

Brewood Middle School

Independent Special School

Inspection Report

DCSF Registration Number	886/6103
Unique Reference Number	135018
Inspection number	330402
Inspection dates	11 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Michael Thirkell AI

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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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.

This was a light touch inspection (LTI) which focused 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

Brewood is an independent special school located in Ramsgate which caters for boys and girls who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. All have experienced disruption in their education with consequent poor educational progress and loss of self-esteem. Registered for pupils between the ages of 5 and 13 years of age, the school currently provides daily education for nine young people between the ages of 10 and 13. The majority of pupils are in care in local residences, including those run by the school's parent company, Lynstead Children's Services, and the minority live at home. They are placed at the school by several local authorities in the South East of England. The mission statement of the school is to *'provide a therapeutic, secure, caring environment in which to teach its pupils and prepare them for their return to mainstream education'*. All but one pupil have a statement of special educational need. The school was last inspected by Ofsted in January, 2006.

Evaluation of the school

Brewood is a successful school. It provides a good quality of education in the context of its aims and pupils make good progress, in terms of both their personal and academic development. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education. The pupils are well cared for and staff work hard to ensure that they are provided with stimulating learning opportunities. Provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school has made considerable progress since the last inspection, but needs to ensure that all aspects of welfare are secure.

Quality of education

The quality of the curriculum is good. It provides pupils with a curriculum that in most respects meets their needs very well and which is broad and balanced. The provision is suitable to meet the requirements of the statements of special need held by the majority of pupils. The provision is generally well documented. Good planning is supported by a curriculum policy which reflects the school's aims, by carefully considered schemes of work and other published material, including National Curriculum guidance. The curriculum is carefully structured to ensure that it contains

those essential elements that are designed to promote pupils' developing social skills and self-esteem. Close attention is given to developing pupils' speaking and listening skills, as well as their literacy and numeracy.

The subjects available for both Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 pupils broadly follow the National Curriculum but also include Spanish for both age ranges. A course in personal, social and health education (PSHE) is carefully provided to ensure an appropriate range of learning opportunities that are matched to the nature of pupils' needs. The course includes elements of citizenship, which is further supported by visits made as integral parts of the pupils' learning experience. Although the school ensures that pupils have a suitably wide range of learning activities, which includes opportunities for rigorous physical exercise, it is aware of the need to improve the range of physical education (PE) and games that are available. Careers education is provided for the pupils linked to their transition to senior school and supported by the local Connexions service. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to be prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of the next stage of their education, but also for adult life, through this and their broad learning experiences within the context of their needs.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. Teaching is good and often outstanding. Teachers have appropriate subject knowledge; they plan their lessons carefully and in appropriate detail. Because they are well structured, lessons invariably proceed at a good pace. Teachers are appropriately trained and skilled in behaviour management. They are ably supported by teaching assistants who are well briefed and therefore able to play a positive role in lessons. The effectiveness of lesson structure and pace supports generally positive behaviour in lessons within the context of pupils' difficulties. Careful lesson planning recognises and addresses pupils' individual learning and personal needs and uses information from assessment well. As a result pupils make good progress in their learning.

Pupils' relationships with their teachers are good. They frequently show that they value their teachers and appreciate their calm approach. In the context of their difficulties, pupils' behaviour is generally positive. This owes much to the calm yet assertive examples set by their teachers. Teaching makes effective use of questioning to engage pupils in learning. Very effective use is made of resources, including information and communication technology (ICT) where relevant. Display is used very well in lessons to stimulate pupils' interest in learning. In an English lesson, pupils engaged in composing a detective story and were encouraged to empathise with the Victorian period and with the character of Sherlock Holmes through the use of related props, including costumes. The outstanding display supported pupils' developing knowledge of the genre, including Conan Doyle. Most pupils showed their developing ability to work individually and to use computers for word processing. The provision of ICT has improved considerably since the last inspection and there is now one computer available for each pupil.

