



# Muntham House School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 126154  
**LEA** West Sussex  
**Inspection number** 282062  
**Inspection dates** 16 November 2005 to 16 November 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Melvyn Blackband RISP

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Special	<b>School address</b>	Barns Green
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained		Horsham
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	8 to 18		West Sussex RH13 7NJ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys	<b>Telephone number</b>	01403 730302
<b>Number on roll</b>	45	<b>Fax number</b>	01403 730510
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Carol king
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 December 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Richard Boyle

<b>Age group</b> 8 to 18	<b>Inspection dates</b> 16 November 2005 - 16 November 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 282062
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an additional inspector.

## Description of the school

Muntham House is a non-maintained residential special school near Horsham in Sussex. It provides for boys aged 8-18 years, with learning difficulties associated with social, emotional and behavioural problems. The school also provides for pupils with other developmental disorders, including attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and autism. There are a small number of pupils in public care. Most pupils are White British, with a small minority of pupils who are Black Caribbean or of mixed race. Pupils may join the school at any time during the school year. As a result of their difficulties, many of them enter the school with lower levels of attainment than their peers. There are currently no pupils for whom English is an alternative language.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 1**

Muntham House is a good school with some outstanding features, particularly in the pupils' personal development, in care and guidance and in the post 16 provision. The school has accurately evaluated its strengths and areas to improve. Pupils and parents are very positive about the school. Parents are happy that their sons will be safe and free from anxiety and are making very good progress. Many pupils enter the school with low levels of attainment but the school sets high standards and most pupils catch up with their peers and leave the school with a range of GCSE passes. Achievement by post 16 pupils is good, because of the good teaching and organisation and the extremely good links with local colleges. The pupils' personal development is exceptionally good. Pupils learn to behave very well, to get on with other pupils and adults. They enjoy learning and join in the wide range of activities with enthusiasm. Teaching is good and teachers are knowledgeable about their subject. The school keeps a close check on how pupils are getting on and teachers take care to match work to pupils' particular needs. There is, however, some inconsistency in the way teachers explain to pupils how they can improve. There is an interesting and wide-ranging curriculum. Pupils up to age 16 are satisfactorily prepared for work or college and the school is beginning to develop appropriate vocational courses. Post 16 pupils have outstanding support as they make the transition to college life. The care and guidance provided for all pupils is outstanding and the pupils feel safe and secure.

The school is extremely well led and managed at all levels. There is a clear sense of direction and there has been continual improvement since the previous inspection. The senior team are aware of the strengths and weaknesses and have good plans to maintain improvement. Well established checks give a clear picture of the school's performance. The school is well placed to maintain its improvement. The school's finances are well managed and the school gives good value for money.

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 1**

The inspector agrees with the school that post 16 pupils are getting a high quality education. They are particularly well prepared for leaving school. Pupils are able to reach their potential and gain a good standard of accreditation in vocational courses at local colleges complemented by individually negotiated work experience opportunities. Their achievement is outstandingly well promoted through the highly adapted curriculum and the high expectations which school and college staff have of their success. The pupils' personal development is exceptionally good. Pupils make impressive gains in their independence skills. They are shown how to keep themselves safe and healthy and to look after themselves. The pupils make an excellent contribution to the local community in charity fundraising and in supporting a local school for pupils with severe disabilities. Leadership and management of the provision are outstanding. There is a clear vision of how the department can develop and the organisation is very good.

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of boarding provision**

**Grade: 9**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

Boarding provision is of a very high standard. The accommodation facilities are good and there are well qualified and committed care assistants. The provision is well managed and regular inspections show that the facilities are above the national minimum standards for care provision. Communication between teachers and care staff is exceptionally good, leading to high quality provision for pupils during the day and into the evening. Pupils are safe whilst encouraged to be as independent as they can manage. They take part in a wide range of sporting and leisure activities and make regular visits to the local community. Whilst most pupils are accompanied by staff on these trips, some pupils have demonstrated sufficient maturity and improvement in their behaviour to be allowed to go out independently using public transport.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the consistency of teachers' planning so that pupils have a clearer understanding of their learning targets.

## **Achievement and standards**

**Grade: 1**

Pupils enter the school at varying times of the year, with low levels of attainment, and are at least two years behind their peers. By Year 11, they have caught up and they leave school with a range of GCSE passes. This represents outstanding achievement. The school's effective strategies for measuring and recording pupils' progress enable staff to set challenging school targets and for the pupils to attain high standards in relation to their previous levels. Results have shown steady improvement over recent years, particularly in English and mathematics. Pupils get off to a flying start because initial assessment of their ability is very good and they quickly start to improve. Pupils with reading and writing difficulties make outstanding progress through individual support. The pupils achieve a high proportion of their individual education targets because these are broken down into small manageable learning steps. Progress by the pupils is monitored closely by their tutors and senior staff and this has a very positive impact on the pupils' success. Pupils in post 16 provision are very successful in gaining a range of vocational qualifications. The pupils make excellent progress in their behavioural targets.

