

# Woodside Lodge Outdoor Learning Centre

Woodside Farm, Wood Lane, Quorn, Leicestershire LE12 8DB

## Inspection dates

12–14 September 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher has created a caring and aspirational culture to ensure that pupils make rapid progress in their learning and personal development.
- Leaders have a precise understanding of the quality of the school's provision. They take prompt action to make any necessary improvements.
- Leaders know individual pupils well. They ensure that each pupil receives the support that they need to prepare well for when they leave the school.
- Leaders regularly check on the quality of teaching. They provide effective support where they identify teaching that does not meet their high expectations.
- Leaders have intentionally made the broad curriculum flexible, so that it meets the needs and interests of each pupil.
- Teachers carefully design learning activities to ensure that pupils engage with their learning and make rapid progress. Pupils enjoy learning.
- Across a range of subjects, pupils in all years make rapid progress. This includes pupils who are above the compulsory age of education.
- All staff take great care to help pupils to manage their emotions and their behaviour.
- Staff provide strong support to enable pupils to make rapid progress in their personal development.
- Pupils understand the need to respect others, including those who are different from them.
- The school provides a range of therapies that support pupils to make rapid progress in their social and emotional development.
- Pupils' attendance at the school is well above national levels for similar schools.
- Staff receive wide-ranging opportunities to undertake further training. This ensures that they are fully effective in supporting the pupils in their learning and in their welfare.
- All staff provide first-rate care and support to ensure that the pupils are safe at the school.
- The school works well with the local authority to review pupils' progress.
- The school works with other educational providers to learn from their practice.
- Older pupils' progress in English is not always as strong as that in mathematics.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

## **Full report**

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

- Ensure that the progress that Year 10 and Year 11 pupils make in English continues to rise, and is consistently as high as the progress that all pupils make in mathematics.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- The proprietor has ensured that the school meets all of the independent school standards.
- The headteacher has created an aspirational culture which focuses on ensuring that pupils make rapid progress in their learning and in their social and emotional development.
- Senior leaders are ambitious for the pupils. They ensure that each pupil receives effective support to prepare them well for when they leave the school.
- All staff share leaders' ambition for their pupils. They work enthusiastically to support the pupils, and to help them make rapid progress both academically and in their personal development.
- Senior leaders have a precise understanding of the quality of the school's provision. They are quick to take effective action to improve any aspect of the provision that does not meet their high expectations. In doing so, they are quick to review the impact of the action that they have taken, to ensure that it is effective.
- Senior leaders have taken effective action to resolve the areas for improvement that the inspector identified at the last inspection. For example, pupils now receive lessons that enable them to explore different areas of science and to make strong progress in securing their scientific understanding.
- Senior leaders regularly check the progress that pupils make, both academically and in their personal development. Where pupils are not making sufficiently rapid progress, leaders ensure that the pupils receive the support that they need.
- Senior leaders have a precise understanding of the quality of teaching through their regular visits to lessons and their discussions with teachers. Leaders are quick to provide support to teachers whose practice does not meet their high expectations.
- Staff receive regular opportunities to engage in training to sharpen further the support that they can provide pupils in their learning and in their personal development. As a result, staff have a secure understanding of how to support pupils, particularly in meeting their additional needs. Staff appreciate these opportunities to develop their practice.
- Senior leaders have ensured that the curriculum is flexible to meet the needs and the interests of the pupils. This ensures that pupils engage well with their learning, and make rapid progress in developing their skills and understanding across a range of subjects. Wide-ranging extra-curricular activities, including educational visits, charity events and theme days, provide pupils with excellent opportunities to reinforce their learning.
- Pupils' completion of work-related subjects, such as animal care, cooking and life skills, allows pupils to prepare well for independent living.
- Pupils receive wide-ranging opportunities to become secure in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Through their lessons, and through discussions with adults at the school, pupils learn about different religions, moral values and how the country is run. Through this, pupils develop a secure understanding of fundamental British values.
- Pupils receive effective opportunities to learn about the area local to the school. Pupils in the primary provision, for example, have raised money to buy food for a local food bank,

while older pupils visit a local nursing home.

- All pupils have individual education plans that have targets that focus sharply on pupils' education and personal development. These targets link closely to pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans. Regular reviews of pupils' individual education plans allow senior leaders to support pupils to achieve their targets. The school works closely with the local authority to review pupils' EHC plans.
- The school works closely with a range of other educational organisations to learn from the practice of others and to ensure that the school's provision is fully effective.
- The school's systems for managing the performance of staff are rigorous. Staff have targets that relate to the quality of their teaching and to the support that they provide pupils to help them to make rapid progress, academically and in their personal development.
- The school meets the independent school standards in relation to the material changes that the school has applied for.

