

# More House School

Moons Hill, Frensham, Farnham, Surrey, GU10 3AP

## Inspection dates

5–7 March 2013

## Overall effectiveness

	Overall effectiveness	Outstanding	1
Pupils' achievement	Outstanding	1	1
Pupils' behaviour and personal development	Outstanding	1	1
Quality of teaching	Outstanding	1	1
Quality of curriculum	Outstanding	1	1
Pupils' welfare, health and safety	Good	2	2
Leadership and management	Good	2	2

## Summary of key findings

### This school is outstanding because

- The outstanding curriculum is highly tailored to meet the needs of each boy and based on rigorous initial assessment of and the levels of attainment of students when they enter the school. This underpins the exceptional progress they make both personally and academically while at the school so they are well equipped for the future.
- Teaching is outstanding in most subject areas and consistently good across the school in all key stages and the sixth form. Teachers set high expectations of what students can achieve regardless of their learning difficulties. They target learning exceptionally well so that students make sustained progress and achievement overtime is outstanding in most subjects.
- The school's approach to students' personal development is excellent, enabling the boys to flourish, gain self-confidence and develop highly positive attitudes to learning.
- Students' behaviour is excellent. The levels of respect they show towards each other, particularly in lessons, are exceptionally high.
- Students are extremely well cared for each day. Arrangements for their welfare, health and safety are robust, but good overall because the reviews of their effectiveness could be tackled with greater rigour.
- The school is led and managed well. The high-quality teaching seen at the last inspection has been sustained, although information gained from lesson observations could be more systematically used to enhance teachers' professional development. The assessment of students' progress is used highly effectively by staff to support the individual achievement of students. However, this is not always presented with sufficient clarity to illustrate levels of progress in subjects for parents, carers and leaders.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with half a day’s notice.
- Thirty lessons were observed, nine short lesson visits made and students were heard reading, some jointly with the headteacher and senior staff.
- Meetings took place with the headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and students. The inspectors examined students’ work, records of progress, and a range of documentation including policies, risk assessments, schemes of work and staff training records.
- Comments from parents and carers, the 112 Parent View responses and 75 staff questionnaires were considered. Students were not given the opportunity to complete Ofsted’s online Point-in-Time survey last term.

## Inspection team

Angela Corbett, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Usman Mapara

Additional Inspector

Helen Griffiths

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Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- More House School is a large independent day and boarding special school in Frensham, Surrey. It caters for boys between the ages of eight and 18 years with a wide range of learning difficulties. These include dyslexia, specific learning difficulties, speech and language difficulties, and autistic spectrum disorder, including Asperger's Syndrome.
- The school, which opened in 1939, is a Roman Catholic foundation but is not closely affiliated with the diocese. It is owned by the Gard'ner Memorial Trust.
- The school is registered for 360 students. Currently there are 428 boys on roll in the school, with 52 in the sixth form and 102 boys in residence.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. No children are looked after by a local authority or speak English as an additional language.
- There are 193 pupils with a statement of special educational needs with 169 of these fully- or partly-funded by over 20 different local authorities and 24 are privately funded.
- Most of the students arrive at the school with low self-esteem, having experienced disruptions and difficulties with their education at maintained or special schools.
- There are extra activities for day and boarding students until 5.30pm. No other alternative provision is used by the school.
- Since the last inspection, the school has increased both academic and therapy staffing levels and appointed an additional deputy headteacher. Considerable building work has extended the school's premises and accommodation. This includes the Learning Development Centre (LDC), the refurbishment and provision of additional science laboratories, extended sixth form accommodation and a new music block. A new engineering and design and technology block is due for completion in July 2013.
- The school aims to meet the pupils' specific needs on an individual basis in order to enable them to access the widest possible curriculum and to maximise their potential.
- The school is a member of the Independent Schools Association (ISA) but has opted to be inspected by Ofsted.
- The last full education inspection of education took place in November 2008, when all the regulations were met and the quality of education was judged to be outstanding. A short inspection visit was made in June 2009 to approve the school's admission of pupils with Asperger's Syndrome and high functioning autistic spectrum disorder and to increase the permitted number on roll to 360. This was a full inspection of education; the last social care inspection took place in July 2012.