Assessment is good and firmly based on the positive opportunities provided through dialogue between teacher and pupil. The school has established a good framework for assessing pupils' work and progress. Systems for review are thorough in relation

to both their personal and academic progress. Individual Education Plans for pupils are clear and helpful documents. Monitoring by staff identifies pupils' personal and academic progress. Reports are provided weekly for parents, and shared with placing local authorities and social workers. An overall report at the end of each term and a more extensive one at the end of the third term, are provided in suitable detail. Written assessments of pupils' progress are good because they are clear about what each child has achieved and can do. The school is conscious of the need to ensure clarity in communication with all parties. Regular review of pupils' statements of special need is undertaken with appropriate oversight by the local and placing authorities.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Developing pupils' self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence is central to the aims of the school. Pupils say that they are happy to be at the school. Attendance is satisfactory with absences usually linked to the pupils' complex circumstances. The school places strong emphasis on developing communication skills, and reinforces this through activities such as shopping in the local community. An assembly during the inspection emphasised the effectiveness of strategies used to develop confidence and communication skills when pupils and staff shared their experiences of the previous day. Pupils of all ages in the school listened to what one another had to say and all played a full and constructive part in the daily occasion.

Pupils are supported in developing an understanding of right and wrong through the expectations set by the school. This is reinforced through the positive reward system, the curriculum, for example through PSHE and the development of social skills, and through visits to the school by the police community liaison officer. Behaviour is good in the context of the school. Though pupils' behaviour is occasionally contrary to the school's expectations, they are expected to recognise and take responsibility for their actions. They gain knowledge of public institutions in England through PSHE and citizenship, and through other aspects of the curriculum such as history. However, the school recognises that this aspect of their development does not yet make full use of local opportunities for visits or inviting guests to the school. The school successfully promotes respect for others, and harmony and tolerance between cultures. Opportunities are used throughout the curriculum for pupils to gain insights into their own and other cultures. Despite the improvement in this aspect of the provision since the last inspection, the school has still to involve pupils in visits to local places of worship.

Safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety

Provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good. Practice is thorough and pupils indicate that they feel well cared for. The school now has a written policy for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and all information is appropriately and clearly provided. These represent improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are encouraged to make healthy choices in their diets and they are provided with adequate opportunities for physical activities. A very high standard of pastoral care is provided. All policies to support welfare, health and safety are in

place and staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding children and in first aid. The school provides a very wide programme of training for staff in all respects. Checks on staff are appropriately undertaken and recorded. Fire precautions are carefully considered and risk assessments and checks undertaken. However, despite the strengths of procedures and practice overall, the school has not given sufficient attention to some aspects of its practice in relation to emergency evacuation. The school has not ensured that arrangements for evacuation match its own safety policy. The school has in place an appropriate three year policy with respect to disability access. This is a further improvement since the last inspection.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets most 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 provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

- ensure a satisfactory level of fire safety, (paragraph 3(5)).

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:

- improve facilities for PE
- further extend opportunities for the multi-cultural dimension of its provision.

Inspection Judgement Recording Form

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		√		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		√		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		√		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		√		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		√		
The behaviour of pupils		√		

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		√		
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School details

Name of school	Brewood Middle School		
DCSF number	886/6103		
Unique reference number	135018		
Type of school	Middle		
Status	Independent Special		
Date school opened	2005		
Age range of pupils	10–13		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 7	Girls: 2	Total: 9
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 6	Girls: 2	Total: 8
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 6	Girls: 2	Total: 8
Annual fees (day pupils)	£32,453.20		
Address of school	146 Newington Road Ramsgate Kent CT12 6PT		
Telephone number	01843 597088		
Fax number	01304 620935		
Email address	school@brewooded.wanadoo.co.uk		
Headteacher	Mr Don Wilton		
Proprietor	Mr John Baker		
Reporting inspector	Michael Thirkell AI		
Dates of inspection	11 February 2009		