

# Progress School

Independent school inspection report

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DCSF registration number	888/6030
Unique reference number	131138
URN for registered childcare and social care	SC044241
Inspection number	344441
Inspection dates	26-27 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Chanan Tomlin
Social care inspector	Elaine Clare

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended. The inspection of boarding was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Age group: 7-19

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## Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A<sup>1</sup> of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005<sup>2</sup>, 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.

An inspection of the care provision was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 having regard to the national minimum standards for children's homes. This inspection took place at the same time but the full report is published separately on Ofsted's website and should be read in conjunction with this report which covers the educational registration of the school.

## Information about the school

Progress School is an independent special school which opened in 1996 and is located near Preston in Lancashire. It is owned by Progress Care and Education Limited. The school was last inspected in 2007. It provides residential care and education for 52 weeks per year for students aged 7 to 19 years who exhibit severe challenging behaviour and experience severe learning difficulties along with associated medical needs. It aims to 'provide learning and achievement opportunities for all students as they move towards adult life'. There are currently 16 students on roll and most have autistic spectrum disorders. All students have statements of special educational needs and are placed and funded by local authorities, mainly from the north west of England, although some are from further afield. All students are resident in one of the company's children's homes located in the area. These homes have all been inspected by Ofsted since July 2009. This is the first education inspection when the social care inspection of one of the homes was carried out simultaneously.

## Evaluation of the school

The overall quality of the education and social care is good. The school meets its aims; providing a flexible and responsive education suited to each student's individual needs and learning styles. The provision for the welfare health and safety of the students is outstanding and all safeguarding and child protection requirements are met. The school has made significant improvement since the last inspection in the quality of teaching which is good, and in planning and resources. It meets all the requirements for its continued registration.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga\\_20020032\\_en\\_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162)

<sup>2</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga\\_20050018\\_en\\_15#sch8](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8)

## Quality of education

The overall quality of the education is good. The curriculum is good and meets the needs of the students. A 24-hour curriculum and excellent links between the school and care staff ensure that the students' education is reinforced at every available opportunity. Key workers and education staff have exceptionally good relationships with the students. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum is particularly effective. Teachers are keenly aware of students' aptitudes and capabilities, and they consequently individualise programmes of study to match these aims. All staff challenge students to think for themselves and to be as self-sufficient as possible. This is evident in tailor-made systems for communication between staff and students, for example, making choices during art lessons and taking initiative during food technology.

Policies are in place to ensure the effective teaching of all of the required areas of learning. These are firmly based on the Every Child Matters outcomes and adhere to National Curriculum guidelines, as appropriate to the capabilities of the students. Lessons are supported by individualised schemes of work that fully incorporate the life skills guidance that is at the core of much of the work done at the school. The curriculum is based on themed topic work that is supported by activities in the evenings. This helps the students learn about topics from a variety of sources and gives them a real, practical appreciation of the things they learn in school. The school assists the students in having an awareness of the world around them through regular visits to local shops, the swimming pool and scheduled walks around the neighbourhood. Post-16 students are prepared for adult life through practical literacy, numeracy and lessons in information and communication technology (ICT) and through the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) awards and vocational experiences when possible.

Students are assigned key workers and form positive and effective relationships with them. Students know all the staff and staff deployment is arranged so that students are always comfortable and at ease with the adults who care for them. All students have individual teaching although, when appropriate, they work in pairs at school or in group activities with care staff in the evening. The school has a good range of resources. However, there is a lack of computing equipment and this impedes students' progress.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. Educational assessment arrangements for younger students is based on Performance Indicators for Value Added Target Setting (PIVATS), a national assessment programme used to measure students' progress through the 'P' Scales and up to National Curriculum Level 4 and ASDAN moderation for students that are above 16 years.

Students' progress is satisfactory. Life skills and sociability are assessed and monitored well through regular meetings, reviews, good record keeping and clear reporting procedures. On-site Challenging Behaviour Practitioners monitor behaviour and advise staff. Teachers are keenly in-tune with the needs of their students and provide them with experiences that build on previous knowledge and equip them to progress in their learning. During lessons, teachers manage behaviour very well and

extra staff are always on hand to ensure that incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with quickly and unobtrusively. Since the last inspection, teaching has improved because staff now share methods of good practice regularly and the school has added to its resources. Planning now focuses on education as well as behaviour and personal skills. However, the school has yet to establish a robust and reliable system of fully monitoring progress so that students' progress is assured. Lesson observations are informal and do not lead sufficiently to focussed opportunities for professional development of staff.

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

The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students in the school is good. Students are taught to communicate in ways that are socially acceptable and this helps them forge and maintain meaningful relationships with others. They are taught to understand and acknowledge what is expected of them and to consider and control their responses. As appropriate, students are encouraged to use methods of self-expression and to achieve as individuals. They enjoy school and attend well.

