

Gretton School

Independent school standard inspection report

DfE registration number	873/6048
Unique Reference Number (URN)	136047
Inspection number	364148
Inspection dates	19–20 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Julie Winyard HMI

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

No. 090070

© Crown copyright 2010



Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, 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.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

Gretton School opened on 5 January 2010 and is registered for boys and girls aged five to 19 years. This is the school's first inspection. The building and grounds were remodelled and refurbished by the present owners Piscari Ltd. At this time the site was shared with a pre prep school also purchased by Piscari. A decision was made to close the pre prep school due to falling numbers and the whole site was adopted by Gretton on 1 September 2010 as a specialist school for pupils with High Functioning Autism. There are currently four boys, placed by local authorities, at the school. Each pupil has a statement of special educational needs.

There has been considerable turbulence since the school opened. The first headteacher appointed was unable to continue and the proprietor is currently working with two specialist educational consultants who are leading the school until the headteacher designate takes up post at the end of November 2010.

The school buildings have specialist subject teaching areas as well as six class bases. All required documentation is in place. Following the appointment of a new headteacher, the proprietor is recruiting a head of education and more teachers, including subject specialists. The school offers a range of therapies to meet the content of individual pupils' statements of special educational needs; for example, speech and language and occupational therapy. A clinical psychologist and educational psychologist work alongside class teachers.

Evaluation of the school

Gretton School offers a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils with many good features including the way it successfully promotes pupils' personal development. Teaching seen during the inspection was good and pupils make good progress in lessons. Assessment procedures and processes, which are satisfactory, are at the early stages of development. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good as is pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The curriculum is satisfactory for the current pupils. Nevertheless, not all subjects required for older

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

pupils are provided fully. Provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good and all safeguarding procedures are very robust and meet requirements. All documentation is in place; however, the school does not meet all the regulations.

Quality of education

The overall quality of education is satisfactory. The curriculum, supported by a good range of educational visits, is satisfactory in that it meets the daily needs of each pupil although not all required subjects are taught. The school is addressing this by recruiting specialist staff so that an appropriate range of Key Stage 3 subjects and GCSE subjects can be offered as pupils move through the school. The school has a written curriculum policy but this is not fully translated into practice. A long-term plan shows how key skills and content of the National Curriculum will be covered. Older pupils have contributed their ideas for topics that particularly interest them, for example in history. However, medium term plans do not always have sufficient detail to show how their ideas will be developed. Teachers' short term planning is well-structured and detailed ensuring that pupils know exactly what they are expected to learn during each lesson. The curriculum does not always meet fully pupils' special needs because the detailed recommendations within individual statements of special educational needs are not distilled into clear learning programmes for each pupil. Individual education plan (IEP) targets are too broad and are not all broken down into small steps. This means that pupils cannot achieve the target over a reasonable timescale. Teachers' lesson plans do not always refer to, or include, pupils' IEP targets. There is no agreed approach for tracking how well pupils reach their IEP targets and show progress over time.

Teaching and assessment overall are satisfactory. Teaching seen during the inspection was mostly good. Lessons are carefully planned and interesting. Pupils say they like their teachers because they are friendly and that they enjoy learning because activities are fun. For example, in a design technology lesson when pupils were designing a machine using one specific mechanism, a pupil explained his design very precisely, and with great enthusiasm, and was then able to answer well the teacher's probing questions. Pupils make good progress during lessons because they apply themselves well to activities and work hard. They appreciate the quiet and orderly learning environment and are very pleased to have individual workstations so they can work in their own space if they need to. In the words of one pupil, 'This place has really helped a lot. You get individual teaching and a quiet area if you do get angry.' Key strengths in teaching are the excellent relationships between adults and pupils that enable a very positive learning atmosphere, the effective deployment of well-trained, specialist teaching assistants and the quiet, calm manner in which teachers express their high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils respond appropriately. Assessment is carried out well during lessons and teachers use the information to plan the next steps in a particular subject or skill. There is no whole school approach to recording pupils' progress against agreed criteria and national norms so teachers are not able to map robustly enough pupils' progress from when

they start at the school. Adults give pupils effective verbal feedback during lessons about their work which helps pupils to progress. The school's aim to enable pupils to self-assess has not been fully realised.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Behaviour is good because of the excellent relationships between pupils and all adults who work with them. There are very effective behaviour management systems in place which are consistently used across the school. Pupils really like and appreciate these systems as they feel this helps them to behave well most of the time. One pupil said, 'I really like the rewards because I know exactly what I am expected to do and why I am getting the reward. It helps me to keep on task.' Teaching assistants are particularly skilled at supporting pupils as soon as their focus drifts away from learning.

