

Hopewell School (Harmony House)

Harmony House, Baden Powell Close, Dagenham, RM9 6XN

Inspection dates 11–13 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Inadequate	4
Leadership and management	Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils	Inadequate	4
Sixth form provision	Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings

This is an inadequate school

- Students are not safe because safeguarding systems and structures are not robust.
- Students do not achieve well enough. Too many students regress in their learning or make insufficient progress.
- The quality of teaching is inadequate. The pace of learning is slow in too many classes. Teachers fail to move students on when they are ready to do so. Students are not taught the skills they need to extend their learning.
- School leaders do not check the quality of teaching with sufficient rigour. They do not align their judgements with the information they have about students' progress.
- Leadership and management are inadequate. The proprietor and director have not sufficiently monitored and checked the work of the school. They have not supported or challenged senior leaders robustly about their work. Consequently, they have not ensured that all the independent school standards are met.
- Health and safety are compromised; fire extinguishers are not easily accessible and washing facilities are inadequate.
- Provision at the satellite site is inadequate, with very few resources available to engage students in learning.
- The sixth form is inadequate because of the same concerns identified for younger students.

The school has the following strengths

- Working relationships between staff and students are very positive. Students conduct themselves well, and appreciate that the school has enabled them to improve their behaviour and attitudes.
- An appropriately broad and balanced curriculum is in place which caters for the needs of the students on roll.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school must take action to meet schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, as amended by The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was unannounced at the request of the Department for Education. It was conducted at the same time as inspections of two other schools and three children’s homes owned and run as part of the Hopewell schools and Holibrook homes community. The inspector observed teaching in seven lessons; three jointly with the headteacher. All classes were observed.
- The inspector visited the satellite classroom at Lily House, but was unable to view teaching due to student absence. She also made a short visit to Holibrook House (Monteagle) children’s home.
- Meetings took place with the proprietor, a director, the headteacher, and other staff. The inspector spoke with students about their learning and life at school.
- The inspector scrutinised students’ work, examination results and the school’s own records of students’ progress. A range of documentation, including policies, risk assessments, schemes of work and staff training records, was also examined.
- Results of the school’s questionnaire to parents were considered, alongside parents’ comments made as part of their child’s annual review.
- Inspectors considered 14 responses to the staff questionnaire. At the time of the inspection, students had not completed Ofsted’s online Point-in-Time survey. There was one response to Ofsted’s online parental questionnaire, Parent View, this was not looked at as there were too few responses.

Inspection team

Gaynor Roberts, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Hopewell School (Harmony House) is an independent day school which opened in November 2006 and is owned by a sole proprietor. The school is situated within Harmony House, which is a charitable project of the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. The school provides education for students with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, moderate learning difficulties and for those with autistic spectrum disorders, who have experienced disruption and disengagement in their previous education.
- The school is registered for up to 65 students aged five to 19 years. There are currently 44 students on roll, three of whom are resident in one of the Holibrook homes. The overwhelming majority of students are boys, in line with other schools of this type. All but three students have statements of special educational needs.
- The school runs an outreach programme for 12 of the students on roll, delivering education off site, within community facilities such as colleges and libraries. There is also a classroom located at the rear of an unoccupied children's home located approximately three and a half miles from the school. Currently, one student is educated in this provision.
- The school was last inspected in September 2013 when all aspects of the school's work were judged outstanding. All of the independent school standards were judged as met.
- Since September 2013, 37 students have joined the school. Ten of these stayed on roll for only a short period of time, and have already moved on.
- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher has returned from maternity leave.
- A governing body has recently been established to replace the review committee which checked the performance of the school. The proprietor is the Chair; there are two other directors along with the headteachers of both Hopewell School (Bartram) and Hopewell School (Harmony House). An additional governor is in the process of being recruited externally.
- The school aims to 'educate and empower young people to realise their full potential, whilst building on resilience and providing opportunities for them to achieve the outcomes of the Every Child Matters Agenda; equip young people with the tools they need to enhance their dignity and life chances; and provide high quality services that make a positive difference to young people in a safe and therapeutic environment'.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and raise students' achievement by ensuring that:
 - teachers assess students' progress in lessons and adapt their teaching accordingly, moving students on as soon as they are ready
 - staff make use of a wider range of resources to engage and support students with their learning
 - students within the outreach programme have regular opportunities to discuss their learning with teachers
 - leaders employ a wide range of methods to judge the quality of teaching
 - the independent school standards listed below are met.
- Ensure that the areas for improvement identified in the September 2013 inspection are fully implemented. These are:
 - improve the effectiveness of teaching assistants in lessons by developing their understanding of how students' literacy and numeracy skills can be extended and their expertise in doing so
 - make arrangements for the external moderation of all teachers' assessments to ensure their consistency and accuracy
 - implement the proprietor's plan to set up a board of governors with a wide range of expertise to challenge the school robustly.
- In order to improve the quality of leadership and management, senior leaders and the proprietor should:
 - ensure that all aspects of safeguarding are effective
 - ensure that all of the required school policies and procedures are in place and fully reflect the context of the school
 - bring greater rigour to the quality of assurance of all aspects of the school, and use this information to

