

Ocean Lodge Independent School

8 Trinity Avenue, Westcliffe-on-Sea, Essex SS0 7PU

Inspection dates 24–26 November 2015

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	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher provides strong and purposeful leadership and receives good support from the proprietor and staff. Together they are successfully promoting a strong culture for learning and good behaviour within a nurturing environment.
- The headteacher and proprietor have ensured that all the independent school standards are met. They have also made sure that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are good, so pupils make good progress.
- The headteacher and proprietor have effectively addressed the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection and are ensuring the school continues to improve.
- The school's efforts to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils are good.
- Pupils make rapid progress in their personal development, behaviour and attendance. Staff provide good welfare and effective support and guidance for each pupil's needs.
- Teachers plan and provide a range of interesting activities to motivate pupils. They manage behaviour consistently well and maintain strong relationships with pupils.
- Pupils make good progress in a wide range of subjects because teaching and the curriculum are good.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The overall quality of teaching is not outstanding because teachers do not always challenge pupils' thinking sufficiently.
- Occasionally, pupils do not make informed choices about their futures by the time they leave school. This is because they do not always receive appropriate careers guidance in Year 8 or as soon as they enter the school thereafter.

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 teaching and raise achievement by making sure that pupils are consistently given sufficient challenge which deepens their thinking and which is based on their potential rather than their attainment on entry.
- Always enable pupils to make informed choices about their futures when they leave school by providing high-quality careers advice from Year 8 or as soon as they enter the school thereafter.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher and proprietor have ensured that all of the independent school standards are met. All staff share the same vision for the continuous improvement of the school to enable it to become outstanding. Both areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection have been addressed well. The headteacher and staff have ensured that attendance has risen from below the national average to above average. They are also regularly monitoring pupils' attendance and progress and the quality of the provision made when pupils are placed with other providers.
- The headteacher and proprietor regularly review policies and ensure they are up to date. Staff implement these effectively. The headteacher motivates staff well, through the good procedures for managing their performance to improve the quality of teaching and the provision of well-chosen training to extend their knowledge and skills in meeting the learning and welfare needs of pupils.
- Staff morale is high, which is reflected in the strongly positive responses in their completed questionnaires. The headteacher promotes good teamwork and enjoys the full confidence of staff to enable consistency in their approaches in developing a structured, predictable environment for all pupils. Parents have full confidence in the work of the school, as reflected in their highly positive responses to the school's recent survey of parents' views.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's performance, based on detailed monitoring of the impact of provision on pupils' outcomes. It uses this information well to establish clear priorities for improvement in the school development plan. All staff take responsibility for developing their subjects and ensure that the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and communication are promoted across each subject.
- The school's curriculum is good and meets all regulations. It is planned effectively and offers a broad range of well-balanced subjects, with a strong emphasis on developing reading, writing and mathematics across the school. A good range of well-chosen resources have been developed to promote learning across a wide range of subjects. Pupils enjoy art, music, physical education and practical experimental work in science. The school makes good use of off-site local facilities, such as a local supermarket where pupils develop their catering skills, the beach, local parks, a secondary school for football, a leisure centre for swimming and a local gym. The oldest pupils follow a wide range of academic and vocational courses tailored to their interests and learning needs, including GCSE examinations where appropriate.
- The school has good links with alternative providers, enabling pupils to follow courses in a range of vocational subjects, such as hair and beauty and animal care. Good arrangements are in place to monitor pupils' responses to the off-site provision and the progress they are making.
- The curriculum includes a well-developed programme of personal, social, and health education, with good opportunities for accreditation through ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) courses. The citizenship programme prepares pupils effectively for life in modern Britain. Pupils learn about democracy and the rule of law, and produce high-quality work, which is proudly displayed around the school. The values of tolerance and respect for other cultures and religious traditions are promoted well. Staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. There are good opportunities for reflection and enjoyment of learning. Pupils develop skills of leadership and working collaboratively. They learn the difference between right and wrong, through the consistent application of the code of conduct around the school and the system of rewards and sanctions.
- There is a well-established system of careers education for the oldest pupils which enables most of them to make informed choices. However, occasionally, pupils are unsure of what they wish to do when they leave school because they do not always receive appropriate careers advice soon enough.
- Assessment systems are secure and staff take full account of the objectives in pupils' statements of special educational needs to develop targets for individual education and behaviour plans. Detailed assessments are carried out when pupils enter the school and clear targets are set to move learning forward. However, occasionally these are based on the gaps in pupils' learning on entry and not always on their full potential. Pupils' progress is continually assessed against National Curriculum level descriptors. This is supplemented with a termly assessment in the core subjects. All parents and carers receive detailed termly reports on their child's learning and progress.
- Leaders promote equality of opportunity well, enabling all pupils to learn and make equally good progress. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated and this is reflected in no recorded incidents of racism or prejudiced-based bullying of any kind. The school fosters good and harmonious relationships among all pupils.
- The headteacher, staff and proprietor ensure that all policies and procedures to ensure pupils' safety and

