

# My Choice School-Kingfisher View

Independent special school inspection report

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DCSF registration number	938/6276
Unique Reference Number (URN)	135782
URN for registered childcare and social care	SC 359832
Inspection number	344626
Inspection dates	16–17 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Jill Bainton

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## Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A<sup>1</sup> of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005<sup>2</sup>, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

An inspection of the care provision was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 having regard to the national minimum standards for children's homes. This inspection took place in December 2009 and the full report is published separately on Ofsted's website and should be read in conjunction with this report which covers the educational registration of the school.

## Information about the school

My Choice School-Kingfisher View is part of the My Choice Children's Homes Limited, which operates a group of registered children's homes in Sussex, some of which provide education. Opened in 2008, My Choice School-Kingfisher View is a small children's home providing education in a detached house in West Sussex, and is registered for up to three students aged between 11 and 16, who reside there all year round. There are currently two students at the school, both in Year 11. It admits students who are unable to sustain placements in other schools, including special schools, and have a history of exclusions or non-attendance either due to childhood trauma or other complex needs. Students have long-term placements. They may have learning and motivational difficulties and one of the current students has a statement of special educational needs. The school operates for 38 weeks of the year.

The main emphasis is to motivate and engage students in the learning process to enable them to acquire the skills necessary to live and work independently and constructively in the wider community. This is the school's first published Ofsted education inspection.

## Evaluation of the school

My Choice School-Kingfisher View provides a good quality of education and successfully meets its aims. It is a caring, supportive environment where the students experience a wide range of activities to promote their education and well-being. Through the use of a well-planned curriculum and good teaching, students make good progress, particularly in gaining independence and communication skills

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<sup>1</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga\\_20020032\\_en\\_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2002/ukpga_20020032_en_14#pt10-ch1-pb4-l1g162)

<sup>2</sup> [www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga\\_20050018\\_en\\_15#sch8](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts2005/ukpga_20050018_en_15#sch8)

and personal and social development. The students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively and is good. The school's procedures to safeguard the students are very good and arrangements for their welfare, health and safety are outstanding overall. The school meets all of the regulations for registration as an independent school.

## Quality of education

The quality of education is good. There is a good curriculum which meets the needs of the students. The school provides an individualised learning programme to suit the needs and ability of each student. This programme is provided in a safe environment in which each student is able to engage in positive activities, develop social skills, establish a routine where they develop their basic skills and build the foundation for further learning. The comprehensive curriculum planning documentation includes schemes of work for each subject. The plans are based on the AQA Unit Award Scheme. The planning builds on what the students have learned previously and is designed to support them in making progress. The curriculum includes life skills, personal, social and health education (PSHE), art and craft, design and technology, geography, history, science, religious education (RE), work-related learning, information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education. Students follow a GCSE course, if they so wish at other establishments, while having the support of the residential home. There are established links with 14 to 16 programmes at two local colleges, utilised when appropriate for each student. Interviews are arranged with the local Connexions advisor. The requirements of the statement of special educational needs for one student are fully met by the curriculum.

The curriculum is enhanced through a range of visits outside school. These include visits to the library, leisure centres, local museum and art gallery, outdoor activity centres and cafes. These are designed to develop the students' social skills. Other activities include horse riding and swimming. An independence programme is available for older students who receive a weekly allowance to buy and cook some of their meals. This programme helps the students to prepare for life outside the home through the 24-hour curriculum.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good and results in good progress by the students. The teaching demonstrates experience and good subject knowledge. Students' learning styles, aptitudes and needs are considered and taken into account carefully in the planning and implementation of lessons. These plans relate closely to students' individual education plans. Each day begins with secure, safe routines and this structure to the school day is reassuring to the students. The teaching reflects a thorough knowledge of the students and their differing abilities, interests and specialist requirements and teaching plans ensure activities which help to support their learning. The relationships in the classroom are very positive. Students benefit from frequent well-planned changes of activity to enable them to keep focused. They

are able to concentrate and participate well in lessons for a varied amount of time, depending on their attitude and engagement with the task. They are confident to ask questions when they do not understand, and the staff give them time to reflect and answer questions in their own time. Students are given points for attending lessons and working in class, and these link in with the home incentive plan. Residential social workers act as learning support assistants in the classroom and give effective assistance. All the staff work very well as a team using appropriate strategies to handle students' behaviour patterns and to gradually build up their self-esteem.

Students have developed a secure relationship with all the staff, especially with their teacher, and respond well to the teaching within the limits of their behavioural and learning difficulties. Staff are consistent in their approach and have a shared understanding of each student's needs and try to address these through the teaching and support given, and are successful in achieving this. Classroom resources are of adequate quality and range and are effectively used. ICT is used to promote learning and the school has identified the intention to extend this use more widely throughout the curriculum.

Assessment procedures are effective and give an accurate picture of the good progress each student makes. Students are diagnostically tested on entry to ensure that subjects are taught at a level closely matched to their aptitude and ability. The school also uses informal assessment procedures, which assess students' progress lesson by lesson. This is used effectively to inform students on their progress and the next steps to take in their learning. Each student's progress towards their individual education plan target is monitored very regularly and the appropriate level of support provided. The termly reports are very detailed, comment on all areas of the curriculum and give clear guidance as to what the student needs to do next to improve. Behaviour goals are an important part of this review process. The reports are shared in detail with each student and they are asked to comment, with one stating, 'I think my report is fair.' The assessment procedures are effective across both the social care and education provision, in particular for those students who have a statement of special educational needs. All interested parties are kept well informed. The school meets with placing authorities for regular reviews. There was a very positive response from a placing authority in the questionnaire, emphasising the fact that the student had settled in very well and was making progress.

## Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students

The students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school's focus is on raising students' self-awareness, knowledge and confidence and on fostering their emotional life and relationships. For example, students are encouraged to engage in suitable conversation through the daily communal lunch.

The clear behaviour policy helps students to distinguish right and wrong, and, as a result, their behaviour is good. Taking responsibility for, and understanding, the consequences of an individual's actions are central to the school's aims. Students develop a sense of responsibility by shopping for and making some meals for themselves. Students are generally positive, making comments such as, 'I am getting on well,' 'The staff help me a lot' and 'I have settled in well.' There is very good provision for students' personal and social education through a wide variety of topics which examine personal relationships, emphasise the importance of living together in society and encourage students to develop personal qualities that will enable them to contribute effectively to the community. Health education and citizenship are promoted effectively through PSHE and life skills. The students' attendance is good and through the comments they made and their response to the questionnaire it is evident that their attitudes to learning have improved. There is good provision for raising students' cultural awareness, which is taught through a cultural programme of activities and through RE and history. A student has recently converted to Islam and the school and home have been very supportive, enabling her to learn about Islam and giving her access to Islamic teaching. Students' sense of responsibility to the wider community is fostered through links with local colleges and work experience available for the older students. The home independence plan is used effectively to prepare students for their future economic well-being. This involves living on a fixed weekly budget and includes shopping and cooking. Such experiences help to support the students' personal development effectively. Knowledge of public services and institutions in England is being developed through the regular visits outside the school, which helps the students to integrate into society. The school has identified that this is an area it wishes to develop.

## Welfare, health and safety of the students

The school makes outstanding provision to ensure the welfare, health and safety of the students. There are very clear and detailed written policies for welfare, health and safety, which include anti-bullying, health and safety on visits outside school and behaviour, each of which is implemented effectively. The school has very thorough systems in place to ensure that rigorous and up-to-date safeguarding and child protection training and health and safety training is carried out by all new and current staff. Child protection procedures are very detailed and cover the protection of students from harm, and what to do if allegations are made against staff. There are good procedures for identifying personal risk in relation to students with severe behavioural problems. Arrangements to promote good behaviour are well thought out and there are effective and comprehensive systems, which are supported by teaching and residential staff, who work together very well. Sanctions taken are considered carefully and are listed in the students' behaviour plan. Students are encouraged to stay safe, to eat healthily and to take regular planned exercise. The school has robust arrangements for fire prevention. A detailed fire risk assessment has been carried out and all outstanding matters have been attended to. Fire prevention equipment is monitored and regular drills are held and documented. All

staff receive training in operating fire safety equipment. First aid procedures are clearly outlined, all staff are trained in first aid and all accidents recorded. The attendance and admission registers are kept according to the regulations. The school fulfils its duties with regard to the Disability Discrimination Act 2002 and has drawn up a three-year accessibility plan.

## Suitability of the proprietor and staff

The school has checked the suitability of all staff, including the proprietors, to work with children through rigorous appointment procedures, ensuring the safeguarding of students further. The information is held on the single central register of staff appointments as required.

## School's premises and accommodation

The premises and accommodation are suitable, safe and conducive to the students' learning. The house is very well maintained, warm and welcoming and provides an attractive home for the students. There is one teaching room, which is adequate for the number of students. The home is used effectively for additional activities such as cookery. There is a large garden, which is used well for recreational activities.

## Provision of information for parents, carers and others

A good range of information is provided for parents, carers and others. This information is available through the My Choice School prospectus, My Choice website and student handbook. All the required information is readily available.

## Procedures for handling complaints

The school has a set of procedures which fully meet the regulations.

The care provision was judged to be outstanding in December 2009 and national minimum standards were met. A full report on the care provision is available on Ofsted's website and should be viewed in conjunction with this report.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended ('the Regulations').

Please see the report on Ofsted's website relating to the care provision in the children's home which should be read in conjunction with this report.

## What the school could do to improve further

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

- extend the use of ICT more widely throughout the curriculum to provide an additional dimension to students' learning
- provide the students with more opportunities for extending their general knowledge of public services and institutions in England.

Inspection judgement recording form

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		√		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		√		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		√		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		√		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		√		
The behaviour of pupils		√		

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils	√			
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The quality of boarding provision *(leave blank if not applicable)*

Evaluation of boarding provision				
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## School details

Name of school	My Choice School-Kingfisher View		
DCSF number	938/6276		
Unique reference number (URN)	135782		
Type of school	Registered Children's Home providing education for students with behavioural, emotional, social and learning difficulties.		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	September 2008		
Age range of pupils	11–16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 0	Girls: 2	Total: 2
<a href="#">Number of boarders</a>	<a href="#">Boys: 0</a>	<a href="#">Girls: 2</a>	<a href="#">Total: 2</a>
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need	Boys: 0	Girls: 1	Total: 1
<a href="#">Number of pupils who are looked after</a>	<a href="#">Boys: 0</a>	<a href="#">Girls: 2</a>	<a href="#">Total: 2</a>
<a href="#">Annual fees (boarders)</a>	Available on request		
Address of school	My Choice Children's Homes Ltd Unit 3a Mill Green Industrial Estate Mill Green Road Haywards Heath West Sussex RH16 1XQ		
Telephone number	01444 446920		
Fax number	01444 446929		
Email address	a.murphy@my-choice-homes.com		
Headteacher	Annie Murphy		
Proprietor	My Choice Children's Homes Ltd		
Reporting inspector	Jill Bainton		
Dates of inspection	16–17 March 2010		