

Pegasus School

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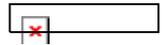
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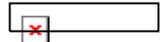
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Introduction and summary

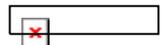


Purpose and scope of the inspection



This inspection was carried out by the Office for Standards in Education under Section 163 of the Education Act 2002 in order to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school

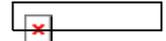


Pegasus School is an independent residential special school which makes day and residential provision for boys and girls aged 8 to 19 years who experience severe or complex communication and learning difficulties, including autistic spectrum disorder, and who present behaviour which is challenging. There are 24 pupils on roll: 21 boys and 3 girls. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs and are referred and funded by local authorities across the country. Nearly all pupils are resident, the majority for 52 weeks; consequently Pegasus School is also registered as a children's home. It is subject to annual inspections by the Care Services Commission Inspectorate (CSCI), the most recent of which took place in December 2004. The school is located in the village of Caldwell near Burton on Trent in Derbyshire. It is registered with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and was last inspected by Ofsted in November 2002. At the time of the inspection the school was seeking approval from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). The school and residential accommodation are located mainly in one building, which is set in its own extensive

grounds.

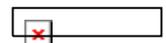
Pegasus School aims to provide a full time care and education programme which supports the pupils in restoring their self-confidence, self-esteem and social inclusion. The curriculum includes the National Curriculum and reflects the school's emphasis on developing communication skills and preparing young people for adult life.

Summary of main findings



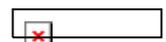
Pegasus School continues to improve and provides a caring, supportive and safe environment for its pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and form a real strength of the school. Teachers, care staff and other professionals work closely with parents and successfully encourage the pupils to make choices, communicate effectively with others, and develop their independence. The curriculum is broad, generally balanced and relevant to the pupils' needs and abilities. The school makes suitable provision for the pupils' moral, social and spiritual development. However, it does not provide enough experiences to prepare them for living in a multi-cultural society. The quality of teaching and assessment is satisfactory with some good practice taking place, but there is a small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. The pupils make steady, and sometimes good progress in specific areas of their learning. Teachers do not use information and communication technology (ICT) well enough to support the pupils' learning. There are very effective arrangements in place for the recruitment and induction of new staff. Through regular self-evaluation senior managers have identified many of the priorities for development at this school.

What the school does well



- it provides a broad and relevant curriculum for the pupils;
- there are positive relationships between the staff and the pupils;
- communication with parents and other professionals is very good;
- there are high standards of care and supervision for the pupils, while behaviour is managed consistently and effectively;
- the provision for developing the pupils' personal, social and communication skills is very good; and
- the carefully planned induction programme ensures that new staff are well informed about the school's policies and the needs of the pupils.

What the school must do in order to comply with the regulations



- provide its pupils with a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England;
- assist its pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions; and
- ensure that it provides information for parents and other interested parties as

detailed in section 6 of this report.

What the school must do to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2002

In order to comply with the requirements of the DDA, the school should:

- devise a three-year plan to improve the accessibility of the premises.

Next steps

Whilst not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- continue to develop the curriculum, particularly in the areas of citizenship, religious education and careers education;
- improve the quality of teaching with a particular focus on extending the range of learning experiences for all pupils and further developing their knowledge and understanding of the subjects taught;
- enable support staff to develop an understanding of the curriculum and how children learn;
- provide opportunities for the pupils' individual targets to be shared across the residential and education settings;
- further develop the use of ICT to support learning in all curriculum areas; and
- provide specialist facilities for practical activities in science and technology.

Compliance with the regulations for registration

1. The quality of education provided by the school

The quality of the curriculum

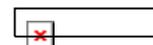
The school provides a broad curriculum which is based on the National Curriculum and modified to suit the needs and abilities of its pupils. Subject responsibilities are clearly defined, and co-ordinators have received appropriate training. Detailed schemes of work are in place for most subjects, based on a commercial 'small steps' approach, and these support the teachers' planning.

However, the teaching strategies identified within schemes of work were not always evident in classroom practice with the result that for some individual pupils there was an imbalance in the range of their learning experiences. For older pupils there are increasing opportunities for vocational learning. Specialist teachers appointed in the areas of music and horticulture have added to the range of expertise in the school and enhanced the curriculum for the students in these areas.