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

- Improve leadership and management by:
  - taking a more rigorous approach to evaluating the effectiveness of the implementation of school policies in relation to student welfare, health and safety
  - taking a more systematic approach to the information gained from lesson observations to enhance all teachers' professional development
  - developing the use of students' progress data to better inform parents, carers and leaders to ensure achievement in all subjects is outstanding.

## Inspection judgements

### Pupils' achievement

### Outstanding

Students' achievement is outstanding because of the excellent curriculum and the consistently high-quality teaching. Students join the school between Years 4 and 9. While most are of average or above average ability cognitively, their communication, literacy and numeracy skills are well below those expected for their chronological age. Over time, they make sustained progress which accelerates as their self-esteem grows, they understand and learn how to manage their difficulties and they are re-engaged in education. Consequently, by the end of Key Stage 4, students achieve high levels of success at GCSE, with most gaining nine GCSE grades, often at the higher levels, with overall A\* to C rates comparing favourably year on year with the national average. Across all subjects, achievement is at least good and in many subjects outstanding, such as in English and science, particularly triple science, geography and design and technology.

Regardless of age, key to students' success is the high focus on developing communication, literacy and thinking skills so that students can access the curriculum, learn effectively and express their thoughts, knowledge and understanding both in the classroom and in their work. Increasing numbers enter the sixth form where their outstanding progress continues, with many achieving the highest grades. As a result, almost all successfully gain places on the university or further education course of their choice or find employment. Review of students' success in their weekly challenge targets and analysis of students' work confirm that progress is excellent, including in literacy and numeracy at Key Stage 2. Students' art and photography work at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form are of particularly high quality. There is no difference in achievement between students with different learning difficulties and needs, including those with a statement of special educational needs, which in part is due to the excellent support that students receive through the LDC.

### Pupils' behaviour and personal development

### Outstanding

Students' behaviour and personal development are outstanding as a result of the school's outstanding provision for boys' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The development of their social skills is paramount and undertaken exceptionally well; this is particularly apparent for students with autistic spectrum disorder who have struggled to enjoy life in their previous schools. As a result, they become active members of the school who keenly participate in lessons and the very wide range of other school activities, including sport, music and drama. Other excellent opportunities for social development are through the 'flexi-day' activity days, residential trips, and the school council. Consequently, students' attendance is very good and they are punctual to lessons. In the sixth form, links with a nearby girls' school also help to develop social skills and prepare the students for life beyond school. Students' behaviour in lessons and around school is exemplary; they are polite and courteous, and show exceptional respect for others. This is due to teachers conveying high expectations about behaviour and, as students commented, in the respect shown to them by staff.

Students develop extremely positive attitudes to learning and, as their self-esteem and confidence improve over time, so do their aspirations of what they can achieve. Talk of university is commonplace even with students in Key Stages 3 and 4. Opportunities to learn and participate in the arts are abundant and often enable the boys to find something they excel at or really enjoy. All students, including those in Key Stage 2, are taught about computer safety. Students develop an excellent understanding of public institutions, life in modern Britain, the wider world and other cultures through the study of different countries and religions, events, visits and visiting speakers. For example, a recent visit to a mosque had provided a memorable experience in learning about the Muslim way of life. A highly proactive link with a school in Tanzania is also giving all boys an

excellent understanding of life in Africa; they spoke about a recent 'Skype' call with the school, and how they had raised money for electricity. Boys of all ages are highly reflective and are able to confidently express their views and talk about difficult issues such as racial discrimination as seen in a Year 10 English lesson on the book *Of Mice and Men*.