### **Governance of the school**

- In his role as headteacher, the proprietor's daily contact with the school's staff and pupils ensures that he has a precise understanding of the quality of the school's provision. He is quick to provide for any further requirements that he identifies that the school, the staff or the pupils may need.
- The proprietor is not complacent in the high quality of provision that the school offers its pupils. Rather, he is committed to ensuring that the school improves even further.
- As the school has grown, so the proprietor rightly has expanded his team of senior and subject leaders. This has ensured that the school has maintained its capacity to build on the school's successful provision.
- The proprietor has ensured that there are the necessary resources to enable pupils to make rapid progress, both academically and in their emotional and social development. For example, the proprietor has employed staff to offer therapies, including speech and language and equine therapy, to support pupils in their personal development.
- The proprietor seeks external support to ensure the accuracy of his evaluation of the quality of the school's provision. He acts promptly on any advice that he receives.
- The proprietor fully understands the actions that he must take to ensure that pupils are safe at the school.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's safeguarding policy reflects the latest government guidance and is available on the school's website.
- Safeguarding leaders work very closely with all staff to secure the welfare of the pupils. They take quick and effective action when they have a concern about a pupil's well-being. They work closely with the pupil's parents, and with external agencies, to ensure that the pupil receives the support that they need.
- Safeguarding leaders are sensitive to occasions when a pupil demonstrates behaviour that

suggests that they may be putting themselves at risk. Where this is the case, the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education leader provides the pupil with extra guidance to help them to keep themselves safe.

- Leaders maintain comprehensive records of the actions that they take to resolve a safeguarding concern. These records ensure that all staff have a precise understanding of the work that the school undertakes to support the well-being of individual pupils.
- Staff receive regular training on safeguarding, including updates at staff meetings. They understand that keeping pupils safe is everyone's responsibility. They know the signs to look for, and what actions to take, should they have a concern over a pupil's welfare.
- The pupils the inspector met said that they feel safe at the school. They said that the one-to-one support that they receive from staff helps them to feel safe. They said that they have someone whom they can speak with if they have a concern. They are confident that staff would provide them with help to resolve their concern.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

### **Outstanding**

- Teachers effectively use information about each pupil's prior attainment and additional needs to design learning opportunities that enable pupils to make consistently strong progress.
- All pupils learn on a one-to-one basis with their teacher. This helps pupils to focus on the lesson, and to receive the support that they need to become secure in their learning.
- Teachers carefully plan lessons around what interests each pupil. This allows pupils to engage well with their learning, and to make rapid progress in their understanding.
- Teachers use a wide range of resources to design creative lessons that stimulate pupils' interest. This includes using the school's many outdoor resources.
- Teachers use questioning well to check on their pupils' understanding. In so doing, they provide pupils with helpful feedback to allow them to improve their work.
- When pupils are uncertain about what they are learning, teachers ask well-considered questions to guide pupils to arrive at a secure understanding for themselves.
- Teachers are sensitive to their pupils' emotions. When pupils begin to lose concentration, or become agitated, teachers quickly adapt the task to re-engage them in their learning. As a result, occasions when pupils are not attentive to their work are rare and temporary.
- Teachers have very strong subject knowledge. They teach within their subject specialism. This ensures that they provide pupils with accurate information and appropriate support.
- Teachers provide pupils with regular opportunities to develop their reading skills, both within lessons and as independent reading activities. Furthermore, teachers actively promote pupils' interest in reading, particularly through literature-based theme days, including 'Shakespeare Day' and 'Roald Dahl Day'.

### **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

### **Outstanding**

#### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Staff are highly vigilant of pupils' welfare. They are quick to take action when they identify that a pupil has a concern.
- Staff develop strong relationships with the pupils. They provide timely and effective support and guidance to help pupils to make rapid progress in developing their social and emotional skills.
- Pupils develop a secure understanding of the need to treat all people with respect, including those who are different from them. This includes those people who meet the protected characteristics contained within the 2010 Equality Act.
- Pupils receive regular therapy sessions, including speech and language therapy and animal and equine therapy. These sessions help pupils to manage their feelings well and to develop their emotional responses. This work is crucial in helping pupils prepare to learn.
- Pupils know how to be safe, including when online, when crossing the road and when in the local community. Staff take great care to ensure that those pupils who demonstrate unsafe behaviours receive further support.
- Pupils understand about different types of bullying, including verbal, physical and racial bullying. They say that bullying at the school is extremely rare, and that, when it does occur, staff take effective action. The school's records confirm this to be the case.
- Through their lessons and the time that they spend with the staff, pupils develop a secure understanding of how to live healthy lives. In their PSHE lessons, for example, pupils consider activities that they can undertake to be healthy and those activities that they should avoid.
- All pupils undertake 'life skills' lessons to help them prepare well for when they leave the school. Pupils learn about the different skills that they require to live independently.
- Pupils in the secondary provision receive independent careers advice and guidance to support them as they consider their next steps. School leaders work closely with pupils to ensure that they are successful in moving to a place of further education or training. School leaders maintain contact with pupils once they have left the school, and provide support to find a suitable alternative if a pupil's initial placement is unsuccessful.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Staff model the behaviour that they expect from their pupils. They provide measured support for the pupils to help them to manage their feelings and their behaviours well. As a result, the school has a calm atmosphere, both during lesson time and at social times.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They recognise how the close support that they receive from the staff, and the creative learning experiences that teachers design for them, help them to learn. Consequently, pupils engage well with their learning.
- Occasionally, pupils display inappropriate behaviours, particularly when they first arrive at the school. When this occurs, staff work closely with the pupils to enable them to manage their behaviour more effectively. The school's records show that such support is effective in helping pupils to moderate their actions and behave well.