The framework for the teaching of personal, social, and health education (PSHE) is being suitably revised to include planning for citizenship, which was recently included in the timetable. The school has introduced the teaching of religious education and provided initial guidance to support teachers. Careers education takes place on an incidental basis through PSHE. The school is appropriately planning to implement a more formal programme for all students from September. The ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) Transitional Challenge has been introduced at Key Stage 4. It is having a positive impact on the curriculum for this age group, particularly in encouraging pupils to work with others.

The school makes good use of the local community to extend curriculum experiences for all its pupils, for example on visits to local supermarkets and churches. Post-16 students develop, with varying levels of support, the daily living skills needed for adult life. In addition, through good links with local colleges, an increasing number of students attend courses supported by staff from the school. Work experience takes place within the school setting for the majority of students, for example carrying out clerical tasks in the school office. Occasionally placements take place off-site with local employers. An exciting development has been the introduction of horticulture into the curriculum and students have been involved in designing and creating a garden within the school grounds. There are good plans to extend this to include enterprise activities. The school has made significant progress in introducing external accreditation for its post-16 courses and some students have achieved ASDAN accreditation in food technology, horticulture, life skills, and sex education and relationships.

The quality of the teaching and assessment



The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with some examples of good teaching and a small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. Where teaching is at its best, staff know the pupils well, have high expectations of them, and use a range of teaching approaches to engage the pupils in learning. In these lessons the pupils participate sensibly in introductory sessions or activities and then settle quickly to related individual tasks which are well matched to their ability. Where pupils have more complex learning difficulties, the quality of teaching and learning varies and is unduly dependent on the mood of pupils or their willingness to engage in activities or to work with particular adults. When this happens staff do not always have alternative strategies or resources available to use to re-direct and re-focus the pupils' learning. Although the timetable provides sufficient taught time, too many lengthy individual 'tray activity' sessions occur close together. At these times the pupils work with individual support and are expected to maintain concentration on simple tasks, often unrelated to the subject being taught, which do not keep their attention. They do not experience a sufficient variety of teaching and learning experiences and opportunities are missed to develop their knowledge and understanding of the subjects being taught. The use of ICT to support teaching and learning is underdeveloped. The previous inspection identified that support staff were not sufficiently well informed about the curriculum to make their classroom role fully effective. Although senior managers acknowledge the lack of awareness as a priority for improvement, this is still the situation. This has a negative impact on teaching and learning. The day-to-day teamwork between all adults who work in the classroom is generally very good. Support assistants provide good emotional support for the pupils in classes and assist teachers well with the management of challenging behaviour.

Assessment is sound and the procedures enable the staff to set long-term curriculum targets and to monitor progress. The school carries out a thorough assessment of the pupils' behaviour during

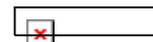
their first few weeks in school. This is used in conjunction with any information received prior to admission to establish individual placement files which include behavioural targets and detailed records of the pupils' responses in both the care and school settings. Specific individual curriculum targets, based on 'P level' assessments are set in all subjects and reviewed termly. Very detailed records provide staff with an overview of the pupils' progress and responses to tasks. However, information about development of the pupils' subject knowledge and understanding is less clear. At post-16 the students' progress in literacy and numeracy is regularly assessed and monitored against the 'milestones' in the Adult Core Curriculum.

The speech and language therapy team play an important part in developing the pupils' communication skills across both the education and residential settings, and all staff receive regular training in the use of alternative means of communication. The school uses the 24-hour curriculum particularly well to develop the pupils' personal and social skills, however, it does not actively encourage the staff to use activities within the 24-hour curriculum to help pupils achieve their agreed academic targets.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

2. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils



The provision for pupils' moral and social and spiritual development is sound but provision for their cultural development is under-developed. The school endeavours to help the pupils improve their self-knowledge, self-confidence and self-esteem together with better communication and social skills. These areas are at the heart of the school's approach to resolving pupils' learning and emotional difficulties. There is a strong ethos based on enabling pupils to develop trusting relationships with staff. Throughout the school day, the staff encourage and promote positive social interaction. After-school activities contribute well to the pupils' social and personal development and provide valuable opportunities for them to communicate in a wider group. The pupils demonstrate clear progress in this area, as detailed in their placement plans. For example, in the youth club run by the speech and language team, individual students were making choices and using money appropriately in the tuck shop. The pictorial communication system was used well to support independent learning. Some pupils develop their social skills and relationships in the wider community by attending the village youth club, sports centre, cafes and other outdoor activity centres.