### Quality of teaching

### Outstanding

Teaching is outstanding, as at the last full inspection. Teachers' subject knowledge is excellent. They work as a team and are highly skilled at 'breaking down learning' into manageable units which are firmly based on the schemes of work, to suit the differing abilities and specific learning needs of students within their classes. High expectations of what students can achieve and interesting, varied and well-paced lessons support students' outstanding achievement. Across the school, there is little variation in teaching quality, which is never less than good and outstanding in most subjects. Consequently, students' engagement in lessons is high, contributing to their own and others' learning; it was summed up by one student, who said 'It's fantastic here!'

Teachers use questioning exceptionally well to check students' understanding, promote learning and hone teaching throughout lessons. Teachers at all stages, including in the sixth form, are careful to give students time to develop their independence and confidence in learning. All teachers play their role in supporting the development of students' literacy and communication skills, which is reflected in students' confidence to respond to questions, such as in design and technology when Year 9 students explored product marketing ideas. Therapy sessions and literacy support teaching in the LDC are exceptional and contribute significantly to developing students' communication, organisational and thinking skills, enabling them to be more effective learners. There is frequent assessment of students' work, which provides them with good insight into how well they are doing, although occasionally incomplete work is not followed up by teachers. Teachers record their assessments throughout lessons and this information is used to track students' progress over time, inform new targets and ensure that teachers are highly responsive to changes in students' learning or well-being needs.

### Quality of curriculum

### Outstanding

The curriculum is outstanding. Enhancements since the last inspection have ensured that it continues to underpin highly effective learning. Exceptionally detailed schemes of work for all age groups and subjects are based on the school's curriculum policies. The curriculum is broad and balanced and covers all of the required areas of learning. It is extremely well suited to the special educational needs of the students because it has the flexibility to be individually tailored. Specialist and intensive teaching, including speech and language and occupational therapies, is provided through the LDC to support the specific and often complex needs of students forming an integral part of their timetables. In Key Stage 2, much focus is placed on developing literacy which includes the teaching of letters and sounds and opportunities to develop writing and presentation.

Key Stage 3 work, also focuses on English, mathematics and science, with students covering a wider range of subjects, such as design and technology and history as part of a carousel. At Key Stage 4, students all follow GCSE courses in English, mathematics and science. They may also select from a range of options which includes both BTEC and GCSE subjects, including sport, drama, photography and design and technology. Personal, social, and health education is effectively taught using a range of approaches, including psychology lessons in Year 9 and the innovative bi-weekly 'flexi-days' which are very popular with the boys. Each of these days focuses on a different area of the curriculum, with tailored work for each year group to extend students' knowledge and understanding, make links between subjects, enhance social development and enrich their learning. Physical education is taught across the school and students all learn about

the use of computers in Key Stages 2 and 3 and as an option at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form.

In the sixth form, the students can select from an expanding range of A level or BTEC courses. There is access to the full range of LDC support and mentoring, and schemes such as 'Amicus' develop leadership skills. From Year 9, students are provided with a variety of opportunities to learn about careers, including through talks from parents and carers on their work. There is an exceptionally wide range of extra-curricular activities, many of which are run after school and enable boarding and day students to mix socially. These range from the Warhammer club to the virtual stock exchange and competitive sports. Recent visits to places of cultural significance have included those to HMS Warrior at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard and rugby at Twickenham. Residential trips are also a routine feature for all age groups, with the sixth form recently returning from Venice, an experience they particularly enjoyed and benefited from.

### **Pupils' welfare, health and safety**

**Good**

The quality of pupils' welfare, health and safety is good. All independent school standards are met. Staff are highly committed, develop excellent relationships of trust with the boys and provide them with extremely good care on a day-to-day basis. They supervise the boys well at all times and ensure that quiet areas are always staffed. Consequently, the boys feel safe in school. A consistent approach is taken to behaviour management, which includes clear sanctions and rewards which are recorded on the school's database. These are monitored daily and can be accessed by parents and carers. Serious incidents are rare and are detailed on a central record. Provision if boys feel unwell is excellent and a high number of staff have received appropriate first aid training. Safeguarding arrangements are robust; staff have been trained in child protection at the required level. The two designated officers are diligent in their roles and have recently reviewed their procedures. Recruitment procedures are robust and details are appropriately recorded in a single central register.

