

Woodbury School

Bushbury Court, Hellier Road, Wolverhampton WV10 8ED

Inspection dates

25–27 September 2018

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Good |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Good |
| Outcomes for pupils | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The leadership team has ensured that all of the independent school standards have been met.
- Leaders and staff at all levels lead by example and demonstrate an unwavering commitment to improving the lives of vulnerable young people.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have a good understanding of the individual learning needs of pupils and take these into account when planning lessons.
- Sometimes, teachers do not ensure that the work given to the most able pupils is sufficiently challenging, particularly in mathematics, or that pupils are given opportunities to apply their writing skills in different subjects. This means that some pupils do not deepen their learning as well as they might.
- Leaders and managers know their school well. This means they have a good understanding of its strengths and are able to accurately identify what they need to do to improve the school further.
- The school's system of improvement planning does not enable leaders to monitor fully the impact of their actions on improving provision and outcomes for pupils.
- The school's work to support pupils to overcome their individual barriers to learning is highly effective. Pupils make good gains in their personal, social and emotional development.
- Staff at all levels implement effective behaviour management strategies confidently and consistently. This helps pupils to improve their behaviour over time.
- As a result of leaders' actions, attendance rates for pupils whose attendance was previously low show significant improvement.
- Leaders have developed a broad, rich, engaging curriculum which meets the needs of pupils. Pupils are beginning to develop their social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding. Leaders have rightly identified that this aspect of the curriculum could be strengthened.
- The school's provision for post-16 education meets statutory requirements. The school has not yet had any students apply for sixth-form provision.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management, by:
 - ensuring that the school’s system of improvement planning makes it clear how the impact of actions intended to bring about improvements will be monitored and evaluated and focus sufficiently on the progress made by all pupils from their start points
 - strengthening the provision for pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural education so that pupils demonstrate a more informed knowledge of the range of public institutions and services in England.
- Improve academic outcomes for pupils by ensuring that:
 - teaching and learning are consistently matched to the individual needs of pupils, particularly ensuring appropriate challenge for the most able pupils in mathematics
 - pupils are given more opportunities to practise and consolidate their writing skills in different subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders and managers, including the proprietor, are ambitious for the school. They demonstrate a determined commitment to securing their aim of ensuring that all pupils achieve their potential. Their vision and passion are shared by staff at all levels. Consequently, in the short length of time that the school has been open, leaders have established an effective learning environment, which is already having a positive impact on improving pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders' evaluation of how well the school is performing is accurate. As a result of this, they identify appropriate improvement priorities. However, the school's current system of improvement planning does not support leaders as well as it might. For example, leaders have not recorded how actions taken will improve provision and outcomes for pupils, or how the impact of actions will be monitored.
- Teachers and support staff say leaders support them well. Despite challenging circumstances, staff work together as an effective team to create a safe, nurturing environment for the pupils in their care.
- Staff value the training opportunities leaders provide. This ongoing training has helped staff to strengthen provision and ensure that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good across the school.
- Leaders have a clear rationale for the school curriculum. It meets all the requirements of the independent school standards, providing pupils with experiences in English, mathematics, science, technology, physical education, art, music and human and social education. An extensive personal, social, health and economic education curriculum is particularly effective at supporting the development of pupils' self-confidence, self-esteem and self-knowledge. Leaders have plans in place to enhance the curriculum with further opportunities for extra-curricular activities.
- The curriculum supports teachers to meet the individual learning needs of pupils well. Due to their history of interrupted schooling and the significant personal challenges they have experienced, many pupils enter the school working at levels well below those typical for their age. The organisation of the curriculum enables teachers to plan appropriately matched learning activities and ensures that pupils make good progress.
- The school's spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) provision is effective in its intention to prepare pupils well for life in British society. Pupils demonstrate tolerance, acceptance and respect for other people's beliefs and lifestyles. The school's behaviour management strategy gives pupils a strong understanding of right and wrong and encourages them to take responsibility for their actions.
- Pupils have a developing knowledge of common public institutions. Leaders have plans in place to strengthen this aspect of their SMSC provision further, including providing opportunities for pupils to get involved in activities that support their local community.
- Leaders have ensured that all of the independent school standards are met.