well-being meet requirements, are up-to-date and are fully implemented. Thorough checks are made on the suitability of all staff and visitors to work with children.

■ **The governance of the school**

- The proprietor challenges the work of the school effectively by working closely with the headteacher to ensure all independent school standards are met and policies are up to date and implemented effectively.
- The proprietor regularly visits the school and has an accurate view of teaching based on pupils' achievement over time. She checks that the school is promoting British values and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively.
- The proprietor ensures that the school meets its legal requirements for promoting pupils' safety and well-being, for example in checking that all potential risks to pupils' safety in school are fully assessed and appropriate action taken to reduce such risks.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Pupils' learning is good and they make good progress during their time in school because teachers plan a range of interesting activities to motivate them. In a lesson visited on British values, pupils were debating the importance of school rules and the effectiveness of various punishments for breaking different laws. This developed into a good, lively debate with pupils listening carefully and showing respect for others' views. Teachers also make good use of well-chosen practical resources, including practical mathematics resources and computers, to enable pupils to research topics in their lessons.
- All staff maintain good relationships with pupils and work closely as a team to manage behaviour and support pupils' learning well. This was seen in all visits to lessons and confirmed in discussion with pupils who said they liked their teachers and wanted to do well in school. Pupils take a pride in their work and their good behaviour and attitudes contribute strongly to their good learning and progress.
- Teachers make good use of assessment information to set clear targets for pupils to achieve based on the gaps in their learning. Occasionally these are not challenging enough to ensure pupils reach their full potential. Teachers track the progress pupils are making and provide good feedback to them on how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. As a result, pupils have a clear idea of how well they are doing and are eager to do even better.
- The teaching of the basic skills of communication, literacy and numeracy are good and staff promote these well across a range of subjects. Pupils' written work shows they are making good progress in using English grammar, punctuation and spelling because teachers are setting high expectations and provide good feedback on their learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils quickly re-engage with learning as they become more confident during their time in school. This is because staff maintain good relationships, showing respect for pupils, treating them all as individuals and providing consistent levels of support and care to meet their needs.
- Staff consistently apply the school's systems of rewards and sanctions to enable pupils to re-engage with learning. Pupils are awarded points for the effort they make and for the work they have completed and this is celebrated further with systematic praise and encouragement.
- Pupils say they feel very safe in school and are safe. They behave safely in school, when they attend alternative provision and on trips outside school. Pupils use equipment including computers safely. The premises and grounds are secure. All potential risks for pupils inside school, when they participate in school trips and when they attend alternative provision, are carefully assessed. Effective measures are in place to minimise any potential risks. There are no recorded incidents of bullying, racism or harassment. Pupils say that bullying is rare and they are increasingly aware of different types of bullying.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils make rapid progress in their behaviour as they respond well to structured routines. Staff set high expectations for their behaviour and consistently apply the system of rewards and sanctions. Consequently, pupils rapidly re-engage with learning and develop more appropriate ways of expressing their feelings and emotions.
- Pupils develop good attitudes to learning, which were seen during lesson visits in school and off-site. Pupils take a pride in their work and present it neatly in their books. Pupils say they now want to learn and do well in school and their parents agree.
- Attendance rates improve rapidly when pupils enter the school. Nearly all pupils achieve above-average attendance and very few are ever absent. Pupils also regularly attend alternative provision as they greatly enjoy this aspect of the curriculum. This is consistently monitored and supported well by the school. As a result, the school knows how well pupils increase their confidence in learning and grow in self-esteem in their chosen courses at alternative provision.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Evidence that pupils make good progress from their low starting points on admission to the school was seen in their work, their progress files and in the school's accurate information about the progress they are making. Nearly all pupils are making the progress expected and a significant number are making better than that expected of them.
- Younger pupils are making good progress in a wide range of subjects including personal, social and health education, reading, writing, mathematics, science, technology, physical education, music and art. They improve their writing and mathematical skills well because these are promoted effectively across a wide range of subjects.
- Older pupils build on their earlier good learning and are making good progress towards their examination courses, which includes GCSE and higher entry-level functional skills courses. A few pupils are making outstanding progress in working towards higher grades at GCSE and distinctions in their vocational courses, such as the European Computer Driving Licence, after only a short time in school. This is in contrast to their previous histories of disengagement from learning. A small number of pupils show exceptional talent in music and have made a professional recording performing confidently in public.
- Pupils attending alternative provision are making at least good progress in vocational course such as animal care, hair and beauty.
- The oldest pupils are making good progress in work-related learning and independence skills. This prepares them well for leaving school and entering further education. All pupils who have left at 16 years of age, in recent years, have entered further education or training and nearly all have sustained their places one year on.
- All groups of pupils, including those in local authority care, those with additional needs, such as autistic spectrum disorder, those at an early stage of learning English and the most able are making equally good progress from their different starting points. This is because all have individual education plans which are used well to provide good support for their learning. Occasionally, the thinking of a very few pupils is not always challenged sufficiently to enable them to reach their full potential.
- The school uses its assessments effectively to plan and provide programmes to enable pupils who have fallen behind to catch up quickly.

