

# Hamilton Lodge

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	114619
<b>Local authority</b>	Brighton and Hove
<b>Inspection number</b>	378902
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 July 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Denise Morris

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The inspection of residential provision was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	79
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	11
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Charlotte Holtam
<b>Headteacher</b>	Graham Sheppard
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	November 2008
<b>School address</b>	Walpole Road Brighton BN2 0LS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01273 682362
<b>Fax number</b>	01273 695742
<b>Email address</b>	admin@hamiltonlodgelsc.co.uk
<b>Boarding/Residential provision</b>	SC050400
<b>Social care unique reference number</b>	800077
<b>Social care inspector</b>	Liz Driver

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<b>Age group</b>	5–18
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	3–4 July 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	378902



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Denise Morris

Additional inspector

Barry Wood

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 15 lessons, most of them jointly with senior leaders, taught by nine different teachers over a period of seven hours. Meetings were held with senior leaders, members of the governing body, staff and pupils. The inspectors took account of the responses to the online Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at teachers' planning, curriculum documents, the school development plan, pupils' work and assessment information. The inspectors received six responses to the inspection questionnaires from parents and carers, and these, with several from staff and pupils, were taken into account.

## Information about the school

Hamilton Lodge is an average-sized special school. It caters for deaf children and because there is residential accommodation, children come from a wide geographical area. Most pupils are White British with the rest from a few minority ethnic backgrounds. A small number use English as an additional language. All teaching is through the medium of British Sign Language and spoken English. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs for hearing impairment. Over two thirds have additional needs, mainly associated with autism, learning difficulties and/or emotional and behavioural difficulties. There are twice as many boys as girls. Pupils spend three years in Key Stage 4 and this is agreed with their funding authority. The school has a sixth form for students up to the age of 18. It holds the Positive about Disabled people award. There are currently no pupils at the school under the age of 10. There were 38 boarders at the school at the time of the inspection with separate residences for boys and girls.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- Hamilton Lodge is a good school. The school has maintained its strengths and has improved its assessment and tracking system in particular since the last inspection. It provides effective opportunities for deaf pupils, enabling them to engage in and enjoy their learning. The school is not outstanding because the pace of learning in some classes is not rapid enough.
- The vast majority of pupils, including those with additional special needs, achieve well. They make good progress, particularly in developing their signing skills, which enables them to communicate confidently. Progress in reading, writing and mathematics for younger pupils is good and reading skills are improving because of regular practice. Older pupils and students in the sixth form also achieve well with many attaining GCSEs and vocational courses by the age of 17.
- Teaching is good. Staff promote signing skills well. They ensure that pupils have equal access to the exciting range of activities that the school provides. In a few lessons, the pace of learning is not rigorous enough and as a result some pupils, particularly higher-attaining pupils, do not always do enough.
- Behaviour is good because pupils have positive attitudes and get on well with their peers. The vast majority of pupils and their parents and carers rightly say that the school is safe and secure and that pupils behave well. Attendance has improved and is now above average.
- Leadership of teaching and management of performance are good. The rich and curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The headteacher and other leaders, well supported by the trustees and the governing body, have created an ethos in which pupils thrive. Leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses and recognise the issues identified for improvement, including the satisfactory management of residential provision.
- Residential provision is satisfactory and no better because two national

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minimum standards, although being addressed, are not fully met. Children and young people benefit from good quality care, resulting in their good outcomes. They enjoy their time in residence and feel safe.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that a greater proportion of lessons are outstanding by:
  - providing different tasks in lessons to meet the wide range of abilities so that the pace of learning for all pupils improves
  - ensuring that all groups across the school complete enough work in the time allowed
  - ensuring that the more-able pupils are appropriately challenged by the work set.
  
- Ensure that it meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools that have not been fully met.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Because of the high proportion of pupils with additional special needs, no overall judgement on standards is being made in this report. All groups of pupils make good progress from often low starts. Many pupils enter the school having had difficult experiences in previous placements due to their deafness. They quickly settle and make at least good progress in their time at the school. Pupils with autism and those with learning, behavioural or emotional difficulties make similarly good progress. Pupils make the best progress in their communication skills because of the sharp focus placed on the teaching of British Sign Language (BSL), which gives them a means to communicate, interact with each other and the confidence to achieve. Their rapid progress in BSL is impressive, including those who have English as an additional language. Younger pupils in Year 6 make good progress in reading. This is due to consistent practice and good quality support to help them understand and learn unknown words. Pupils in Year 6 also made good progress in English as they learnt about 'bossy' verbs. Very effective signing enabled them to really understand the impact that such verbs can have.