- Attendance at the school is well above the national level for similar schools. This is because of the support that the staff provide pupils to attend regularly.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Outstanding

- All pupils, including the most able, arrive at the school well below the level expected of them for their age and stage of education, both academically and in their personal development. The close support that the pupils receive assists them in making rapid progress in their learning, and in developing their social and emotional skills.
- When pupils first arrive at the school, senior leaders are quick to establish their prior attainment and any additional needs that they may have. Pupils receive challenging targets to ensure that they make sustained progress, both in their levels of understanding across a range of subjects and in their personal development.
- Pupils in both the primary and secondary provisions make consistently strong progress in mathematics across all years. This is due to the creativity with which staff teach mathematics, including through the use of the outdoor learning environment.
- Pupils in the primary provision and in key stage 3 make rapid progress in English. This is because staff effectively engage with pupils' interests to develop their reading and writing skills. Staff insist on pupils practising their writing skills accurately, including their spelling.
- The progress that pupils in Year 11 made last academic year in English was not as rapid as the progress that they made in mathematics. Leaders have been quick to adapt the school's English curriculum to resolve this issue. The books that the inspector looked at show that the rate of progress that current older pupils make in English is now rapidly improving.
- Pupils across all year groups make strong progress in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding in religious education, computing, science and art.
- Pupils make strong progress towards a range of academic and work-related qualifications that enable them to prepare well for their next steps.
- Most pupils in Year 11 in the last academic year attained qualifications in English and mathematics that were appropriate to their levels of ability. Some pupils also completed further suitable qualifications, including in computing.
- Because of the strong progress that they make in their learning, pupils are able to grow in confidence and in self-esteem. The progress that they consequently make in their social and emotional development ensures that they are prepared well for life in modern Britain and for independent living.
- Nearly all pupils who have left the school since it opened have moved on to further education courses or training.

## School details

Unique reference number	139734
DfE registration number	855/6032
Inspection number	10026054

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, 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.

Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	22
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Mr J P Lakin
Headteacher	Mr J P Lakin
Annual fees (day pupils)	£45,000 for the primary provision £54,000 for the secondary provision
Telephone number	01509 415 474
Website	<a href="http://www.woodside-lodge.co.uk">www.woodside-lodge.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@woodside-lodge.co.uk">info@woodside-lodge.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	12–13 February 2014

## Information about this school

- Woodside Lodge Outdoor Learning Centre is an independent special school for pupils who have autistic spectrum disorders.
- All of the pupils at the school have EHC plans.
- The school provides education for pupils aged between 5 and 19. Those pupils who are above compulsory school age, who are not ready to leave, continue to study at the school. These pupils work on qualifications that are appropriate to them, given their age, stage of education and additional needs.
- The school currently operates on two sites. These are One Ash House, Loughborough Road, Quorn LE12 8UE and Stonehurst Lodge, Stonehurst Farm, Wood Lane, Quorn LE12



8DB. The school no longer uses the site at Woodside Farm.

- The school does not use any alternative providers for its pupils.
- The proprietor is also the school's headteacher.
- The school's last standard inspection took place on 12–13 February 2014.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector undertook a tour of both school sites to check the facilities against Part 5 of the independent school standards.
- In line with the request from the Department for Education, the inspector inspected the relevant parts of the independent school standards that relate to the school's application for a material change. The school has applied to move from the Woodside Farm site to the site at One Ash House. The school also proposes to open a further site at Upper Vale Farm, Charley Road, Charley, Loughborough LE12 9YB. The school has applied to increase the number of pupils that it is registered to teach to 30, to accommodate the opening of the new site at Upper Vale Farm.
- The inspector observed learning taking place in 10 lessons, including an equine therapy session. During these occasions, he spoke with pupils and looked at pupils' books. The inspector also looked at pupils' books across a range of subjects as a separate activity.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour and spoke with pupils during social time.
- The inspector met with the proprietor, senior leaders and the leader responsible for PSHE. He met formally with pupils and with a selection of staff, including the school's therapy staff. The inspector received correspondence from a member of staff from the local authority who works with pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The inspector also spoke with a representative of the local authority's safeguarding team.
- There were too few responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, for the inspector to be able to make an analysis of parents' views. The inspector did take into account the three responses to the accompanying free-text service.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation relating to the school's provision, including those concerning the school's self-evaluation and improvement; pupils' attainment, achievement, behaviour and attendance; pupils' EHC plans and individual education plans; the quality of teaching; accessibility plans; safeguarding; and complaints against the school. The lead inspector also checked the school's single central register and the school's system for recruiting staff.

## Inspection team

Simon Hollingsworth, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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