remedy any weaknesses or make improvements to provision
ensure that all the independent school standards are met.

■ **The school must meet the following independent school standards:**

Ensure teaching enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught (paragraph 3 and 3(a)).

Ensure teaching involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time (paragraph 3 and 3(c)).

Ensure there are an adequate quality, quantity and range of classroom resources and that these are utilised effectively (paragraph 3 and 3(f)).

Ensure the standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met (paragraph 5).

Ensure that the teaching of any subject in the school precludes the promotion of partisan political views (paragraph 5 and 5(c)).

Ensure steps are taken, as are reasonably practicable, to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils while they are in attendance at the school; while they are taking part in extra-curricular activities which are provided or organised by or on behalf of the school; or in the promotion at the school, including through the distribution of promotional material, of extra-curricular activities taking place at the school or elsewhere viewpoints are well balanced (paragraph 5, 5(d), 5(d)(i), 5(d)(ii) and 5(d)(iii)).

Ensure arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school and these arrangements have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 7, 7(a) and 7(b)).

Ensure that an effective anti-bullying strategy is drawn up and implemented. (paragraph 10).

Ensure that the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 is complied with (paragraph 13).

Ensure that school staff are deployed to ensure the proper supervision of pupils (paragraph 15).

Ensure there are suitable toilet and washing facilities provided (paragraph 23A(1) and 23A(1)(a)).

Ensure that the name of the head teacher is provided to parents of pupils and parents of prospective pupils (paragraphs 24(1), 24(1)(a) and 24(2)(b)).

Ensure that the name and address for correspondence to the Chair of the Governing Body are made available to parents of pupils and parents of prospective pupils (paragraphs 24(1), 24(1)(b) and 24(2)(c)).

Ensure that the particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations are made available to parents of pupils and parents of prospective pupils (paragraphs 24(1), 24(1)(b) and 24(3)(f)).

Ensure that the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school are made available to parents of pupils and parents of prospective pupils (paragraphs 24(1), 24(1)(b) and 24(3)(g)).

Ensure that the number of staff at the school, including temporary staff, and a summary of their qualifications are made available to parents of pupils and parents of prospective pupils (paragraphs 24(1), 24(1)(b) and 24(3)(h)).

Ensure that where a pupil wholly or partly funded by a local authority is registered at the school, an annual account of income received and expenditure incurred by the school in respect of that pupil is provided to the local authority (paragraphs 24(1) and 24(1)(h)).

