paragraph 6(2)(i)).

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



The school has a complaints policy which it makes available to parents on request. A useful booklet is provided to pupils when they are admitted to the school. This gives details of how they may register a complaint, either to someone in the school or to an external person. The procedures are unclear and do not comply with regulations.

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

No.

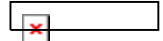
***What does the school need to do to comply with the regulations?***

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

- ensure the procedure sets out clear timescales for the management of the complaint (paragraph 7(c));
- provide for a formal complaint to be made in writing if parents are not satisfied with the response to an informal complaint (paragraph 7(e));
- where there is a panel hearing of a complaint ensure that one person on the panel is independent of the management and running of the school (paragraph 7(g));
- allow for parents to attend the panel hearing, and, if they wish, to be accompanied (paragraph 7(h));
- authorise the panel to make findings and recommendations and ensure that the

- o complainant, proprietors, headteacher, and, where relevant, the person complained about, are given a copy of any findings and recommendations (paragraph 7(i));
- o provide for written records to be kept of all complaints indicating whether they were resolved at the preliminary stage, or whether they proceeded to a panel hearing (paragraph 7(j)); and
- o ensure the procedure provides that correspondence, statements and records of complaints will be kept confidential (paragraph 7(k)).

## School details



|  |   |          |          |
|--|---|----------|----------|
| Name of school:  | Rossendale School   |          |          |
| DfES ref number:   | 888/6020  |          |          |
| Type of school:  | Special school, for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. |          |          |
| Status:  | Independent   |          |          |
| Age range of pupils:   | 8 - 16 years  |          |          |
| Gender of pupils:  | Mixed   |          |          |
| Number on roll (full-time pupils):                             | Boys 51,  | Girls 4, | Total 55 |
| Number of boarders:  | Boys 17,  | Girls 1, | Total 18 |
| Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need: | Boys 51,  | Girls 4, | Total 55 |
| Annual fees (day pupils):                                      | £25,089   |          |          |
| Annual fees (boarders):  | £35,580   |          |          |
| Address of school:   | Bamford Road<br>Ramsbottom<br>Bury, Lancashire<br>BL0 0RT               |          |          |
| E-mail address:  | rossendale@piorigroup.com   |          |          |
| Telephone number:  | 01706 822779  |          |          |
| Fax number:  | 01706 821457  |          |          |
| Headteacher:   | Mr D G Duncan   |          |          |
| Proprietor:  | The Piority Group   |          |          |
| Lead Inspector:  | Mr Tom Smith  |          |          |
| Dates of inspection:   | 23 - 26 May 2005  |          |          |

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