

Hillcrest – Hayling Island

Independent special school inspection report

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Unique Reference Number (URN)	135105
URN for registered childcare and social care	SC061717 and SC068620
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Reporting inspector	Angela Corbett HMI
Social care inspector	Angela Hunt HMI

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PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE INSPECTION

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A¹ of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005², 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.

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Hillcrest - Hayling Island is a school and children's home registered for up to eight boys aged between eight and 16 years who have behavioural, social and emotional and difficulties. It is currently based in chalet accommodation on the site of a children's home owned and operated by Hillcrest Ltd. This arrangement is temporary while new school accommodation is being built at its usual location adjacent to another residential home. The new school is due to be ready for use in September 2010, with some teaching facilities for art and craft remaining at the current site. Most of the six boys, aged between 11 and 14, who are attending the school, live in one of the two residential homes where nine boys are currently resident. The school was registered in 2006 and was last inspected in November 2007. The residential provision was most recently inspected in January 2010. All the boys have a statement of special educational needs and for most their formal education has been interrupted because of exclusions and placement breakdowns. The boys come from several different local authorities in the south-east of England, although some are from further afield. The school aims 'to provide a safe and secure environment to enable pupils to re-engage with education; develop cooperative and interpersonal skills; acquire study skills necessary to realise their own learning potential and to become receptive and willing to challenge themselves in their educational targets.'

EVALUATION OF THE SCHOOL

Hillcrest - Hayling Island provides a satisfactory quality of education and is successful in meeting its stated aims. The curriculum is satisfactory and pupils make satisfactory progress from their varied starting points as a result of satisfactory teaching and assessment. While pupils' personal development is good, overall provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and pupils' behaviour are satisfactory. Day-to-day care of pupils is good and is supported by good links with their children's homes in relation to their behaviour and social development; however, curriculum links are less well developed. While the effectiveness of

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

² www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8

boarding provision in the children's homes is good, a few regulations relating to the welfare and safeguarding of pupils in school are not met and as a result the overall provision for their welfare, health and safety is inadequate. The school has made satisfactory progress in some areas since the last inspection and meets the majority of the regulations for independent schools.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory; it is based on the National Curriculum. The curriculum policy is appropriate and it is supported by a range of subject policies that aim to cover all the required areas of learning. However, while there is some medium-term planning in some subjects, there are no overarching schemes of work for all of the subjects taught to ensure that there is progression in learning across the full age range as well as to meet the educational needs and interests of all pupils. In addition, there are too few planned opportunities to work for externally accredited qualifications beyond those from the Award Scheme Development and Assessment Network (ASDAN). High priority is placed on the development of literacy both through English lessons and those in other subjects. Numeracy is also prioritised in the weekly timetabled lessons which also include science, information and communication technology (ICT), physical education, humanities and art. The curriculum is supported by a good range of visitors and visits. Visitors enhance the curriculum, in particular, to support sex education and drugs awareness as part of the satisfactory personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship programme. Pupils' learning and social experiences are broadened by a good range of visits such as a series of skiing lessons, a visit to a science and technology centre, and participation in a local Halloween event. Staff in the children's homes work to broaden pupils' academic and personal development, in particular, fostering personal interests and independent living skills; however, this provision is not coordinated with the school. Resources for ICT are adequate, although they are not always sufficiently used to enliven teaching and learning, and the range of software is limited.

Teaching and assessment are satisfactory overall. Literacy is taught well, in particular, to develop pupils' vocabulary and the quality of their writing. The teaching staff provide a safe and caring learning environment that builds pupils' confidence and helps them to overcome their barriers to learning. As a result, pupils are keen to learn and feel able to make mistakes and ask questions, although in a few instances they rely too heavily on support so are not further developing their independence in learning. Lessons are organised and suitably planned to meet the differing learning needs of pupils but the planning does not always provide detail on how individual pupils will be supported or challenged to maximise their achievement. Teachers use a variety of approaches and strategies, but on some occasions pupils are not sufficiently active to fully engage and promote learning. For pupils unable to attend some lessons in school, their teaching is accommodated and supported by the teaching assistants in the children's homes.

Assessment is satisfactory. Teachers provide pupils with helpful comments both verbally in lessons and in marked work. However, the assessment framework focuses on National Curriculum levels in English and mathematics, and does not extend across all subjects to ensure progression in pupils' learning. Use of academic targets is limited but great care is taken to ensure that pupils are aware of their individual education plan targets and that progress against these is reviewed frequently with effective communication between children home and school staff.

Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress from their varied starting points, with all working for or achieving ASDAN bronze or silver awards.

SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE PUPILS

The overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is satisfactory. Pupils' social, moral and personal development is good because they are jointly supported by the adults both in the school and the two children's homes who share a vision of striving for the best possible outcomes for each individual. There is also continuity in the management of behaviour so that pupils have a clear understanding of the rewards and sanctions system. Students place high value on earning points both in school and in the homes, and speak with pride of the items they have purchased. The behaviour of the majority is consistently good; however, this is not always the case for all pupils, and overall it is satisfactory. Almost all pupils enjoy school and the large majority attend well. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to school life through regular discussion meetings and also in raising funds for charity. Opportunities for contributing to daily life and taking responsibility are much greater in the children's homes. Pupils are involved in the local community, for example through the annual 'Big Lunch', a barbeque event for local residents at a nearby venue. Pupils are prepared well for their future economic well-being by the high focus given to the development of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, as well as workplace and life skills such as teamwork or cooking. College visits and placements and opportunities to consider different careers, such as a visit to a local hairdresser, also help pupils consider their life beyond school. Pupils have some opportunities to reflect on life and the world around them, and learn about other cultures; however, such opportunities are too few and are not systematically planned. The school used the General Election very effectively to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of British institutions, which included a visit to a polling station to see the electoral system first hand.

