

Chartwell House School

Independent Special School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	873/6018
Unique Reference Number	110931
Inspection number	320736
Inspection dates	8 - 9 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Declan McCarthy

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE
T 08456 404040
www.ofsted.gov.uk



Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, in order to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school

Chartwell House School provides long term residential education and care for up to nine boys (eight boarders and one day student) aged 11 to 16 with a statement of special educational needs for behavioural, emotional, or social difficulties. Currently there are five students on roll aged 12 to 15, including four who are looked after by local authorities. Prior to admission, students have usually experienced prolonged periods of disruption, which has had a negative impact on their progress. The school provides a structured environment with consistent boundaries and well-known expectations within a family setting. The school, which is a family based business, was established in 1 April 1987. It is one of a group of three managed by the family and is situated in a large detached house in the village of Newton, three miles from Wisbech. It offers a high standard of accommodation and classrooms attached to the main house provide an appropriate range of facilities. There is good access to health and leisure services and the school has its own transport. Students are referred through education or social services departments. The school had a social care inspection in July 2007

Evaluation of the school

The school provides a good quality of education for its students. As one parent said, 'I cannot speak highly enough of the care and education my son has received at Chartwell.' Excellent relationships are at the heart of the very strong family ethos of the school, which enables students to flourish and re-engage with education. The school fulfils its aims effectively so that students leave as confident individuals ready to move on to further education. Good boarding provision and an exceptional range of residential visits considerably enhance students' personal development. They express their individuality through good opportunities to show initiative and take responsibility. The school has made good progress on the few minor points identified in its recent social care inspection report and now meets all the national minimum standards.

Quality of education

The curriculum is good. It has a broad range of subjects, including the National Curriculum with a strong emphasis on the development of literacy, numeracy, science and information communication technology (ICT) skills. Pupils are provided

with a broad range of experiences in art, drama, geography, history, physical education and woodwork. There are good opportunities for enriching learning through activities within the local community such as Karate, golf, football and the use of a local swimming pool. There is outstanding provision for residential trips where all students participate with great enthusiasm in an outdoor and adventurous residential visit and a water based, foreign, residential activity each year. This is not only highly enjoyable but contributes greatly to their spiritual and social development by raising their self esteem and confidence. They experienced a sense of awe and wonder when, for example, visiting the Barcelona Football Stadium and were enabled to develop good team skills.

The development of the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) curriculum enables students to achieve not only the Bronze or Silver Awards but also the Certificate in Personal Effectiveness (CoPEEE) and the ASDAN award for residential and adventurous activities. Students are developing good skills in ICT and are making good progress. For example, they are successful in learning how to publish and show information in more interesting ways, such as accounts of their visit to Sandringham, the design and construction of a pinhole camera and display about Chromatography. They also use ICT effectively to improve their presentation of ASDAN course work.

Good provision is made for students' special educational needs in accordance with their statements. For example, there is effective planning which ensures that the curriculum and teaching are always suitably matched to meet the needs of students in each subject. Provision for personal, social and health education and citizenship is good and includes both taught ASDAN modules and permeation through the life of the school. For example, the 24-hour curriculum contributes very well to students' personal development. Activities after school and at weekends effectively enhance the curriculum for these pupils and helps to promote their understanding of their responsibilities to themselves and others.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. Students' behaviour is well managed so that their behaviour and attitude in lessons is good and, on occasion, excellent. When the very few incidents of minor disruption occur, staff manage this effectively so that students refocus on their learning quickly. The very good leadership of the headteacher has ensured that staff are well trained and use their good subject knowledge to ensure pupils learn new skills quickly. Staff always have high expectations for learning. This was seen in the consistent good use of questioning in lessons to move learning forward. As a result of teachers' good subject knowledge and high expectations, students make good academic progress and achieve good examination results. All staff have excellent relationships with pupils, so that they want to learn and try hard. Staff make good use of learning resources including ICT although there is no interactive whiteboard to further stimulate students' interest and imagination in learning.

There are good systems of assessment in place which include individual education planning, transition planning, annual reviews of statements, and weekly and daily monitoring of progress. Pupils also have their own records of achievement and parents are sent regular reports on progress. Teachers make good use of assessment information in planning so that lessons are well planned and activities are well structured to engage students in effective learning. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the particular needs and abilities of individual students and use this well to ensure good progress. Students' work is marked effectively so they know what they must do to improve. Although these systems are used effectively and students are involved in assessing their own performance in ASDAN work, they are not usually involved in assessing their own progress at the end of each lesson. Teachers make good use of the outcomes of standardised tests to set targets and to inform their planning. Students make good progress academically and very good progress in their personal development. As a result, all students who leave in Year 11 move on to further education. Pupils also make good progress towards their individual targets and in their accredited courses.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their behaviour is also good because staff are successful in helping them to understand what constitutes acceptable behaviour and what is not acceptable. Attendance is very good and reflects students' excellent enjoyment of school. The stable environment and the commitment of staff ensure students receive a warm welcome when they arrive so that they quickly settle and make friends. A key reason why students enjoy their learning so much and achieve well is because all staff have high expectations of them. In turn, pupils have a clear understanding of the expectations of staff. As a result, strong relationships are forged which promote self-esteem, helping the pupils to grow in confidence and to recognise their own self worth. Students show respect, trust and consideration for the feelings of others.