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are inadequate

- The safeguarding of students is inadequate. Systems designed to ensure that only authorised persons enter the school building are insufficient and inconsistent. When concerns about safeguarding have been raised, they have not been reported on to the relevant authorities in a timely fashion.
- The health and safety of those within the building are compromised. Fire extinguishers are not easily accessible, having been moved from their prominent positions following incidents of students using them inappropriately. Despite this measure being in place for a year, information has not been disseminated widely to staff. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher did not know where the fire extinguishers were. In addition, washing facilities are inadequate as there is no soap or drying facilities in the boys' toilets.
- Leaders rely too heavily on individual lesson observations in order to judge the quality of teaching. They do not take into account other evidence of teaching over time or link their findings to the achievement of students.
- There is a comprehensive system in place for assessing students' achievement in English, mathematics, science and computing. However, leaders do not use this information to analyse whether students' progress is good enough, or to provide an overview to the proprietor and executives. Therefore, there is no accurate overall view of how well students are doing.
- School leaders do not have an accurate view of the school's performance. They do not have a coherent strategy for checking on different aspects of the school's work over time. Arrangements are in place for the performance management of teachers, linked to national Teachers' Standards, and for the supervision of support staff.
- A range of policies is in place to support the school's work. Many of these policies are common across the schools run by the organisation. However, they have not always been fully adapted to take into account the context of this particular school.
- The school carefully plans opportunities for students to develop their social skills in a variety of ways, tailored to meet the needs of individuals. For example, those students in the outreach programme, who have fewer opportunities to meet with peers, are supported to attend a college course. They are also able to participate alongside other members of the school in physical activities on a regular basis. Students enjoy breakfast and lunch times in small class groups, and staff make good use of the opportunity to promote good manners and develop social interaction.
- The school's work to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is variable. Students do learn to take responsibility for their behaviour, to understand the difference between right and wrong, and to develop tolerance of those around them.
- The school has identified the need to strengthen its work in terms of cultural and spiritual development. Some opportunities for students to develop an understanding of other cultures and a range of religions are included in the curriculum. Students participate in fundraising activities, and during the inspection held a bike-a-thon in aid of Children in Need. They learn about the way people live in other countries. More-able students learn about Britain as a democracy, and the workings of the criminal justice system. Leaders do not, however, have sufficient checks in place to ensure that partisan views are not promoted through teaching or by visitors to the school. Many staff members work one to one with students, and no advice is provided to ensure that any opinions voiced are balanced and appropriate.
- The curriculum structure is adequate. Students study each of the required areas of learning. The curriculum is based on the revised National Curriculum. Appropriate plans are in place which are used by teachers when preparing modules of work. In some subjects, such as design technology, the lack of specialised resources results in the breadth of coverage being narrow as students are unable to develop their cooking skills or fully participate in workshop activities.
- The overall organisation website covers both Hopewell schools - Harmony House and Bartram. There is a shared prospectus. However, several of the required items of information for parents and carers are not included in either the website or the prospectus. These include the name of the headteacher, details of staffing and their qualifications and the number of complaints in the last year. Whilst annual statements of accounts for income and expenditure of funding for students' statement of educational needs are prepared for local authorities, the proprietor could not demonstrate to inspectors that these were sent out.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Those responsible for governance of the school have failed to ensure that there is sufficient oversight

of the school's performance. They do not check for themselves that the school is safe or that the independent school standards are met.

Performance review meetings, intended to ensure that the work of the school is monitored, are not fit for purpose. There were no formal minutes available from meetings; the inspector was provided with brief handwritten notes of actions to be taken. These actions were, without exception, relating to operational rather than strategic matters. Therefore, those attending the meetings have little information on the quality of education offered by the school, or the achievement of students.

Those responsible for governance have contracted an external consultant to provide a view of how well the school is doing. Although the consultant reports that he has visited the school regularly since the last inspection in order to support school improvement work, there was no evidence available of the impact of his work.

Appropriate systems are in place to check the suitability of members of staff recruited to work within the organisation.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Behaviour in lessons is variable. In some lessons, students attend well, and participate fully in the task. However, in too many lessons, they interrupt learning by talking over the teacher or asking questions that are not directly related to the content of the lesson. Teachers do not respond to these interruptions in a consistent manner, which results in the behaviour continuing.
- The school records incidents of poor behaviour in detail. It does not, however, analyse the rate or severity of such incidents. It does not keep a log of incidents involving racist or homophobic behaviour. The number of recorded incidents is not high when compared to similar schools.
- Students often join the school with negative attitudes towards education. Some are unable to join the school community for some time and are educated through the outreach programme. Some need considerable support before they can attend regularly and on time.
- Students can describe how the school has helped them to control their behaviour and improve. They told the inspector that each student is in the school for a reason. They understand that members of staff are committed to supporting students to access their community appropriately and effectively as young adults.
- Working relationships between staff and students are strong. Students who have been disengaged with education respond well to small group tuition in a less formal atmosphere where students and staff address each other by their first names.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is inadequate. The school does not demonstrate a good enough understanding of procedures regarding the reporting of serious safeguarding allegations.
- A revised anti-bullying policy is in place. However, there is insufficient information in the policy on the school's stance regarding homophobic or cyber bullying. Consequently, should this behaviour occur, it may be more difficult for the school to respond consistently and effectively.
- Both teacher and students' safety is compromised in the satellite classroom as the teacher is sometimes working alone.
- Students say they are taught how to keep themselves safe. They could explain to the inspector a range of measures they take in order to maintain their safety online. They say that serious behavioural incidents are rare, and are dealt with by staff.
- Appropriate risk assessments are in place for external trips and regular visits to local facilities such as the sports centre. These are reviewed on a daily basis during the morning staff briefing to ensure any changes are taken into account.
- Most students attend regularly. The school operates a later start and finish time in order to promote a high level of attendance and punctuality. Any patterns of absence are followed up on an individual basis.

