

Liverpool Green Corns

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	Amraz Ali HMI
Social care inspector	Michel Bacon

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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}

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.

Information about the school

This is a single occupancy independent special school which is also registered as a children's home. The school opened in 2007 and is owned and managed by the Continuum Group. It provides 52-week care for young people between the age of 10 and 18 years who are unable to attend mainstream because of severe behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. There is one student with a statement of special educational needs. The school was previously inspected in June 2008.

The school aims to: 'equip pupils for society by empowering, enhancing and encouraging the development of social maturity to develop pupils' capacity to contribute to society's activities, and to encourage spiritual growth, a set of moral values, respect for the community, and a sense of belonging.'

Evaluation of the school

The school successfully meets its aims by providing a good quality of boarding care and education, which is flexible so that it meets the needs of each individual student. There have been good all-round improvements in provision and outcomes for students since the last inspection. The quality of teaching, assessment and the curriculum are good. As a result, students make good progress in their learning and in improving their behaviour and attitudes to education. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because of the good care they receive. The welfare, health and safety of students are good and safeguarding procedures are secure. The school meets all of the regulations for independent schools.

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents.

Quality of education

The curriculum is good overall and the individual education plans and timetables are designed around the needs of each student. The school draws on a full range of National Curriculum policies and schemes of work to ensure all the required areas of learning are covered. Each student's timetable is developed around the need to improve their basic skills and at the same time provide a balance of academic subjects. There is good flexibility in the planning to ensure the most appropriate courses are provided for each student. For example, one student had a timetable, which included an adult literacy course. Year 11 students are encouraged to enter public examinations and apply for courses in further education. Careers education is provided and individual placements are secured to give students experience of work-related skills; for example, one student attended a trade skills course. There is a relative weakness in the planning and delivery of some of the sessions, which are supervised by care staff. These include independent study using the computer and a social interaction programme. Occasionally the planned sessions have not taken place because of shortcomings in the communication between the education and the care staff. Students are taught by a team of teachers with appropriate subject expertise who work across the company's schools and who spend around half a day teaching on each site. Visits out of school to places of cultural and historical interest add breadth to the curriculum. Visits to places of natural beauty encourage students to reflect on the natural wonders of the world, such as a recent visit to the Lake District.

Teaching and assessment are good and enable the students to make good progress. The very good relationships that exist between students and the care and education staff have been particularly effective in helping students to improve their attitudes to learning and their behaviour. They receive much individual attention from the very patient teachers. Students ask questions and seek clarification and reassurance from their teachers when they are unsure of the work they are asked to complete. Teachers know students' individual learning needs very well and are able to intervene quickly to correct any misunderstandings. Lessons are well planned, with individual students in mind and always have clear learning intentions. There are good systems in place for recording each student's academic and personal progress. However, the practice of identifying what 'all, most or some' students have achieved at the end of the lesson does not match the situation when there is often only one student present. The teachers have good subject knowledge that helps to enthuse students and ensures that their explanations are clear. Resources have improved since the previous inspection; a computer with internet access is now available. Good use is made of information and communication technology, for example, when students record their work using word processing. However, students comment that the computer is slow and sometimes restricts access to educational websites.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The provision is delivered mainly through good personal, social and health education and citizenship programmes. Developing students' independence and social skills is a strong feature of the school's work. Each student's individually planned programme includes activities such as visiting a library and practising their communication skills with people in the community. The school provides students with a good range of cultural opportunities to learn about their own and other cultures. For example, students visit a mosque and learn about major world religions. There are appropriate opportunities for students to learn about a broad range of English public institutions that have included visits to a magistrates' court and museums. Students are encouraged to make a positive contribution by, for example, taking part in fund-raising activities. The school has a clear policy to promote acceptable behaviour and to encourage students to develop independence, self-control and self-esteem. The very caring environment and good relationships between staff and students has a positive impact on students' attitudes to learning. Students understand that gaining qualifications will improve their future employment prospects and consequently they try hard in lessons. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good but there are still some occasions when students refuse to attend lessons.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Good provision is made for students' welfare, health and safety throughout the school. The high staff-student ratio and good relationships between staff and students ensures that students are safe. The school has a wide range of policies in place including policies for safeguarding and child protection with staff fully trained at the required level. An admission register is kept electronically and meets requirements. Although not required to do so, because students are boarders, the school maintains a daily attendance register. This is particularly important as students have a history of poor school attendance. However, the practice of giving 'full marks' even when a student is on the premises but refuses to attend lessons results in inaccurate information being gathered and means that evidence of improvements in attendance in lessons is not secure. Appropriate risk assessments are carried out in all areas of the school and for educational visits. Fire risk assessments are in place and fire safety equipment is checked annually. Accidents and incidents are properly recorded. The school fulfils its duties with regard to the Equalities Act 2010.