## **Personal development and well-being**

**Grade: 1**

The pupils' personal development is outstanding and a strength of the school. Pupils with a history of poor attitudes to school quickly accept that at Muntham House, pupils show respect for all others. Behaviour is very good and represents substantial achievement by the pupils. The boys are polite and friendly to visitors, staff and each

other. They feel safe and report no bullying or intimidation. They enjoy school, particularly the opportunities for sport and leisure, and as several boys were keen to point out the quality of meals in the boarding provision Their attendance is good and they are punctual to lessons. The pupils' spiritual and moral development is good, supported by the school's strong management of behaviour and the emphasis on moral values. There is a calm atmosphere because pupils know what is expected of them. The pupils' social development is excellent, promoted by the high standard of residential provision and the opportunities for taking part in leisure activities. Pupils have a good understanding of cultural differences.

Pupils have many opportunities to make their views known. The school council is flourishing and pupils' concerns are acted on. Pupils make outstanding contributions to the community through support for local good causes and prepare very well for their future economic well-being through opportunities for learning about work. This is continued into post-16 provision where pupils are very well prepared for the transition to adult life. Parents report their sons have never been to a school where they feel so happy.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is good and has maintained the improvement noted in the previous report. Lessons are orderly because pupils like and respect their teachers and thus work hard and behave well. Teachers use their good understanding of pupils' progress to plan work which is well matched to their needs. In the most successful lessons, teachers reinforce the pupils' learning targets but this is inconsistent and a few teachers do not always ensure that pupils are aware of how they can improve their work. Teachers and the competent teaching assistants establish very good relationships with pupils. Lessons proceed at a good pace because teachers have high levels of expertise in their subjects.

Pupils work with concentration. They enjoy lessons because of the interesting activities. For example, higher ability pupils in Year 11 gained great enjoyment from a poem written in non-standard English. They made very good progress in listening to others' views and in understanding how people can be judged by the accent they use. Assessment is good. Teachers regularly and systematically check how much pupils have learned and revise their targets accordingly.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

##### **Grade for sixth form: 1**

Pupils enjoy well constructed, purposeful and interesting activities. All National Curriculum requirements are met. The school is very sensitive to the learning needs of each pupil and adapts the curriculum effectively to promote their achievement.

There is a wide range of extra activities to take pupils out of the classroom and teach them that new things can be learned in all sorts of situations. Pupils make good progress through the many opportunities to develop their social skills and the programme for personal, social and health education contributes effectively to this. Good provision is made for teaching about sex and relationships. Pupils are taught about personal safety and healthy lifestyles and they develop physical and social skills through a variety of sports and leisure activities. The provision for pupils up to aged 16 to learn about work is satisfactory but it is outstanding for pupils in the post 16 unit. There is a good programme of careers education.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The care provided by the school is outstanding. There is a safe environment. Arrangements for child protection are in place and understood by all staff. There are very good procedures for updating staff training in health and safety and in approved restraint methods. The school gives a high priority to helping pupils to manage their own behaviour and ensuring that each pupil's welfare is paramount, especially those in vulnerable situations. Pupils' learning targets are challenging and help their achievement. Each pupil has the support of a key worker and a pastoral tutor who work with other teaching and care staff to ensure the pupils continue to make good academic and social progress. Pupils receive very good careers advice and are given tremendous support when they leave school through the excellent arrangements for the transition to college and working life.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The school is exceptionally well led and managed. The principal gives clear direction to the school's work and has very good support from a skilled senior management team. Because of their leadership, staff maintain high standards of teaching and high expectations of pupils who make outstanding progress both academically and in their behaviour. The governing body is extremely effective. Committees are very well organised and ably led and as a result, governors have developed a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and are able to provide a high level of support and challenge to the headteacher. Finances are particularly well run. Because of this, resources are very good and efficiently used.

Communication within the school is excellent and staff morale is high. The quality of professional training is good and tailored closely to the performance reviews of staff. There has been continuing improvement in teaching standards and in the curriculum since the previous inspection and this has strongly supported the achievement of the learners. A strength of the management is that developments are focused on improving standards and the care of pupils. Senior staff maintain very good records of pupils' progress and these are used to plan improvement in the curriculum. Self-evaluation is thorough and accurate because senior staff monitor, evaluate and improve each

aspect of the school's performance. Parents, for instance, feel valued in the decision-making process. The school's development plan is understood by all and provides a good basis for improvement. The school is in a very good position to improve further.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The attendance of learners	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	1

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	Yes

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Muntham House School, Barns Green, Horsham, West Sussex RH13 0NJ

17th November 2005

Dear Pupils,

Not long ago I came to your school to have a look at how you were getting on and whether there was anything I could suggest to make the school better. You made me very welcome and I enjoyed your company. Well done and thank you!

I was only with you for one day but that was long enough for me to realise that Muntham House is a good school. One of the reasons is that you are well behaved and keen to learn. I enjoyed watching some lessons and having lunch with some of you. There are lots of things I liked about the school. Here are a few:

I can see that you enjoy lessons and work hard

There are many different adults in the school who are doing their best to look after you and help you learn

You are able to become as independent as possible

As you get older, you are learning about life and work. This will help you when you leave school.

One of the things that I felt would make the school better is if teachers reminded you more often about your learning targets and made sure you knew how to improve your work still further.

Best wishes to you all, Mel Blackband (Lead Inspector)