WELFARE, HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THE PUPILS

Provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is inadequate because the school does not meet the education requirements for several regulations, including those relating to staff training in child protection, record keeping and the policy for the management of bullying. Other policies and procedures in relation to health and safety, including fire safety and child protection, are written primarily for the

children's home and not sufficiently from the school's perspective. For example, all incidents are logged using the children's home's record sheets and these do not sufficiently differentiate between the type of incident. As a result, issues such as bullying or behaviour cannot be monitored effectively. Effective risk assessments are in place to support the care of pupils both on- and off-site; however, the record keeping for off-site activities is inconsistent. Pupils are well supervised at all times and they say that they feel safe and have someone to turn to either in school or in the homes. Pupils are encouraged to be healthy and enjoy very active lifestyles both through the curriculum and out of school hours. Activities organised by the school include skiing and swimming, and the homes arrange tennis, fishing, outdoor pursuits and sailing. Through the curriculum, pupils learn about how to live healthy lifestyles, including drugs awareness as well as what they need to eat to be healthy. Attendance registers are kept well but there is no admissions register for the school. The school meets the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

SUITABILITY OF THE PROPRIETOR AND STAFF

The systems for the recruitment of the proprietor, staff and volunteers are robust and meet the regulations for independent schools in all but one respect. The school's single central record does not fully meet requirements because information on the school's board of directors is incomplete. Any contractors that regularly work on either of the school sites are fully checked by the school.

SCHOOL'S PREMISES AND ACCOMMODATION

At the time of the inspection, pupils were being taught in two log cabins at the rear of one of the residential homes while a new school is being built at the school's normal location. These are suitably furnished and, together with access to the toilet, kitchen, dining room and lounge in the children's home area, provide safe and adequate accommodation for effective learning. Currently, some of the resources are in storage and the school has plans to review and improve resources when the new building is ready for use. Appropriate provision for pupils who are unwell is available in both children's homes. Both homes offer a grassed play area. At the normal location, the beach, a local library and other facilities are close by.

PROVISION OF INFORMATION FOR PARENTS, CARERS AND OTHERS

Some general information about the education provision is provided on the Hillcrest website. Parents, carers and others receive suitable and timely written reports about pupils' progress. However, the school's prospectus is out-of-date and so not all the regulations for the provision of information are met. The areas of non compliance are identified below. The school plans to revise its information once the new school building is open.

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS

The school has an appropriately written complaints procedure that meets regulatory requirements.

Effectiveness of the boarding provision

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

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.³

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

- provide and implement appropriate plans and schemes of work in line with the curriculum policy (paragraph 1(2)).

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

- prepare and implement a written policy to prevent bullying which has regard to the Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) guidance Safe to Learn: Embedding anti-bullying work in schools (DCSF-00656-2007)⁴ (paragraph 3(2)(a))
- implement the written policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school in compliance with DCSF guidance Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education (DCSF-04217-2006)⁵ (paragraph 3(2)(b))
- keep written records of sanctions imposed upon pupils for serious disciplinary offences (paragraph 3(8))
- maintain an admission register in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 3(9)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of suitability of proprietor and staff (standard 4) and must:

³ www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2003/20031910.htm

⁴ www.teachernet.gov.uk/_doc/11908/SAFE%20TO%20LEARN.pdf

⁵ <http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/Final%206836-SafeGuard.Chd%20bkmk.pdf>

- in relation to each member of a body of persons named as the proprietor in post on or after 1 September 2003, the register must show whether a check was made of: his/her identity. In relation to each member of a body of persons named as the proprietor in post on or after 1 May 2007 the register must also show the checks made to confirm their right to work in the United Kingdom and, where someone had lived outside the UK, such additional enquiries which were made as were appropriate. It must also include in the register the date on which the checks were completed (paragraph 4(6 and 7)).

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

- provide particulars of policies relating to bullying, health and safety, the promotion of good behaviour, and actions adopted in the event of pupils misbehaving (paragraph 6(3)(d))
- provide particulars of academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations (paragraph 6(3)(e))
- provide details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year (paragraph 6(3)(f))
- provide particulars of the number of staff employed at the school, including temporary staff, and a summary of their qualifications (paragraph 6(3)(g))
- publish on its website or send to parents or carers of pupils (and of prospective parents on request) a copy of their safeguarding children policy (paragraph 6(4))
- ensure that an annual account of income received and expenditure incurred by the school in respect of any pupils placed by a local authority is submitted to the local authority and on request to the Secretary of State (paragraph 6(8)).

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:

- develop the schemes of work so that they support the teaching of all subjects by providing progression in learning which covers the full age range of the school and meet the educational needs and interests of all pupils
- maximise pupils' learning time by making clear links between what is taught in school and activities provided by the children's home to develop a more cohesive curriculum

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	Hillcrest – Hayling Island		
DCSF number	850/6086		
Unique reference number (URN)	135105		
Type of school	Special school		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	2006		
Age range of pupils	8–16		
Gender of pupils	Boys		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 6	Girls: 0	Total: 6
Number of boarders	Boys: 5	Girls: 0	Total: 5
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 6	Girls: 0	Total: 6
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 6	Girls: 0	Total: 6
Annual fees (day pupils)	£31,616-38,038		
Annual fees (residential)	£166,400-200,200		
Headteacher (teacher in charge)	Ms Elizabeth Poore		
Proprietor	Mr BHD Sampson		
Reporting Inspector	Angela Corbett HMI		
Dates of inspection	26–27 May 2010		