Cultural development is good and is covered well through the celebration of festivals. Short term plans are thorough and carefully structured to ensure this approach is not tokenistic. This was seen in the experiences provided to pupils so that they could understand the Jewish New Year celebrations. There is not yet a plan to give pupils a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England.

Spiritual development is good and is evident in the pupils' respect for all adults and for each other. It is also evident in pupils' desire to do their best and respond to adults' requests quickly and with good humour. They enjoy pleasing adults and each other and care about behaving well because they are more aware of themselves and how their behaviour affects others.

Social and moral development are good. For example in Key Stage 3, pupils interact and collaborate well with each other in lessons, treat each other with respect and recognise how to change their behaviour to support each other so that they can all learn. For example, when playing a simple card game as part of a probability lesson, a pupil was able to adapt his behaviour to make it easier for his classmate to access the playing cards by placing them nearer to him after having his own turn. There was no adult intervention to request this; the pupil recognised what needed to be done to support his classmate.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety is good. Pupils are very relaxed in lessons because they know they are safe and completely trust the adults they work with. They say there is no bullying in the school and that they like the quiet and orderly environment. All staff consider pupils' welfare and safety to be paramount and provide an excellent level of supervision at all times. Pupils' understanding of living a healthy lifestyle is promoted through the curriculum and there is good

provision for physical exercise including an effective sensory circuit for younger pupils. Pupils are provided with a healthy breakfast and snacks.

The school buildings and grounds are very secure with high yet discrete boundary fencing. There are some good quality and detailed risk assessments for some classroom activities but these are not completed systematically by all staff for all activities. There are effective and robust risk assessments for all educational visits outside the school site.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The systems and procedures for appointing staff, including Criminal Records Bureau checks, their backgrounds and identity, previous employment and medical history are in place and meet the regulations.

Premises of and accommodation at the school

The school's premises and accommodation enable pupils to learn effectively, safely and securely. There is a good range of specialist rooms including a very well equipped science laboratory, food technology area and design technology room. The rooms are of good size and the buildings are in an excellent state of repair. The newly re-furnished buildings have high quality decoration and furnishings. Heating is good in classrooms and in the hall.

Provision of information

All regulations are met. An attractive prospectus includes all the information for parents required by the regulations and informs parents and prospective parents about the work of the school. There is a home school diary which parents particularly appreciate. They say this keeps them well informed about their children's social and emotional development. However, they would like more information about their children's academic progress.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

There are good procedures for handling complaints and parents are informed about these through the school prospectus and the detailed policy is available from the school and on the website. All regulations are met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.³

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the quality of education provided (standards in part 1) and must:

- ensure that the curriculum policy is supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work and is implemented appropriately (paragraph 2(1))
- ensure the curriculum gives pupils of compulsory school age a full time education experience in the following areas of learning: linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical, and aesthetic and creative (paragraph 2(2)(a))
- where pupils have a statement of special educational needs ensure the education provided fulfils its requirements (paragraph 2(2)(e))
- ensure there is, or develop, a framework in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly, and that information from such assessment is utilised to plan teaching so that pupils can make progress (paragraph 3(g))
- ensure there is a framework in place by which pupil performance can be evaluated by reference to either the school's own aims, as provided to parents, and/or by national norms (paragraph 4)

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils (standards in part 2) and must:

- ensure provision is made to give pupils a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England (paragraph 5(d))

³ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1997/contents/made

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
-------------	------	--------------	------------

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		✓		
--	--	---	--	--

School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Special for pupils with autism		
Date school opened	January 2010		
Age range of pupils	5-19		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 3	Girls:	Total: 3
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 1	Girls:	Total: 1
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 4	Girls:	Total: 4
Annual fees (day pupils)	£ 42,000 – 85,000		
Address of school	High Street, Girton, Cambridge, CB3 0QL		
Telephone number	01223 277438		
Email address	admin@grettonschool.com		
Headteacher	Ms Deborah Carr (designate)		
Proprietor	Mr Mike Lander		