Progress in mathematics is also good and pupils enjoy the challenge of working with shapes and numbers. This was evident in Year 8 where pupils were drawing pictograms. Planning was clearly linked to individual abilities and good questioning extended pupils understanding so they successfully interpreted the data and completed their tasks. By the end of Year 12, the majority of pupils achieve some GCSEs and/or vocational qualifications. All of the parents and carers who responded

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to the inspection questionnaires say that their children achieve well. 'We feel we have made the right decision for our child's future and are very pleased with his ongoing progress,' is a typical comment. Inspection evidence supports this view. Pupils' achievements are enhanced by the well-run and purposeful homework club in the residences where pupils receive high-quality support and guidance from staff in the evenings and by the wide variety of clubs. Regular opportunities for day pupils to join in with these clubs are a key feature of the provision. Pupils make outstanding progress in art. This is clearly evident in the excellent displays of their work and in the high levels of accreditation that pupils' attain in the subject. Project folders for the GCSE examinations, for example, show very effective work using exciting colours in the style of David Hockney and vibrant 'pop art' in the style of Andy Warhol.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well and helps pupils make good progress in their personal development, regularly taking responsibility for simple jobs around the school and the residential home. The focus on encouraging pupils to achieve is evident in the way that pupils involve themselves in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme with many achieving Bronze and Silver levels and eagerly helping those younger than themselves.

### **Quality of teaching**

Parents and carers say that their children are well taught. Teachers and care staff are skilled in the use of BSL and use their skills to encourage pupils to engage in conversations and discussions. The vast majority of lessons have good pace and enable pupils to make better than expected progress. Lessons are exciting and very effective use is made of resources to excite and engage pupils. Good questioning helps to extend pupils' communication skills and encourages them to find answers and so deepens their knowledge. For example in a Year 9 English lesson, pupils were learning how to make an 'impact' in their writing by using powerful words. Very good resources as well as the fast pace of activities and high expectations enabled pupils to understand how big companies use simple slogans with powerful messages to sell their products. Similarly in mathematics in Year 7, pupils, including some with additional special educational needs, were able to successfully solve number problems using more than one function. They too benefited from good resources and very focused questioning to extend their skills. In a very few lessons, too few activities are planned. This results in a few pupils doing too little work and a few higher-ability pupils saying that the work set is too easy. Teachers make good use of the rich and creative curriculum to design their lessons, building on pupils' previous learning and linking tasks closely to individual pupils' needs and extending their abilities. For example, pupils with additional special educational needs regularly have extra support and specifically tailored tasks to ensure that they are able to complete their work.

Assessment of pupils' work has improved and now regularly enables pupils to understand their next steps. Older pupils regularly mark their own work and they are aware of their targets and who to go to for help. Teaching promotes pupils' good personal development through many opportunities for them to work together, share

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resources and take turns. This is well supported by the good quality of support that residential pupils receive from care staff in the two boarding houses. They develop their personal skills through independence training from Year 9 onwards, regularly using public transport and visiting leisure centres, cinemas and sports clubs. These activities prepare them well for their futures.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils respond well to the school's strategies to promote their behaviour and safety. This leads to their good behaviour and their clear awareness of how to stay safe. All of the parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaires said that behaviour at the school is good and pupils agree. Pupils take on simple responsibilities diligently, for example preparing the hall for assemblies, helping out at lunchtimes and ensuring that everyone has someone to play with. All pupils have opportunities to represent their class on the school council at some stage in the year. They take a full and active part in decision making about activities and visits. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good and has a positive impact on the calm and positive atmosphere. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through the curriculum, and regular assemblies encourage pupils to think carefully about their own lives and the lives of others. Pupils' obvious enjoyment of school is evident in their above average and improving attendance.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe through personal and social education lessons as well as through drama and physical education (PE). In a drama lesson in Year 9 for example, pupils made excellent progress in their social skills by using mime to develop joint working practices in which they supported each other very well. They act out scenarios in which they develop understanding of real-life experiences. All of the parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaires believe that their child is kept safe at the school and inspection evidence supports this view, accepting the adjustments occurring in the residential safeguarding standards. There is no evidence in school records of any bullying, including bullying related to disability, special educational needs, race, religion or gender. Pupils say that staff quickly sort out any problems. Pupils learn how to work together safely and are very supportive of each other.

In the residences, older pupils who board at the school learn how to look after themselves and others by cooking their own healthy meals. They engage in community activities, for example, cricket at the local park. Older pupils from the age of 14 can go into the community independently with parents' and carers' permission provided they have undertaken successful mobility training, helping to promote their confidence and extending their self-esteem. Engaging in Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme activities, for example camping and trekking, shows that the school promotes safe risk taking for older pupils to better prepare them for college.

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## Leadership and management

The headteacher has a clear vision for the future of the school. Leaders have embedded their ambition by driving improvement through successful training for all staff, including residential care staff in the teaching of BSL, by enriching the curriculum through many visits and visitors and by improving the assessment and tracking of pupils' individual achievements. Care staff provide positive feedback to school staff and home-school diaries are well used to check achievements and well-being for day pupils. As a result, there is now a very clear picture of each pupil's successes. Other leaders, including in the boarding provision, take their responsibilities seriously and are rigorous about improvement for each individual pupil.

