

The Education Centre

Independent school progress report

DCSF registration number	938/6249
Unique reference number	126149
Inspection number	344748
Inspection dates	11 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Richard Winter

This inspection visit to the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 at the request of the registering authority for independent schools.

Age group: 12–16

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Purpose and scope of the visit

This inspection visit was carried out by Ofsted under section 162A of the Education Act 2002.

The visit was conducted at the request of the Registration Authority for Independent Schools in order to monitor the progress the school has made in implementing its action plan following the previous inspection.

Information about the school

The Education Centre is an independent day school for students aged 12 to 16 who have significant behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. All students have a statement of special educational needs and generally come to the Education Centre after other school placements have broken down, some having been out of school for a lengthy period. There are currently 23 students on roll. The Education Centre opened in 1999 and is located at Haywards Heath in West Sussex with the aim of providing education for young people who might otherwise be out of school. There are plans to move to new premises. However, repairs and improvements to the existing site have been implemented.

Context of the visit

The last inspection was in June 2008. Since then, the school has been run by a new proprietor, Eostre Education Ltd. This change in proprietor led to the appointment of a new headteacher who has been in post for a year. The last visit was made in January 2009 to monitor progress in meeting previously unmet regulations. The majority of those regulations had been met. A small number were still unmet. Action plans to remedy this resulted in two further advice notes to the DCSF in June and August 2009. This visit is to ascertain the extent to which the actions proposed in the action plan have been implemented.

Summary of the progress made in implementing the action plan

At the time of the last inspection there was no consistent framework for assessing academic progress regularly and thoroughly and therefore there was little information which could be used to plan teaching so that pupils could make progress. Since the last inspection, the new headteacher along with the senior management team have produced an appropriate assessment, recording and reporting policy. The January progress monitoring visit stated that this was still in the early stages of implementation. Since then, various forms of clear and thorough assessment have been put into place. There are several levels of formal monitoring of students' progress undertaken at different times, from lesson by lesson to daily, weekly, half-termly and termly. There are also annual reports and formal reviews. All teachers contribute to assessments which are based upon behaviour and attitude as

well as academic progress. As a result of regular discussions with their mentors, this is made easy for the students to understand and participate in. Students contribute both orally and in writing. They are therefore aware of the progress that they have made and the steps they must take to improve. Targets are clear and used by teachers to help their lesson planning. Statements of special educational need are clearly addressed and updated through 'transitional' plans so that at the annual review meeting, statements of need can be amended in the light of recent progress made. The end of term and annual reports are detailed and informative. Links with parents and carers are becoming more regular so that there is a growing dialogue between home and school.

Students are assessed on their academic levels of attainment on entry and at various stages while at the school. Many sit external examinations even if they have been at the school for a relatively short time. Test results are recorded clearly and used by teachers to plan lessons. Students follow the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) course to improve their functional skills. Assessments taken as part of this are integrated with the main school assessment procedures. Teachers share information across the subject and vocational areas on students' literacy and numeracy targets and levels so that there is effective cross-curricular planning.

The monitoring and recording of academic, social and emotional progress is continuous and carried out flexibly according to the short and long-term needs of students. Students contribute to the recording of their progress so that they are beginning to feel that they can contribute positively to their progress and development. This is carried out in conjunction with staff who make comprehensive written records of what students feel about all aspects of their progress and what they need to do next. The regulation is now met.

At the time of the last inspection, the company director, rather than proprietor, had been checked. The single central register was therefore incomplete. Since then, the proprietor has changed. School records show that the new proprietor has undergone the necessary checks and this is recorded correctly on the school's single central register. The regulations are now met.

At the time of the previous inspection access to the front of the building was insecure. The additional security measures installed are now adequate in ensuring that there is no unauthorised entry to the premises. The regulation is now met.

At the time of the last inspection the outdoor play area was found unfit for use. There is evidence that it has been improved. The walls have been suitably decorated by the students and there is now seating and a covered area. Not all the students use the space at the same time as there is free flow at break times between the outdoor area and a very roomy indoor games area with pool and table tennis tables. The regulation is now met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school has made good progress and now meets all regulatory requirements.

School details

Name of school	The Education Centre		
DCSF number	938/6249		
Unique reference number	126149		
Type of school	Special		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1999		
Age range of students	12–16		
Gender of students	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time students)	Boys: 17	Girls: 5	Total: 22
Number on roll (part-time students)	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
Number of students with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 18	Girls: 5	Total: 23
Annual fees (day students)	£22,834		
Address of school	17–21 Boltro Road Haywards Heath West Sussex RH16 1BP		
Telephone number	01444 450111		
Fax number			
Email address	The_education_centre@yahoo.com		
Headteacher	Mr N Roles		
Proprietor	Mr W Astill, sole proprietor of Eostre Education Ltd		
Reporting inspector	Mr Richard Winter		
Dates of inspection	11 November 2009		