

Osborne School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116511
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	326414
Inspection dates	29–30 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Kay Charlton

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

Boarding provision	
Social care URN	
Social care inspector	Brian McQuoid

The inspection of social care was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	148
Sixth form	18
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sue Ouvry
Headteacher	Mrs Sonia O'Donnell
Date of previous school inspection	8 November 2005
School address	Andover Road Winchester SO23 7BU
Telephone number	01962 897000
Fax number	01962 849419

Age group	11–19
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Introduction

This was a single integrated inspection of education and social care (welfare). Social care was inspected under the Care Standards Act 2000. An Additional Inspector and a Social Care Inspector carried out the inspection.

Description of the school

Osborne School provides for students with moderate, severe and, profound and multiple learning difficulties. All have a statement of special educational need. Students come from a wide geographical area usually within Hampshire. Most join the school at age 11. Many of the sixth form come from other schools at age 16. Students are predominantly of White British origin and none speaks English as an additional language. There are 17 looked after students. The school provides weekday boarding provision for up to 10 students who are usually on the autistic spectrum. Eight students were in this provision at the time of the inspection. The school has gained the Artsmark Silver award. There have been significant changes in staffing during the past academic year and a new headteacher took up her appointment in September 2008.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Osborne School provides satisfactory education for its students. The school values the individuality of all of its students and their personal development is good as is the level of care, guidance and support given to them. Almost all parents speak well of the school and make comments such as, 'I can't keep my child away from school he really enjoys it'.

As a result of satisfactory teaching and learning, students of different backgrounds and abilities make satisfactory progress. There are examples of good teaching in the school, but there is not enough to ensure that all students achieve as well as they can. Staff are enthusiastic and they plan carefully. They have a consistent approach to managing students' behaviour and lessons proceed smoothly. In some lessons, however, staff do not fully challenge all students and in these situations students do not achieve as well as they might.

The school rightly prides itself on its positive and welcoming ethos. All staff support students' personal development well so that students learn effectively to explore their feelings and respect those of others. Students of all ages make good gains in developing their confidence and independence, and their attendance and behaviour are good. The curriculum is satisfactory. There is a wide range of enrichment, including visits to other countries, and this plays an important part in students' enjoyment of school. However, there is insufficient vocational content and the links between the main school and the boarding provision do not ensure continuity in students' learning. Good quality support and advice is given to all students, particularly to support their personal development and to ensure that there is a smooth transition when they join the school and when they move to the next stage of their education.

The overall leadership and management of the school is satisfactory. The newly appointed headteacher has set out a very clear vision for the future that pays careful attention to checking that all students receive a good education. She is working well with the deputy and in a very short time they have gained the confidence of staff who make comments such as, 'We're in four wheel drive, we feel really energised'. Middle leaders are working hard but, currently, they do not have sufficient impact on ensuring consistent quality of provision across the school. Governors have developed their role as the school's critical friend well since the last inspection. They have good insight into the school's strengths and weaknesses and about what needs to be done for the school to improve. Governors have helped to ensure improved stability in staffing and the school is now in a position to go forward with confidence.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 3

Students of different backgrounds and abilities achieve satisfactorily as a result of satisfactory teaching and learning. In line with the main school there is still further to go to ensure that students are challenged fully to develop the skills they will need once they leave school. Recent changes to the curriculum that place a greater focus on the development of life skills are having a very positive impact and are giving students access to nationally accredited courses. Students are well cared for and their personal development is strong. As a result, most make significant gains in their levels of maturity. Overall, leadership is satisfactory with further involvement of staff in monitoring the quality of provision identified as an important priority.

Effectiveness of boarding provision

Grade: 3

The quality of boarding provision at the school is satisfactory and the majority of the National Minimum Standards are met. There are areas, mainly concerned with organisation and monitoring, where the standards are not met. Significant changes in staffing have adversely affected the ability of the residential provision to move forward since the previous inspection.

The school's ethos successfully supports an environment where students live together in a supportive community and develop positive relationships with each other and staff. Students are treated with respect as individuals. Their dignity is suitably protected and they feel valued and safe within the boarding provision. All staff receive training in child protection and possess a sound understanding of related issues and the relevant procedures to follow. A good standard of care is provided within the boarding house by committed and caring staff who are very aware of the health and welfare needs of all students. Many are trained in first aid and there are effective links with the school paediatrician, the school nurse, the school's occupational therapist and physiotherapist, and external health professionals. There are clear procedures for the management and administration of medication and good provision for supporting any who are unwell.

There is good provision for the health and wellbeing of students who are taught the dangers of drugs, alcohol and smoking, with effective input and support from external agencies. A healthy diet is provided for students and special dietary requirements are well met. There are good opportunities for students to take part in physical activities. Students' views are taken into account, they are provided with choice in areas of their daily lives, and they make a good contribution to the school council.

The overall standard of boarding accommodation is satisfactory. Students' rooms and the facilities provide appropriate levels of privacy and are properly maintained. Communal areas, however, do not reflect a homely environment and lack furnishings and facilities to support the newly introduced life skills programme. The school grounds are spacious and provide good opportunities for recreational activities. Excellent security arrangements are in place.