The curriculum provides exciting opportunities to extend pupils' understanding of the world through cultural experiences, for example, visits to museums and art galleries. This is supported in the residences by regular visits to local theatres and cinemas. A visit by pupils in Years 8 and 9 to the Imperial War Museum, for example, provided them with very good knowledge of the lives of young people in Germany before the Second World War. Pupils were enthralled as they subsequently watched a film clip of the period that helped them build an excellent visual picture of life in those times. Expeditions into the wider United Kingdom through the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme promote resilience and enjoyment for older pupils in particular. The curriculum promotes literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills well through subjects such as history, design and technology and food technology. During the inspection, some older pupils for example, were making fajitas using recipes to cook their meal.

Opportunities for older pupils to undertake cycling proficiency and for younger ones to use cycling lanes, along with regular swimming and a road traffic awareness scheme, all contribute to keeping pupils safe. School safeguarding procedures meet requirements and give no cause for concern. Minor attention to details in the national minimum standards is already being addressed. Committed and well-trained staff in the residences liaise closely with school staff to ensure that robust support and care are available. Strong links with local colleges and businesses enable older pupils to gain accreditation and to undertake work experience in various shops, cafes, nurseries and garages, which prepares them well for their futures.

Parents and carers are very supportive of leadership and are pleased with the school. 'My child loves school. Good care staff, excellent teachers!' wrote one in response to the inspection questionnaires. There has been a good track record of improvement since the last inspection. This, together with the focus on successful performance management which has led to significant improvements in teaching and learning, shows that there is capacity for further improvement. Leaders promote equality well through the wide range of opportunities and are rigorous about eliminating discrimination. All pupils, including those with additional special educational needs, have full access to all that the school offers.

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## Residential provision

Residential pupils receive good quality care. Outcomes are good with some good and some excellent progress made for all residential pupils, taking their starting points into account. Safeguarding is adequate and the school is reviewing and amending current policies and procedures in liaison with the local safeguarding board.

Residential pupils say they feel safe at the school. Parents and carers also say they feel their children are kept safe at the school. Leadership and management are sound; however, due to the impact of safeguarding the judgement is adequate.

Residential pupils enjoy a wide range of activities to broaden their life skills and social skills. Good provision is made for transition into adult life with a real emphasis on integrating into the local community. Residential pupils receive the direction and guidance they need to make informed choices in terms of their own social behaviour and conduct. They are highly supported by the staff team to achieve good outcomes in this area. Much work is done to raise individual self-esteem and self-worth and there is a culture of respect, acceptance and tolerance of each other. Residential pupils feel they are part of a family and live in a warm, safe and homely environment. They form trusting relationships with staff as a result of sensitive working systems.

Recent concerns raised by an external agency have resulted in the school reviewing their safeguarding policies, procedures and practices to enhance protection. The senior management team has identified areas that need reviewing and is already proactively addressing them. They are also liaising with the local children's safeguarding board to ensure amendments fully meet local safeguarding procedures and expectations. Health and safety procedures are addressed to an excellent standard with robust checks ensuring safety for the day and residential pupils and staff. The fire procedures are excellent with appropriate resources in place for residential pupils to be able to undertake evacuation drills in the event of a fire. Residential pupils are happy at the setting. Many happy smiling faces were seen during the inspection.

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## National minimum standards

The school must meet the following national minimum standards (NMS) for residential special schools.

- NMS 11 The school should ensure that: arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (as referenced in 'Residential Special Schools National Minimum Standards').
- NMS 3 The school should ensure that: prescribed medicines are given only to the children to whom they are prescribed, and that children allowed to self-medicate are assessed as sufficiently responsible to do so.

*These are the grades for the residential provision*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the residential experience</b>	<b>3</b>
Outcomes residential pupils	<b>2</b>
Quality of residential provision and care	<b>2</b>
Residential pupils' safety	<b>3</b>
Leadership and management of the residential provision	<b>3</b>

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons, and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



5 July 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Hamilton Lodge School, Brighton, BN2 0LS**

Thank you for welcoming us when we inspected your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and talking with you. Your signing skills are good and you told us how much you enjoy school; we can see that you do by the way your attendance is improving. Well done! You told us that you feel safe.

We have judged your school to be good. From the answers to the questionnaires received from your parents and carers, we can see that you are happy and like your teachers. There are many good things in your school, for example, your behaviour, your achievement and the teaching. Your headteacher is doing a good job in providing you with lots of exciting things to do and helping you to be well prepared for your futures. We found that you are kept safe and that your behaviour is good.

You make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. We know that you have been working hard to do well. You told us how much you like art and we can see from your work that you are doing very well in your art lessons. We also found that younger pupils are doing well with their reading because of lots of practice. We hope you will keep this up because your reading skills are improving quickly. Your writing has also improved. Well done! I know your parents and carers are very pleased with your achievement. I am asking your leaders to make sure that all teachers plan more things for you to do in your lessons so that you achieve even better. We think some of you, particularly those who could do a bit more, could make even more progress. We hope you will help with this by working hard. Thank you again for your welcome.

Yours sincerely

Denise Morris  
Lead inspector

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