The school's consistent approach to managing behaviour supports the pupils' moral development well. The system of rewards and sanctions encourages them to think about the consequences of their actions.

Multi-cultural awareness is not adequately taught and the school does not prepare the pupils well enough to live in a multi cultural society. Although it is identified through the school's planning, and aspects are covered in the citizenship modules, the school recognises that it could do more. The school does not provide pupils with an adequate general knowledge of public institutions and services.

The pupils' spiritual development is fostered satisfactorily through the religious education curriculum and the PSHE programme. However the school assembly observed did not contribute strongly to pupils' spiritual development as it did not contain a period of reflection or an act of collective worship. Although the religious education scheme of work introduces major world religions and the festivals associated with them, there is little evidence of how the school celebrates the feasts and

festivals of faiths other than Christianity.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

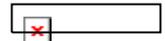
The school meets most but not all of the requirements.

What does the school need to do to comply with the regulations?

In order to comply with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the school should:

- provide its pupils with a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England (paragraph 2(d)); and
- assist its pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures in a way that promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions (paragraph 2(e)).

3. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils



The school takes very good care to ensure the welfare, health and safety of its pupils. All policy documents meet the regulatory requirements. Through the comprehensive induction programme, new staff are well informed about the school's policies and the pupils' individual needs.

There is a written policy to prevent bullying, with a good quality risk assessment of both school routines and premises. All staff are trained in child protection procedures and in the behaviour management techniques used by the school. A positive approach to managing pupils' behaviour is central to the school's ethos. There is a clear and comprehensive behaviour policy which is implemented consistently by staff. Incidents involving the use of restraint are recorded appropriately and monitored regularly to analyse any emerging patterns.

Staff are deployed carefully to ensure that pupils are safe and engaged in positive work or play. There is clear written guidance and a good understanding between staff that ensures there are always several adults in a supervisory capacity.

On admission, each pupil is allocated a key worker who liaises with parents and staff from other disciplines, and ensures that the agreed care plans are implemented effectively. There is a high level of co-operation between the education and care staff at all levels to the benefit of the pupils. Care staff work in school in a supportive capacity and are well informed about issues from the school day and the achievements of individuals.

The school employs a qualified nurse who takes responsibility for the storage and administration of medicines, and for the routine health needs of the pupils. The proprietors are considering what changes need to be made to their practice to comply with recommendations made by CSCI in their recent report regarding storage of medication in the residential setting. Staff with First Aid qualifications are on site at all times. The school employs a clinical psychologist and also a paediatrician who contributes to the pupils' assessment and acts as a consultant on a range of related issues. Admission and attendance registers are maintained in accordance with regulations. Attendance is good and pupils willingly come to school. The school has not yet undertaken an assessment of the school's accessibility or drawn up a plan to improve accessibility in relation to the Disability Discrimination Act.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

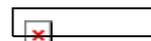
Yes.

What does the school need to do to comply with the DDA?

In order to comply with the requirements of the DDA the school should:

- devise a three-year plan to improve the accessibility of the premises.

4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff

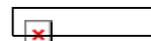


Careful and thorough recruitment procedures have been established by the proprietors which ensure that staff appointed to the school have undergone appropriate checks and are suitable to work with children. Staff are not permitted to commence employment until Criminal Records Bureau checks have been completed. The very good staffing levels ensure that the pupils are well supervised at all times.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

5. The suitability of the premises and accommodation



The school and residential accommodation are housed in a Grade II listed building with the post-16 provision and school dining hall located in another building close by. There are extensive grounds and the land close to the school has been suitably adapted to provide good recreational and play facilities. Emergency exit points are clearly signposted and there is a well-rehearsed emergency evacuation procedure.