All of the required policies are in place, including those for child protection, first aid, behaviour and anti-bullying, and reflect current guidance. They are understood by staff, who say they are informed when any are updated. A helpful handbook provides detailed guidance for staff on all aspects of health and safety. Risk assessments for all aspects of school life and for trips are in place, with actions taken where necessary. There are regular fire drills and a contractor regularly checks electrical appliances and fire safety equipment. Admission and attendance registers are suitably maintained. While policies and procedures are implemented and routinely reviewed, these reviews are not always tackled with sufficient rigour to better inform practices. . Students say that bullying is rare. They have a good understanding of what it is and how to get help should they feel concerned and confidently say it is dealt with if it occurs. Good quality food, teaching on health-related issues and high levels of participation in sport and other activities help students to live active and healthy lifestyles.

### **Leadership and management**

**Good**

The quality of leadership and management is good. The headteacher and governors have ensured that all regulatory requirements are met. The headteacher is seen as visionary. His drive to sustain and secure improvement is instrumental in the success of the school and the expanding curriculum, the growing sixth form and the good quality premises and accommodation are testament to this. He is ably supported by senior leaders and staff, who are highly committed to ensuring the best possible experience for every boy and that, in line with the school's aims, the potential of every one is maximised. While some staff are relatively new to the school, due to the increasing roll, many are long serving and there is a considerable expertise in the understanding of students' differing needs.

The leadership of teaching has been effective in sustaining the high quality of teaching seen at the last inspection. Lesson observations are routine, with high expectations set for staff both in the classroom and in their participation in school life. Any weaker performance is tackled rigorously. Information gained from lesson observations is used effectively to help individual teachers to improve but a more strategic and overarching approach is required to better target professional development at whole-school level. Self-evaluation involves all staff, and helps to provide an accurate view of the school which results in sound development planning, although more detail could be given regarding the impact of actions on students' achievement.

There are ample, well-maintained classrooms to suit all age groups, including the sixth form, as well as high-quality facilities such as for sport, music, drama, ceramics, photography and science. The grounds are extensive with grassed and hard-surfaced areas for play and sport. All of the required information is provided, or is made available, to parents and carers. There is frequent contact with parents and carers by telephone and email and they receive detailed reports twice a year. There could be greater clarity in the way in which progress information, particularly at Key Stages 2 and 3, is presented to parents and carers; this would also help inform leaders to ensure even greater consistency and outstanding achievement in all subjects. The procedure for handling complaints meets requirements. Both the required annual financial and progress information for the reviews of those with a statement of special educational needs are provided to local authorities. Most responses to the staff questionnaires, Parent View and in some other comments received from parents and carers during the inspection are generally very positive, although a very few raised some specific concerns. These were explored in general and findings are reflected in the report.

## What inspection judgements mean

School and boarding/residential provision		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of education and care and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of education and care that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of education and care it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and/or the quality of education and care has serious weaknesses.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	125403
<b>Inspection number</b>	418335
<b>DfE registration number</b>	936/6420

This inspection was carried out 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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Special school
<b>School status</b>	Independent day and boarding school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	8–18 years
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	428
<b>Number of part time pupils</b>	0
<b>Number of boarders on roll</b>	102
<b>Proprietor</b>	Gard'ner Memorial Trust Ltd
<b>Chair</b>	Mr John Stares
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Barry Huggett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1–2 October 2008
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£11,640–£14,370
<b>Annual fees (boarders)</b>	£22,650–£25,380
<b>Telephone number</b>	01252 792303
<b>Fax number</b>	01252 797601
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