Governance

- Governance is effective. There is a clear line of accountability between the school and the proprietary body.
- The individuals responsible for governance monitor all aspects of the school's work effectively. As a result of the comprehensive information provided to them by the headteacher, they have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development. This enables them to provide appropriate levels of support and challenge.
- They are aware of their statutory responsibilities and ensure that the school meets its statutory requirements.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders carry out all the required safer recruitment checks on all members of staff and agency staff.
- The school's safeguarding policy meets current government requirements. Staff implement the policy effectively. The policy is available to parents and carers on request and via the proprietor's website.
- Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. All adults in school have a secure knowledge of the school's safeguarding procedures and an understanding that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe from a range of potential dangers. Pupils say that they feel safe and secure in school. They have a good understanding about a range of different types of bullying. They confidently state that there is no bullying in school and know what actions to take should it happen.
- The headteacher is the designated safeguarding lead for the school. He has a secure understanding of the potential risks faced by pupils and is proactive in ensuring that pupils are protected from these as far as possible. He works very closely with families, carers and a range of professionals and outside agencies to ensure that all pupils and their families are well supported and are kept safe from harm.
- The school implements its range of safeguarding policies effectively, including those for health and safety, anti-bullying, behaviour management, risk assessment and safer recruitment.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- School leaders have ensured that the teaching staff have the appropriate knowledge and skills to deliver the school's curriculum effectively. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the aspects of the curriculum they are required to teach, as well as a good grasp of the age-related expectations for their pupils.
- Teachers plan well-structured lessons. They know the pupils well and have a good understanding of their individual learning needs. As a result, learning and activities are mostly well matched to the needs and abilities of pupils and pupils are well supported to

achieve the learning objectives in lessons. However, there are times when the level of challenge for the most able pupils is not high enough, most notably in mathematics. This means that a small proportion of pupils do not make the progress they are capable of making in this subject.

- In addition, teachers do not always have the same high expectations of pupils' writing across the wider curriculum. For example, the use of low-level worksheets in some subjects means that pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to practise and apply their writing skills in subjects other than English.
- Teachers use questioning effectively to probe pupils' understanding and levels of confidence, and reshape learning accordingly. This means that pupils engage well with the learning activities and many contribute confidently during lessons.
- Teaching over time enables pupils to make strong progress from their low starting points in writing and mathematics. This is particularly evident for pupils who have been at the school the longest.
- Teachers make consistent, effective use of the school's behaviour management systems to ensure that inappropriate behaviour does not become a barrier to learning. Pupils respond positively to these strategies.
- Leaders have developed an effective framework for assessment that is linked to the curriculum and enables them to monitor the progress of individual pupils in all subjects. Information from assessments is used well by teachers to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding and teach lessons that meet their needs.
- The school provides frequent and detailed information to parents and carers about individual pupil's learning and behaviour.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils value their education and the opportunities the school provides for them. They speak highly of the care and support they receive from staff and say they feel valued, respected and listened to.
- The school curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn about how to keep themselves safe and healthy. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of how to make healthy life choices, including keeping themselves safe when using the internet.
- The comprehensive programme of careers information, advice and guidance enables pupils to make clear decisions about their futures. Pupils are aspirational for their future careers. They are clear about the options they have and the qualifications they need to gain to pursue their chosen career paths. Pupils are supported to find work experience placements and to apply for jobs and college places. The school uses the support of external agencies to enhance their careers provision further.
- Adults in school have an excellent understanding of pupils' emotional and well-being needs and establish constructive working relationships with them. Because of this, pupils feel safe and can develop their personal and social skills. They are also developing their

self-confidence and self-esteem in lessons.