Students learn how to live together through the consistent guidance and support of highly motivated teaching and care staff who are familiar to them. Students and their families are encouraged and supported in ways that promote good, solid relationships and an appreciation of the family unit. They take part in a wide variety of activities and experiences in the evenings and at school that help them practice skills in different contexts. The calm, caring atmosphere in the school and residence and individualised programmes for monitoring, afford good management of very challenging behaviour. As a result, students behave well. They have many opportunities to spend time in the local community and become aware of the people around them.

The school and care staff make every effort to equip the students for life when they leave school through effective methods of communication and some understanding of social norms. Staff take pride in how their students change and adapt during their time at the school and are eager to see this progress continue when they leave. Students are encouraged to explore and take pride in their own culture and, whenever possible, to share experiences with others. They are taught to appreciate other cultures through topic work that gives them access and experiences in food and art.

## Welfare, health and safety of the students

The welfare, health and safety of the students are outstanding. The supervision of the students is exceptional both in school and in the evenings and staff go to great lengths to ensure that students are safe at all times. Staff know all of the students very well, and swiftly address any concerns they may have about their well-being.

Behavioural issues are dealt with quickly and unobtrusively. The school is rightly proud of its inclusive approach to welfare. It promotes healthy lifestyles through regular walks and swimming, and by carefully tailoring the dietary and exercise requirements of each student.

Procedures to safeguard students and for child protection are good. All relevant policies are robust and staff are suitably trained. There is effective provision for first aid and the school nurse takes an active part in the maintenance of students' medical requirements. All necessary risk assessments for the premises and school trips are routinely carried out. Fire checks and drills are also regular events. Admission and attendance registers comply with requirements. The school has a clear policy to support its provision for students with disabilities and has an appropriate three-year plan to outline its intentions, as required by the Disability Discrimination Act.

### Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school is very thorough in its vetting of staff and all other adults who work in the school. They are all checked for their qualifications, experience and suitability for working with children. Records are kept scrupulously up-to-date and are kept securely on a single central register.

### School's premises and accommodation

The school provides good quality accommodation for safe and effective learning. There are a good number of classrooms, an art room, sensory room and a kitchen for food technology. There is a suitable room to support students when they are ill and need to lie down and another for them to relax in. The outdoor area provides adequate space in which students can play safely. The building, grounds and playground are maintained well.

### Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The school maintains good links with the parents and families of the students and provides clear, up-to-date and helpful information to them. The prospectus gives parents a good overview of the school's wider provision and is supported by appropriate information about the teaching staff and the curriculum. Annual reviews give detailed indicators of students' progress and achievements. Key workers, teaching and care staff make every effort to keep parents informed about their child's progress and any areas of concern; parents and staff share ideas and the school provides guidance and support to parents. In their questionnaires, parents raised no concerns about the quality of information they receive and were very positive about the education provided by the school.

## Procedures for handling complaints

The school has a comprehensive complaints policy which meets all of the necessary requirements. It is made known to parents through the school's prospectus.

## Effectiveness of the boarding provision

The care provision was judged to be good and national minimum standards were met. A full report on the care provision is available on Ofsted's website and should be viewed in conjunction with this report.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003.

Please see the report on Ofsted's website relating to the care provision in the children's home which should be read in conjunction with this report.

## What the school could do to improve further

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

- improve assessment arrangements to ensure students progress well
- institute formal lesson observations to further improve teaching styles and students' learning
- make more ICT facilities available to students.

## 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 students		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of students' needs		✓		
How well students make progress in their learning			✓	

### Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		✓		
The behaviour of students		✓		

### Welfare, health and safety of students

The overall welfare, health and safety of students	✓			
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### The quality of boarding provision

Evaluation of boarding provision		✓		
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## School details

Name of school	Progress School		
DCSF number	888/6030		
Unique reference number (URN)	131138		
Type of school	Residential special school		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	December 1996		
Age range of students	7-19		
Gender of students	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time students)	Boys: 15	Girls: 1	Total: 16
Number of boarders	Boys: 15	Girls: 1	Total: 16
Number of students with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 15	Girls: 1	Total: 16
Number of students who are looked after	Boys: 10	Girls: 0	Total: 10
Annual fees (boarders)	£187,696 - £265,908		
Telephone number	01772 334832		
Fax number	01772 314933		
Email address	lynlewis@progressschool.co.uk		
Headteacher	Ms Lyn Lewis		
Proprietor	Progress Care and Education Limited		
Reporting inspector	Chanan Tomlin		
Dates of inspection	26-27 January 2010		