

Wey House School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125466
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	315242
Inspection date	29 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Kay Charlton

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	7-11
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number on roll	
School	35
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sue Knight
Headteacher	Mr Paul Sanderson
Date of previous school inspection	7 December 2004
School address	Horsham Road Bramley Guildford GU5 0BJ
Telephone number	01483 898130
Fax number	01483 894642

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues, achievement and standards, teaching and learning, leadership and management and personal development and well-being, gathering evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and documents. Parents' questionnaires and discussions with pupils, governors and staff also contributed to the judgements. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Wey House is designated for boys with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties and all have statements of special educational need. Increasingly, pupils entering the school have a much greater diversity and complexity of need than in the past. They are predominantly of white British origin and all have English as their home language. In recent years, there has been a period of significant staff absence and high turnover, particularly amongst the teaching staff. The school provides boarding provision for up to eighteen pupils, although very few of the pupils were in residence at the time of the inspection. The school has gained the Healthy Schools, the Bronze Eco Schools and The Investors in People awards. It is a member of the Guildford Confederation of Schools.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Wey House School provides satisfactory education for its pupils. It has several strong features, notably in pupils' personal development, and pupils and parents are very positive in their views. As one parent commented, 'My son's life has become one where he loves going to school'. However, the quality of the school's provision for pupils' academic needs is not as strong and results in satisfactory achievement.

Personal development is a cornerstone of the school's work and a very strong feature of the provision. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and attendance are good and for the vast majority of pupils this represents significant improvement from first starting at the school. This success is based on well-established systems to promote and reward their every effort. Pupils are proud of their school and are keen to point out how it has helped them. They enjoy the calm and purposeful lessons and speak very positively about the extra activities that they undertake, such as horse riding and climbing. They have gained good understanding of healthy eating and the importance of keeping safe. There are few instances of bullying and pupils are very clear about what they should do if any occurs. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils learn to reflect and can explain how the 'thought for the week' helps them think things through. In a wide range of activities, they work successfully as members of a group. They show respect for each other and support each other well. Pupils are aware that their views count and, particularly through the school council, make a positive contribution to the school. They actively support others less fortunate than themselves and are very aware of the need to take care of the environment.

As a result of satisfactory teaching and learning, the achievements of pupils of different backgrounds and abilities are satisfactory. By age 11, standards are below average, but this is reasonable given pupils' below average attainment on entry. Staff work very well as a team and they use praise very effectively to improve both pupils' concentration and behaviour. Teachers plan lessons conscientiously and make good use of the interactive whiteboards to make learning fun. There are models of good practice, particularly in lessons taken by members of the senior team. However, teaching is too variable and not all staff make best use of pupils' learning targets or a sufficiently wide range of teaching styles, such as 'hands-on learning', to challenge the learning of all pupils. Consequently, some pupils do not achieve as well as they might.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and satisfactory overall. It goes a long way to meeting pupils' needs, in their personal development but is not so successful in ensuring that they achieve well academically. There is a very good level of enrichment, for example visits to outdoor activity centres, that adds to pupils' enjoyment. However, literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) are not always used sufficiently in different subjects of the curriculum to extend and reinforce pupils' learning. The school has well-focussed action plans in place to address this issue, and also to increase the emphasis given to life skills, so that the curriculum fully meets the needs of the school's changing population.

The care pupils receive is of a high quality. Staff give good support to pupils' personal development, including the use of a range of therapies. Health and safety are high on everyone's agenda and pupils feel safe and learn to trust others. They say that 'There is always an adult or a friend to turn to if we have a problem'. The guidance that they receive for their academic development is less effective. Although pupils are given regular feedback it is not always specific

enough to ensure that they are clear about how they might improve their work or meet their learning targets.

The school's track record since the last inspection shows that the leadership and management, and the school's capacity to improve are satisfactory. In the current academic year, there is a renewed sense of optimism and determination because there is now a stable staffing situation. Consequently, there is a greater consistency of approach and leaders are beginning to fully realise their roles, particularly in monitoring. The headteacher has a very clear vision and the commitment to ensure that planned changes take place. He is working well with the recently established senior team to bring about improvements in classroom practice. The ethos that all pupils, many of whom have experienced failure in their previous school, deserve a second chance pervades school life. It ensures a common sense of purpose amongst staff and, along with the school's commitment to professional development, is helping to bring about school improvement, particularly in this more stable situation.

The school's self-evaluation procedures are satisfactory. A programme of focussed monitoring has been in place for a relatively short time but, even so, the school's judgements of its overall effectiveness are accurate. These are based largely on the discerning judgements of the headteacher. Governors show insight into the changing needs of the school and ask some searching questions. However, along with other leaders, they are at an early stage of using information from monitoring to bring about improvement in pupils' achievements. Subject coordinators are developing their skills well and are making an increasingly active contribution to whole school reviews. The school's strong links with a wide range of agencies, for example the community police, give very effective support to pupils' personal development. Along with the strong links with parents, these are also helping to take the school forward.

Effectiveness of boarding provision

Grade: 1

The most recent Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) report judges the provision to be outstanding and notes that staff address pupils' personal development needs especially well through a range of purposeful and enjoyable activities. Staff from the boarding provision work very effectively with those in school to ensure consistency of approach, particularly in terms of the care pupils receive and in their personal development. In line with developments in the main school, they are looking to make more use of pupils' learning targets to guide their academic development when they are involved in after-school activities.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the teaching of all staff fully challenges all pupils.
- Ensure that leaders, at all levels, use monitoring information to bring about sustained improvement in pupils' achievements.
- Implement the planned improvements to the curriculum so that it fully meets the changing needs of the school's population.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of boarding provision	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

11 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wey House School, Guildford, GU5 0BJ

Thank you for all the help you gave me when I visited your school on 29 January 2008. Many of you told me how effective it has been in helping you to improve your behaviour and attendance. You feel that the staff and your friends are always ready to help you. I agree that these are the real strengths of the school. You are proud of your school and I could see that you enjoy coming by the way you arrived in the morning. You think some of the activities that you take part in, such as horse riding and climbing, are especially good. I agree with this, and I also noticed that most of you like it when the teachers use the interactive whiteboards.

The senior team have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are keen to see Wey House improve further. I have asked them to work with the staff so that they can all help you achieve your best in lessons, for example, by staff making it clear to you how you might improve your work in order to reach your learning targets. I have also asked the school to use the information about your progress to make sure that your achievements improve further in the future. The school has some well thought out plans to develop the curriculum and I want these to be put into action. By trying your hardest at all times you, also, can help to make sure that Wey House School improves.

Yours sincerely,

Kay Charlton

Lead Inspector