A regular programme of visits provides pupils with a wide range of opportunities to develop their social skills and prepare them well for their future lives. They display positive attitudes to work and are becoming increasingly independent and confident to participate in decision making. Cultural diversity is addressed well through art, music and humanities. Students contribute well to their immediate community by helping at the village fete, taking part in regular meetings, helping to keep the environment clean and raising funds to support charities. They have a good knowledge of public institutions. The school is successful in its mission to introduce students to purposeful learning through a structured environment offering support and guidance, thereby effectively opening avenues to lifelong learning.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

Provision for the welfare, health and safety of the students is good. Staff are very safety conscious and successful in ensuring students are kept safe and secure. The

boarding accommodation is of a high standard, and students are very appreciative of their environment and the wealth of recreational facilities provided. Health and safety, bullying and behaviour policies are all in place and take close account of the individual needs of the students. There are detailed risk assessments procedures relating to individual student behaviour and for checking arrangements stringently before visits are taken outside school. Policies and procedures for first aid and medical care are implemented well. The policy for managing behaviour is strongly based on the principle of rewarding good behaviour and has a very positive impact. As a result, students are very respectful of one another and staff. Students are encouraged to follow healthy lifestyles and to adopt safe practices. They are well informed of the dangers of drugs and alcohol abuse. They willingly participate in healthy eating and take regular exercise. The school has yet to write a three-year accessibility plan in order to comply with the Disability Discrimination legislation.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

Effective procedures are in place to ensure that all members of staff are fully checked for their suitability to work with students. The school has a single central record of all staff checks, their full qualifications and how long they have been at the school. However, not all proprietors have been subject to the thorough checks routinely made for staff and proprietors working in the school.

School's premises and accommodation

The school comprises a large classroom base and a smaller extension with ICT suite and a practical wood working area. Classrooms are well equipped with sufficient resources to deliver the curriculum. Classroom display is of a high quality and helps to inspire confidence and raise student's self esteem as they see their work on display. The premises are in a good state of repair, are well maintained and kept very clean and tidy. As a result, students respect their surroundings and keep their own rooms in good order. The ground floor benefits from three reception rooms including a dining room where pupils have communal meals. This promotes good social development. There is a popular games room and games area, a well resourced kitchen, and sufficient well maintained washrooms for staff and pupils. The first floor consists of eight individual bedrooms and a staff sleeping in room. All are nicely furnished and personalised to individual students' tastes. There is a good number of shower facilities and toilets and the overall standard of decoration is good. Within the house there are additional areas for private study and confidential meetings. The outdoor grounds are spacious and students also make good use of the nearby park and local leisure facilities for recreation or sport. This has a positive impact on their progress and personal development as they stay fit and healthy.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

A satisfactory range of information is provided for parents, carers and local authorities. The new prospectus contains all the necessary information about the

proprietor, headteacher, aims and ethos of the school, details of admissions and approaches to discipline and sanctions. There is a range of other appropriate information available in the school that can be viewed easily at the school reception office. The information pack for parents makes it clear what additional information is available in the school. The school has a new policy for dealing with complaints and is aware that it has to maintain a record of formal complaints made against it, but there have been none in the past academic year. Parents receive regular reports on their children's progress and have just been sent information about the school's academic results last year. However the school does not provide local authorities with a breakdown of their income and how this is spent on individual students.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school has appropriate procedures for handling complaints. Parents are made aware that details of the procedures are available on request.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005, with the exception of those listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of suitability of proprietor and staff (standard 4) and must:

- Ensure that appropriate checks are made on the two retired proprietors to confirm their identity, right to work in the UK, and that they have had an enhanced CRB check (paragraph 4B(4 and 5)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information for parents, carers and others (standard 6) and must:

- provide particulars of income and expenditure for each pupil on an annual basis to their respective Local Authorities (paragraph 6(7)).

In order to comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2002 the school should devise a three-year accessibility plan.

What the school could do to improve further

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

- introduce an interactive whiteboard into the main classroom to support teaching and learning across subjects in that room
- further involve pupils in assessing their own progress against learning outcomes in lessons.

School details

Name of school	Chartwell House School
DCSF number	873/6018
Unique reference number	110931
Type of school	Special
Status	Independent
Date school opened	1 April 1987
Age range of pupils	11-16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 5
Number of boarders	Boys: 5
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 5
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 4
Annual fees (day pupils)	£62,400
Annual fees (boarders)	£137,800
Address of school	Goodens Lane Newton Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE13 5HQ
Telephone number	01945 870793
Fax number	01945 870885
Email address	chartwellgroup@btconnect.com
Headteacher	Mrs Debra Wright
Proprietor	Mr C E Wright
Reporting inspector	Declan McCarthy AI
Dates of inspection	8 - 9 January 2008