

Inaura School

Independent school inspection report

DCSF registration number 933/6000
Unique reference number 135735
Inspection number 342002
Inspection dates 6–7 October 2009
Reporting inspector Andrew Redpath HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended.

Age group: 11–14

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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, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.¹

Information about the school

Inaura School provides education for boys and girls who have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Some pupils have additional learning difficulties associated with the acquisition of numeracy and literacy skills and most have failed to thrive in their previous educational settings. Currently, six boys and two girls attend aged between 11 and 14 years, seven of whom have a statement of special educational needs. Almost all young people come from Somerset and have their places funded by their local authority. The school is located in four former residential properties. The main site is in Burrowbridge, near Bridgwater, in Somerset. The other sites and the school's registered office are located approximately 14 miles away in the village of Lower Godney near Glastonbury. The school is in the ownership of the Inaura charitable trust.

The school seeks to 'develop well-motivated and self-regulated individuals' by removing barriers to learning and by providing an education tailored to each pupil's individual need. This is the school's first inspection since it was registered with the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) in October 2008.

Evaluation of the school

Inaura School provides a good quality of education and care. Good teaching and a high standard of care ensure pupils make good progress in their learning and in their personal development. Robust safeguarding procedures are implemented conscientiously by staff. The curriculum is satisfactory. Carefully adapted individual programmes are successful in helping pupils re-engage with learning. However, for some students, the amount of full-time supervised education falls short of the minimum required. Determined leadership is helping the school to develop well and there are appropriate plans to take the school forward. The school meets most of the regulations.

Quality of education

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. It is supported by a clear policy that emphasises working with pupils as partners to help make learning a positive

¹ www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162

experience. Each pupil has a personal study plan which includes considerable individual support, with occasional work in pairs and in a larger group. The strong focus on personal, social and health education (PSHE) encourages pupils to reflect on their attitudes and behaviour and to build the skills required for making positive relationships. The excellent weekly Green Craft project gives pupils the opportunity to work in a team, for example, by building an outdoor shelter from natural materials. The curriculum covers most, but not all, of the required areas of learning. While some pupils take part in horse riding or go swimming, there is no planned programme to ensure all pupils take regular physical exercise. Also, although pupils are able to cook and prepare meals, the school has limited facilities for supporting the teaching of the practical aspects of science and design and technology. Good links have been made with a pottery to extend the art and design curriculum.

The school meets the needs of pupils as set out in their statements of special educational needs, although a few statements have not been updated to reflect pupils' current educational programmes. Most pupils attend school for an extended morning or afternoon session with some additional activities provided in the community. For some, the amount of full-time supervised education falls short of the minimum required.

Planning is in place for the subjects offered and further courses are being added each year as the school becomes more established. Pupils are currently offered a satisfactory range of GCSE and Entry level courses, including English, mathematics, biology, history, geography and information and communication technology (ICT) and an accredited Preparation for Working Life course. A vocational course in construction is offered should pupils express a particular interest. All pupils receive suitable careers advice provided by a Connexions adviser and they also benefit from the school's support in identifying future education or training placements.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. Teachers generally set high expectations and classroom routines are clearly established. As a result, pupils settle quickly to their work and display positive attitudes to learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use it effectively to question pupils and to encourage them to develop their ideas. Both teachers and support assistants form positive relationships with pupils and consistently encourage them to try their best. This approach contributes significantly to pupils' sense of security and increased self-esteem. However, the intensive individual support offered to pupils occasionally limits their ability to work independently. Resources to support teaching and learning are satisfactory for the subjects taught and several pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) to research topics.

The school completes a 'readiness for learning profile' for each pupil on entry to the school. This is consistent with the school's philosophy of identifying and removing barriers to learning. The school also assesses and records pupils' progress using National Curriculum levels and P levels (performance descriptors used for recording the attainment of pupils with special educational needs working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum) to record progress. The use of assessment information to plan lessons varies between classes. In some lessons, it is used well to break work up into small steps and set targets for improvement. Occasionally, it is not used to

match work closely to a pupil's level of ability which limits their progress. Senior leaders do not have in place a robust system for monitoring teaching and learning in order to identify inconsistencies and to share best practice.

Overall, pupils make good progress, particularly in managing their behaviour and re-engaging with learning. All gain GCSE Entry level or adult numeracy and literacy examination passes each year. More capable pupils currently on roll are studying a range of appropriately challenging GCSE courses. Almost all young people move on to suitable destinations, either returning to mainstream education or following vocational courses at local colleges.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Pupils' personal development is good. The school is effective in promoting pupils' self-esteem by encouraging them to feel more in control of their learning and to experience success. Pupils report they enjoy school and are pleased to talk about their work. For example, one pupil who had compiled a photographic record of a pottery project was clearly proud of his achievement. Pupils' attendance is generally good when compared with their record in previous schools. Staff are creative in arranging home tutoring and activities in the community for those who find regular attendance difficult. However, while appreciating that staff work hard to meet their individual needs, some pupils recognise that the range of curriculum activities provided by the school is limited.