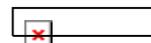
There is adequate teaching accommodation and a number of specialist rooms including a soft play room, two very well-resourced sensory rooms, an art room, a food technology room, and a music room, but there is no library. There is a medium sized hall, used for a variety of purposes. In the post-16 base there is a small ICT room. The facilities for practical science and for design and technology are inadequate. Classrooms are of a good size. The upper floor of the main building, where a number of the teaching bases are located, is accessible only by stairs. Corridors are wide to allow for pupils to pass each other in comfort. There is no access for wheelchairs and no lifts. Washrooms are located on all floors and satisfy all requirements. There are separate facilities for staff. There is a dedicated medical room. The accommodation externally is in a good state of repair, while internally the accommodation is clean and maintained to a reasonable standard.

The grounds around the school are used well for science and other curriculum areas. Effective use is made of local resources in the community including the local youth club and the swimming pool in Burton upon Trent.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

6. The quality of information for parents and other partners



Just over a quarter of parents completed and returned the parents' questionnaire. They feel well informed about their children's progress and feel comfortable about contacting the school should they wish to.

The school prospectus and the 'statement of purpose' give parents and other partners a wealth of basic information about the care and education provided by the school. However, there is some duplication of information and lack of clarity about which policies are available from the school on request and those which are routinely sent out to all parents.

The school's policy on exclusion does not make clear in what circumstances a pupil may be temporarily excluded from the school into the residential setting. The school has detailed guidance for staff on managing behaviour, including the use of physical restraint. However, it does not provide sufficient information for parents on these aspects of its policies and procedures. Whilst the recently revised complaints procedure meets requirements, the school does not provide parents with details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedures in the previous school year. Brief information is given in the prospectus about the staffing structure, but it does not indicate the number of staff employed and a summary of their qualifications.

Parents receive regular information about their child's academic and social development. However, in the annual report, information about progress in literacy and numeracy is only expressed in numerical terms which may not be helpful for parents as it does not describe what their child can actually do in these areas.

The school responds to requests from local authorities for information about the expenditure for each pupil. However, it does not routinely provide an account of income and expenditure to all placing authorities.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

No.

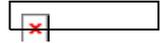
What does the school need to do to comply with the regulations?

In order to comply with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the school should:

- provide particulars of the school's policy on and arrangements for discipline and exclusions, (paragraph 6(2)(e));
- provide particulars of the educational and welfare provision for pupils with English as an additional language (paragraph 6(2)(f));
- provide particulars of the school's policies relating to the promotion of good behaviour and sanctions adopted in the event of pupils misbehaving (paragraph 6(2)(h));
- ensure that parents and other partners are made aware that particulars of policies relating to bullying, child protection, health and safety, the promotion of good behaviour, and sanctions adopted in the event of pupils misbehaving are available on request (paragraph 6(2)(h));
- make available details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year and inform parents and other partners that these are available on request (paragraph 6(2)(j));
- prepare particulars of the number of staff employed at the school, including temporary staff, and a summary of their qualifications, and inform parents and other

- o partners that these are available on request (paragraph 6(2)(k)); and
- o submit to local authorities an annual account of income received and expenditure incurred by the school in respect of pupils placed by them at the school (paragraph 6(7)).

7. The effectiveness of the school's procedures for handling complaints

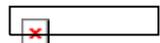


The procedures for handling complaints have been revised recently and are fully satisfactory.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

School details



Name of school:	Pegasus School		
DfES ref number:	830/6024		
Type of school:	Special residential school		
Status:	Independent		
Age range of pupils:	8 - 19 years		
Gender of pupils:	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils):	Boys 21,	Girls 3,	Total 24
Number of boarders:	Boys 19,	Girls 3,	Total 22
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need:	Boys 21,	Girls 3,	Total 24
Annual fees (day pupils):	£52,098		
Annual fees (boarders):	£163,000 (52 weeks). £92,725 (38 weeks)		
Address of school:	Caldwell Hall Main Street Caldwell Derbyshire DE12 6RS		
E-mail address:	info@pegasusschooluk.com		
Telephone number:	01283 761352		
Fax number:	01283 761312		
Headteacher:	Mr Hugh Rodger		
Proprietor:	SENAD Ltd		
Lead Inspector:	Mrs Caroline Broomhead HMI		
Dates of inspection:	7 - 11 February 2005		