- Behaviour logs show that bullying in school is extremely rare. This is supported by the pupils' views. They have a good understanding of the different types of bullying and know what to do if they experience it.
- Pupils learn in a variety of ways about being a responsible citizen. Through the curriculum, they are offered careers guidance information about applying for jobs and how to budget their finances. They are involved with charitable events in the local community, including, most recently, collecting food for harvest donations.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school's behaviour management systems are clear, understood by all, and are consistently applied by adults. All adults work together as a highly effective team to manage behaviour and provide valuable, effective pastoral support. This means that any incidents of inappropriate behaviour demonstrated by individual pupils do not interrupt the learning of other pupils.
- The majority of the pupils attending the school are experiencing difficult personal circumstances. Many of them have only been in the school for a few weeks after having been out of education for lengthy periods. As such, staff are currently working closely with a number of pupils to manage and support their challenging behaviour. The school's behaviour records show that this work is effective and that the number and duration of negative behaviour incidents is reducing. Furthermore, for pupils who have been at the school the longest, there is evidence of significant improvements in behaviour over time.
- The school actively promotes regular attendance and punctuality. As a result, overall attendance is improving and currently stands at 85%. Although below national figures, this figure represents a marked improvement for all pupils at the school. Records show that the vast majority of pupils whose attendance was low before joining the school have significantly improved their attendance. A significant proportion of pupils have attendance in excess of 95%.
- The school's behaviour strategy encourages pupils to take responsibility for their behaviour and accept the consequences of their choices. Responses to the staff survey show that the vast majority of adults in the school feel behaviour is well managed and improving. Pupils say they value the guidance they receive from staff, which encourages and enables them to manage their own behaviour, both in and out of school.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- When pupils arrive at the school, they have significant gaps in their learning and their attitude to education is largely negative. Consequently, the improvements in attendance and behaviour and the academic progress made by pupils represents significant progress from their starting points.
- The school's assessment system demonstrates that the majority of pupils in all year groups make accelerated progress in writing and mathematics. This is supported by the work produced by pupils and the quality of learning seen during this inspection. Work in books shows that pupils also make progress across the wider curriculum, acquiring new

knowledge, understanding and skills and discovering how they can become more effective learners.

- The school is successful in meeting its aims. The school has only been open for a short while and most pupils have been in school for only a few weeks. However, in that time they have clearly made progress in developing the personal skills and positive attitudes necessary to enable them to engage well with education. As a result of the school's work, pupils are better prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 145059 |
| DfE registration number | 336/6005 |
| Inspection number | 10052719 |

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

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| Type of school | Other independent special school |
| School category | Independent school |
| Age range of pupils | 7 to 18 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 23 |
| Number of part-time pupils | 0 |
| Proprietor | Horizon Care and Education Group |
| Chair | Paul Callander |
| Headteacher | James Davis |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £58,500 |
| Telephone number | 01543 570304 |
| Website | www.horizoncare.co.uk |
| Email address | enquiries@horizoncare.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- Woodbury School is one of a group of schools run by the Horizon Care and Education Group.
- The school provides full-time education for pupils between the ages of seven and 18 and is registered by the Department for Education (DfE) to accommodate up to 42 pupils. It operates from a self-contained building, standing within its own grounds, in Wolverhampton, West Midlands.
- Pupils are referred to Woodbury School by local authorities. There are currently 23 pupils on roll. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.

- The current headteacher has been in post since April 2018. Prior to this, the school was led and managed by a senior member of the Horizon Care management team.
- Pupils attending Woodbury School typically have a range of social, emotional and mental health difficulties and a history of interrupted schooling due to exclusion. Many pupils have been out of education for a significant length of time.
- The school aims to address the individual, personal, social, emotional and learning needs of pupils by developing their self-esteem and teaching them to make appropriate choices. The aim is to enable pupils to reintegrate into school or continue into further education and employment.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The school was first registered by the DfE in February 2018.
- This was the school's first full standard inspection since opening.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out by one inspector over three days.
- The inspector observed teaching and learning across all year groups and looked at pupils' work in English, mathematics and across the wider curriculum. The observations were carried out jointly with the school's senior leaders.
- The inspector looked at the school's own assessment information for individual pupils, including information about academic progress, behaviour and attendance.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher about various aspects of the school's provision. This also included a meeting to discuss the school's safeguarding arrangements. The inspector also spoke with the proprietor and a group of pupils.
- Questionnaires submitted by 15 members of staff were scrutinised.
- There was one response to Ofsted's Parent View survey.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents and policies, including: health and safety checks, behaviour records, safeguarding documentation and records of attendance. The inspector also looked at the proprietor's website.
- A check of the premises, including the facilities provided for pupils, was also carried out.

Inspection team

Janet Satchwell, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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