In accordance with the school's philosophy and behaviour policy, staff emphasise the need for pupils to 'put right' mistakes and to move forward in a positive way. Pupils like the system whereby good work is rewarded by earning points which can be exchanged for chosen experiences, such as quad biking, or for buying items of clothing. As a result, pupils' behaviour is good, they feel safe and valued and a harmonious atmosphere prevails in lessons and around the various school sites. Pupils contribute to the school and wider community when, for example they: raise funds for charity through completing a sponsored walk; design a mural with children from other schools arranged annually by a local arts group or; an older pupil helps younger peers.

The school has recently introduced a citizenship curriculum, although pupils do not yet benefit from a clear programme to provide them with a general knowledge of public institutions and services. Pupils' understanding of different cultures and faiths in modern Britain is taught through the religious education curriculum and through the study of texts in English. Some relevant visits have been arranged, for example to the cathedral in Wells. The school has suitable plans to extend further the programme of visits.

Pupils are prepared effectively for their future economic well-being, for example, by learning to work in a team by participating in the popular Green Craft project and by gaining numeracy and literacy qualifications. Some pupils have completed work experience placements, which have included working on a farm, in a garage and at a hairdressing salon.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The quality of welfare, health and safety of pupils is good. Staff form a strong team committed to providing a welcoming and caring environment for pupils. They treat pupils with respect and recognise them as individuals, which underpins the trusting relationships between pupils and adults. In the words of one parent, 'The school feels passionately about what they do and will do anything to help children achieve their potential.' Detailed health and safety policies and procedures cover all aspects of the school's work and good levels of staffing ensure pupils' safety. Fire drills are held regularly and fire-fighting equipment checked by a specialist company. Good arrangements are in place for the administration of medicines and all staff are trained in first aid. Robust arrangements are in place to safeguard pupils, and staff have received recent training in child protection. Staff have also received training to manage the rare incidents of inappropriate behaviour in a calm and non-confrontational manner. While the school has clear procedures for recording incidents of misbehaviour, it does not record them in a sanctions book, as required. The PSHE programme has a strong focus on leading a healthy lifestyle and forming safe and positive relationships. However, opportunities for pupils to take physical exercise are limited. The school has a plan for increasing access to the sites which meets the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2002.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

Thorough procedures are in place for the recruitment and appointment of staff. All staff have been subject to clearance at an enhanced level with the Criminal Records Bureau to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. All checks are suitably recorded on a single central register.

School's premises and accommodation

All the properties are maintained to a satisfactory standard and provide a pleasant environment for learning. Rooms are of a suitable size for the number of pupils using them. Kitchens in each house provide opportunities for cookery, although the lack of specialist rooms for teaching science, design and technology, and art, limits the range of topics that can be taught in these subjects. Suitable space for outside recreation is provided at each of the sites.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school provides most of the information for parents, carers and others required by the regulations. The prospectus sets out the school's ethos and curriculum aims. Parents and carers receive termly educational reports which contain appropriate information on pupils' progress in each subject. The school has established a close working relationship with parents and carers, and maintains regular contact by telephone and by making home visits. Returns from the parental questionnaires sent

out prior to the inspection show that parents feel well informed about their child's progress and they are very happy with the work of the school.

Procedures for handling complaints

The complaints policy meets all the regulations. The policy sets out how informal and formal complaints may be made to the school and parents can receive a copy on request.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.²

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

- provide full-time supervised education for all pupils of compulsory school age (paragraph 1(2)(a)(i))
- ensure the curriculum gives pupils experience in the physical area of learning (paragraph 1(2)(a)(ii)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (standard 2) and must:

- provide pupils with a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England (paragraph 2(d)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

- keep a written record of sanctions imposed on pupils for serious disciplinary offences (paragraph 3(8)).

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

- publish on its website, or where no such website exists, send to parents of pupils (and of prospective parents on request) a copy of their safeguarding children policy as prepared under paragraph 3(2)(b) (paragraph 6(4)).

² www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2003/20031910.htm

What the school could do to improve further

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

- increase opportunities for students to work independently in lessons
- monitor teaching and learning more systematically to ensure that the best practice is shared effectively across different classes.

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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The quality of boarding provision *(leave blank if not applicable)*

Evaluation of boarding provision				
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School details

Name of school	Inaura School		
DCSF number	933/6000		
Unique reference number	135735		
Type of school	Independent Special		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	October 2008		
Age range of pupils	11–14		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 6	Girls: 2	Total: 8
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 5	Girls: 2	Total: 7
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 2	Girls: 0	Total: 2
Annual fees (day pupils)	£33,000		
Address of school	Manor Farm Cottage, Wells, Somerset, BA5 1RZ		
Telephone number	01458 830434		
Fax number	02085 573755		
Email address	zizi@inaura.net		
Headteacher	Dr Adam Abdelnoor		
Proprietor	Inaura Charitable Trust		
Reporting inspector	Andrew Redpath HMI		
Dates of inspection	6–7 October 2009		