School details

Unique reference number	137562
Inspection number	10006042
DfE registration number	882/6010

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.

Type of school	Special school for pupils with behavioural, emotional and mental health needs
School status	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	7–16 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	9
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Susan Potton
Headteacher	Ange Rudd
Annual fees (day pupils)	£38,750
Telephone number	01702 332181
Website	http://oceanlodgeschool.com
Email address	angela@potton-homes.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	18–19 September 2012

Information about this school

- Ocean Lodge is a small independent special school located in a residential area, which opened in October 2011. It is owned by Potton Homes and at the time of the previous inspection the school was registered to admit up to eight boys and girls between the ages of seven and 16 years with a range of social, emotional and mental health needs. Since the last inspection the school requested the Department for Education to increase the number on roll to 10 pupils. As a result, the school was granted this change to its registration by the Department in April 2015 without a material change inspection.
- There are currently nine pupils aged 11 to 16 on roll. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. Many have histories of poor attendance and challenging behaviour and some have additional needs associated with autistic spectrum disorder.
- Nearly all pupils are White British and a very small number are learning English as an additional language.
- Most pupils are looked after by the local authority; five pupils live in accommodation provided by the company and a few are in foster care. This care provision provided by the company was not part of this inspection. The school receives the pupil premium for a small number of pupils. This is additional funding for those known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority.
- The school provides pupils with alternative education in a number of establishments to educate pupils for part of the time. These include: the Circles salon in Basildon, where a small number of pupils attend for one day per week for hair and beauty, and the Circles farm where a small number of pupils also attend for one day per week. The school also uses external facilities for football, horse riding, sports, outdoor adventurous activities, swimming and leisure.
- The school aims to enable its pupils to reach their potential and to be well prepared for life after school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited four lessons with the headteacher to look at the impact of teaching and assessment on pupils' learning and progress. All teachers were seen.
- The inspector looked at samples of pupils' work in school and in the Circles salon.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the health and safety manager, the care manager, the play therapist and the proprietor.
- The inspector took account of the school's most recent survey of parents and held discussions with a small number of parents, as there were too few responses to Parent View, the online questionnaire for parents. The inspector also looked at the completed questionnaires returned by all staff.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documentation, including: safeguarding policies and procedures; records of behaviour and physical restraint; attendance figures; the school's information about the progress pupils are making; the school development plan and self-evaluation documents.

Inspection team

Declan McCarthy, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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