

# Waterloo Lodge School

Independent Special School

DCSF Registration Number	888/6026
Unique Reference Number	119853
Inspection number	321807
Inspection dates	30 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Greg Sorrell

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).

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## 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.

This was a light touch inspection (LTI) which focussed principally on the quality of education provided by the school; its provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and the improvements the school has made since its last inspection.

## Information about the school

Waterloo Lodge School is an independent special school for students aged 11 to 16 years who have a statement of special educational needs relating to behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The school opened in June 1995 and currently has 38 pupils on roll, of whom 7 are girls.

The school's premises are a Georgian Grade II listed former country house on the outskirts of Chorley, Lancashire. In 2003, the school had a change of proprietor which is now, Acorn Care and Education Group. The school aims to provide a caring structured learning environment in which all pupils develop academically, socially, emotionally and morally to their full potential and in which pupils and staff feel safe secure and valued. The school was last inspected in February 2004.

## Evaluation of the school

Waterloo Lodge provides a good quality of education for its students. It makes good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and this is shown through the positive relationships and behaviour of the pupils. It is successful in meeting its aims. Parents and referring local authorities report that they are very satisfied with the work of the school. The school has implemented the few recommendations of the last inspection report and has maintained its strengths. It meets all but one regulation.

## Quality of education

The quality of education provided is good and enables the pupils to make good academic progress and improve their attitudes to study. The curriculum is satisfactory and is supported by very clear policies and planning based on the National Curriculum. There is an appropriate focus on the improvement of basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Other programmes include science, design and technology, information and communication technology (ICT), humanities, art, physical education and personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE). At Key Stage 4, and

sometimes earlier, the pupils achieve success in English, mathematics, science, ICT and art in GCSE and Entry Level examinations. In addition to citizenship education, there is a good careers education and guidance programme. Plans to strengthen links with the community and colleges of further education are appropriate. The omission of music and a modern foreign language is a weakness in the curriculum for Key Stage 3 pupils as it is required by their statements of special educational needs. At the end of the last academic year, all leavers went on to education, employment or training which represents good progress in view of their difficulties.

The quality of teaching is good. A significant strength evident in the best lessons is the emphasis on practical experiences that engage the pupils and reduce the need to focus on behaviour. For example, in a mathematics lesson, the pupils used wooden rods of different lengths to deduce the dimension ratios of a right-angled triangle. In science pupils looked at the properties of saturated oils following revision using an interactive whiteboard. Specialist subject knowledge enables the teachers to offer good challenge in lessons and they receive good support from the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) who provides valuable input to staff and pupils. For example, pupils with reading difficulties are given individual support and staff receive guidance about the reading age level of written materials. The SENCO has rightly identified the need for additional training in specific learning difficulties. The role of teaching assistants is effective in supporting pupils' learning and not just in monitoring behaviour; this is especially true when they take an active part in lessons.

The teachers' assessment of individual pupils is good, although occasionally, it is not used to best effect, for example, the same tasks are sometimes provided for significantly different abilities. Comprehensive records of work and assessment have a large impact on pupils' examination outcomes, for example in art. There is increasing involvement of pupils in assessment of their own learning. Monitoring of classroom practice by the managers is undertaken regularly and the school is in the early stages of data analysis to make even better use of the information it holds on pupils.

## Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their economic and personal well-being is effectively promoted through the education they receive and by the focussed support to improve their relationships with peers and adults. The pupils gain confidence and increase their enjoyment of school as they respond to regular opportunities to reflect on their achievements and behaviour.

The school council is currently not active due to staff absence although it did play a decisive role in selecting the new school uniform. Pupils regularly express their views in daily meetings including 'circle time' where discussions of feelings are regularly promoted. Within the curriculum, they study other faiths although in view of the multi-cultural context of their local communities, this aspect is under-emphasised. The pupils respond well to the positive role models provided by staff.

The pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. Occasionally, some pupils find it hard to settle down to work but most respond well to encouragement. Once issues have been resolved, attitudes to learning and behaviour improve. They respond positively to the school's system that recognises and rewards good behaviour and achievement. Annual fund raising for the local children's hospice enables them to demonstrate an awareness of the needs of others less fortunate than themselves. Pupils are regularly encouraged to consider how to communicate effectively and the impact of their actions. During lunch and breaktimes pupils behave well, particularly in the small dining areas which are due for expansion along with some teaching areas. They show a willingness to opt for healthier meal options and participation rates in physical activity are high. Their attendance is good and for many is markedly improved from previous settings. The school goes to great lengths to secure regular attendance and liaises effectively with all agencies to maximise opportunities. As a result, attendance rates are markedly improved from previous settings, although a minority persist with irregular attendance. Visits are made to local places of interest such as nature reserves, sports and outdoor centres. Most pupils live a long way from school and extra curricular activities are limited as a result. However, an occasional overnight activity trip has proved successful in strengthening personal development and confidence in unfamiliar settings.

### Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety

The school safeguards students well. All staff receive regular training on child protection and the designated person has received training from the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The school's recently amended central staff register meets requirements, as do the procedures for appointing new staff.

The provision for the pupils' welfare, health and safety is good. The school works closely with parents, carers, and relevant agencies to promote the pupils' well-being. The school uses all available information as well as their own initial assessments to establish appropriate education and behaviour support plans. The small group and individual attention provided also has a positive impact upon the pupils' development.

The school's policies promote the pupils' health, safety and welfare effectively. The supervision of pupils and risk assessments are appropriate within school and during off-site visits. School staff encourage pupils to follow healthy lifestyles, for example, healthy options in the breakfast club and lunch-times. Regular exercise is a key element of the timetable and good links with Connexions, an external advice agency, enable the pupils to understand issues related to drugs and sexual health. Regular visits from a trained counsellor and good relationships with staff ensure pupils know they can talk to trusted adults.

The school's comprehensive policies for the promotion of good behaviour and for administering first aid are implemented well. All accidents, incidents and interventions by staff are recorded in detail. The systems to manage challenging

behaviours are effective. Systematic checks on equipment, attention to fire safety and prompt on-site maintenance ensure that the pupils are in a safe environment. The school has planned well to increase accessibility to the premises and curriculum and has produced an appropriate plan.

## 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 the one listed below.

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the curriculum and teaching (standard 1) and must:

- provide music and a modern foreign language to Key Stage 3 pupils so that the curriculum meets the requirements of their statements of special educational needs (paragraph 1(2)(e)).

## 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:

- make more effective use of pupils' achievement data by improved analysis of the progress made by all groups of pupils
- enrich the curriculum with greater attention to other cultures represented in the pupils' home towns.

## School details

Name of school	Waterloo Lodge School		
DCSF number	888/6026		
Unique reference number	119853		
Type of school	Special		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1995		
Age range of pupils	11-16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 31	Girls: 7	Total: 38
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 31	Girls: 7	Total: 38
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 9	Girls: 2	Total: 11
Annual fees (day pupils)	£26,148		
Address of school	Preston Road Chorley Lancashire PR6 7AX		
Telephone number	01257 230894		
Fax number	01257 272372		
Email address	admin@waterloolodge.co.uk		
Headteacher	Mr G Sinclair		
Acting headteacher	Mrs J Taylor		
Proprietor	Acorn Care and Education		
Reporting inspector	Greg Sorrell		
Dates of inspection	30 April 2008		