Overall, the leadership is satisfactory. The school has suitable policies and procedures in place relating to the boarding provision. However, there is ineffective monitoring by the Head of Care in relation to the National Minimum Standards and the organisation of the provision is only satisfactory. Although the residential staff do promote the students' independence and support the acquisition of life skills, there are insufficient links with the main school in relation to the curriculum. A lack of collaborative planning means that continuity in students' learning is not assured and students' achievement is not fully supported. The school governors and the newly appointed headteacher have identified these shortfalls and have already started to improve the provision.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the effectiveness of the school's leadership to ensure consistently good quality of provision in the main school and in the boarding provision.
- Improve teaching and learning so that students of all abilities achieve as well as they are can.
- Ensure that the curriculum fully meets students' needs providing continuity in students' learning between the main school and boarding provision.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Students' achievements are satisfactory, and are based on satisfactory teaching and learning. There is some good achievement, but there is further to go to ensure that all students achieve as well as they can. Good achievement is often seen in those areas taught by either subject-specialist staff, for example in art, or by need-specific staff, such as those qualified to teach students with profound and multiple learning difficulties. This is because these staff are confident to set a high expectation for all students, whatever their needs, and this ensures that students reach their challenging targets. On entry, students start from very low starting points related to their learning difficulties and, consequently, by the time they leave the standards they reach are well below those in mainstream schools. However, with the improved national accreditation that has been introduced since the last inspection students are now gaining a wide range of qualifications that gives them a suitable start in post 16 education.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Staff show good levels of respect to students enabling them to make noticeable gains in developing their social skills. The ways in which students learn to think through their actions and the effects that they have on others plays an important part. It ensures that students' work together in a harmonious atmosphere where bullying is rare. Students say that their views are taken into account and the vast majority enjoy school. The work of the school council is much appreciated by all. Students make a particularly strong contribution to the wider community, for example, through their work on the Comenius Project where they worked together with students from other countries. All students show good awareness of the need for a healthy lifestyle, they pay attention to acting safely and they look after each other well. They take on extra responsibilities with enthusiasm and work placements are carefully organised so that students develop appropriate work-based skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Lessons are well organised, proceed smoothly and staff work well as a team. There is a good working atmosphere in classes based on good relationships between staff and students. Most students show positive attitudes and are keen to contribute their ideas in lessons often showing a good sense of fun. Staff are vigilant and make sure that even if students find difficulty in managing their own behaviour the learning of others is not affected.

Although there are models of good practice there is not sufficient teaching that is good or better to ensure improved student achievement. In a particularly good literacy lesson seen in Year 7, staff employed a very wide range of approaches, including a range of communication techniques and resources, to make learning interesting and lively. They also used detailed knowledge of each student's level of understanding ensuring a high level of success for all

even though there is a very wide range of ability in the group. In lessons where teaching is only satisfactory, staff do not ensure this level of challenge for all students and learning often becomes too leisurely.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

A strong focus on personal development very effectively underpins all aspects of the curriculum. Visits out of school and visitors to school, such as the army, and arts and drama groups, give a good level of enrichment. In order to respond to changing demands nationally the school is aware that there is too little focus on vocational content to fully match students' needs and aspirations. Also, the curriculum in the boarding provision does not sufficiently support that in the main school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Very effective systems guide and support students' personal development. As a result, students' attendance improves and most make significant gains in their levels of self-discipline. Staff provide a high level of care and students say, 'there is always someone to turn to if we need help'. Child protection and safeguarding procedures are robust and fully meet requirements. Targets are set for every student to help them achieve academically. This system is used well by some staff but there is inconsistency that relates to differences in the quality of teaching.

Parents and carers are seen as partners in their child's education and the school works well with them and with a wide range of outside agencies to support students' development. Looked-after students are supported particularly well so that they are provided with equality of opportunity in line with their peers. Effective induction procedures are much appreciated by both students and parents. Very good guidance is given to students when making career choices.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The new headteacher has quickly developed an incisive view about the ways in which the school should develop based on her strong belief that each student deserves the best. She is clear that all staff have an important part to play in achieving future improvement and has drafted proposals for a new leadership structure to enable this to happen. At present, middle leaders are not sufficiently active in monitoring quality within their areas of responsibility. The school has good links with others and suitably promotes community cohesion. Governors have an established and systematic monitoring programme and, as a result, have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have effectively seen the school through a time of significant changes of staffing and are working very well with the new headteacher to address the most important issues currently facing the school.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2	2
The effectiveness of boarding provision	3	
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3	

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

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2	
The attendance of learners	2	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

10 October 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Osborne School, Winchester, SO23 7BU

Thank you for all the help you gave us when we came to visit your school. We particularly enjoyed and valued the discussions we held with you. You told us that students are well-behaved and you make good friends. We were glad to hear that you enjoy school and were impressed with the ways in which you help others. We agree that you get a lot of support from staff so that you quickly gain confidence and behave well. It is also clear that staff care for you well.

The headteacher and the deputy know that you get a satisfactory education. Along with all staff, they are keen to see the school improve further. We have asked them to work with the staff to make sure that, in all lessons, teachers fully challenge every one of you so that you all achieve as well as you can. Also, we have asked them to make sure that the curriculum improves, and the provision for boarders better supports that in the main school. We have also said that leaders need to make sure that there is consistently good quality of provision across the school. You can help by trying your hardest at all times.

Yours sincerely

Kay Charlton

Lead Inspector