Students are encouraged to eat healthily and to take regular exercise. Meals include fresh fruit and vegetables. Students have the opportunity to visit a local leisure centre to take part in sporting activities such as badminton and football. Students are taught about the importance of personal safety and well-being; for example, they learnt about sexual health and hygiene.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

Thorough checks are completed prior to the appointment of all staff to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. Checks with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) have been completed for all members of staff. All the required information is kept in a single central register.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The building is in an adequate state of repair and the accommodation provides a safe and suitable setting for learning that meets all of the regulations. The interior of the house is suitably decorated and maintained. The provision has improved since the last inspection for there is now a dedicated school room. This room is light, with shelving and cupboards for storing resources and pupils' work. However, although the table in the school room is adequate the chairs for students and teachers are shared with the dining room. Good use is made of this adjacent dining room when more space is required, for example for art work. The enclosed garden at the rear of the house has a grassed area and a small paved section for recreation.

Provision of information

The comprehensive school brochure contains all of the required information. However, although the correct numbers of staff and their qualifications are included so that the regulations are met, some information is incomplete, for example, the brochure does not include the names of all staff who currently work at the school. Parents, carers and others are provided with an annual report on students' academic and personal progress and provide targets for the future. Local authorities that place students at the school are sent an annual account of income and expenditure.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The complaints procedure is made available to parents, carers and other and meets all of the requirements.

Leadership and management of the residential provision

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

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets all of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010.

National minimum standards

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:

- improve the quality of the planning and communication between the home and the school to ensure all the planned sessions supervised by care staff take place
- review the procedures for completing the daily attendance registers in order to better reflect when students attend lessons or refuse to enter the school room.

Inspection judgements

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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Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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Overall effectiveness of the boarding experience

Overall effectiveness of the boarding experience		✓		
Outcomes for boarders		✓		
Quality of boarding provision and care		✓		
Boarders' safety		✓		
Leadership and management of boarding		✓		

School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Special for students with severe behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.		
Date school opened	August 2007		
Age range of pupils	10-18 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of boarders	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 1	Girls: 0	Total: 1
Annual fees (day pupils)	£34,800		
Annual fees (boarders)	£205,400		
Email address	angela.norris-heyas@greencorns.co.uk		
Headteacher	Mrs Angela Norris-Heyes		
Proprietor	Green Corns		

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



21 November 2011

Dear students

Inspection of Liverpool Greencorns

Thank you very much for your friendliness and help when my colleague and I came to inspect your school recently. We are grateful that you came to meet us and for telling us about your school. The care staff and teachers take good care of you. You go to a good school. You make good progress during your time there because you are taught well and have interesting things to do in your lessons. The curriculum is good. You told me that you understand that working hard and getting qualifications will help you get a better job in the future. You make good progress at improving your behaviour which is usually good.

Your school does all of the things it needs to in order to continue to operate as a school. I have suggested just two things that the school might do to make things better for you:

- improve the quality of the planning and communication between the home and the school to ensure all the planned sessions supervised by care staff take place
- review the procedures for completing the daily attendance registers in order to better reflect when students attend lessons or refuse to enter the school room.

I am sure that you would like to play your part too by doing your best in every lesson. You can also help your teachers by making sure that you attend every lesson.

We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Amraz Ali
Her Majesty's Inspector