The quality of teaching is inadequate

- The quality of teaching is inadequate. The pace of learning is slow and students are not moved on when they are ready, carrying out additional activities which repeat learning they have already acquired.
- Learning resources at Lily House are sparse. Members of staff are reliant on pencil and paper activities

when in the classroom. They have no computer, no practical mathematics resources and no whiteboard. In addition, there are no visual resources to support the understanding of students placed there. In the main school, resources in some subjects lack breadth. There are limited design technology resources, for example. When studying modules on resistant materials, students design their product, but the teacher cuts wood to the students' design at home prior to the students finishing the product. There are no facilities for food technology and no laboratory for the teaching of science GCSE.

- Teachers' questioning in lessons does not deepen learning, but is reliant on students recalling facts from previous lessons. At times, following a question, students resort to calling out answers that are broadly relevant to the field of study, until one happens upon the correct answer. Students are not encouraged to think deeply about their work through further questioning.
- The school has a consistent marking policy which is used by teachers as appropriate to individual students' needs. Marking provides feedback to students on what went well in their work, and what could be done to improve it.
- The development of reading skills is given appropriate emphasis. Students enjoy sharing stories and texts, and are confident when reading in front of a small group. However, there is a lack of structure to the teaching of basic reading skills. Students who cannot read a particular word are told what it is, rather than encouraged to work out for themselves what the word may be.
- Teaching focusses on the acquisition of knowledge, successful completion of accredited courses and improvements in behaviour. The acquisition of skills is not a priority in some subjects. For example, students were asked to take notes in a GCSE lesson, using the teacher's PowerPoint slides and verbal information. Most of those present took no notes, but said they would rely on the printed PowerPoint slides. One student laboriously copied out all the slides into his exercise book.
- Around a quarter of the students on roll are taught through the school's outreach service. These students find it difficult to access a school environment for a number of reasons. School leaders and teachers meet weekly with outreach tutors to discuss the week, mark work that has been completed, and set work for the week ahead. The school is successful in transferring many of these students into the main school over time. Whilst accessing the outreach service, students have very few opportunities to discuss their work directly with teachers. As a result, they do not have access to staff with the relevant level of subject knowledge for them to make sufficient academic progress.
- College courses are used well to provide education and social opportunities for those more able students accessing the outreach service on a longer term basis. The school has had success in maintaining students' involvement in education and training through the careful identification of relevant college courses.

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Students enter the school following a period of disrupted education, and have often been out of school for some time. They enter at different stages of their education, and often at levels well below those that would be expected for their age. This is due either to the complexity of their needs and/or time out of school. The school uses a range of assessments to ascertain the students' level of attainment when they join the school.
- From these low starting points, students make insufficient progress. For example, school information shows that in 2014, around half of the students in Key Stage 4 regressed in terms of their attainment in English over the year. In other key stages, progress is often not sustained, with students making gains in one term, but then falling back over the next.
- Progress in mathematics, science and computing shows similar irregularities. Too many students regressed over the year, or made gains which were not sustained. Few students make steady progress term by term.
- The school has systems in place to assess the level of students' performance, and measure any progress in English, mathematics, science and computing on a termly basis. Teacher assessments are checked by senior leaders, but there are no arrangements for any external moderation of the school's judgement.
- The school sets individual targets for students in English, mathematics, science and computing, and students are aware of these. However, there is little analysis of whether students are on track to achieve their targets, or whether the targets are sufficiently challenging. At Key Stage 4, the school sets targets in terms of GCSE or entry level grade and also in terms of National Curriculum levels; these targets are not consistently closely aligned.
- The school has increased the range of qualifications available to students. More-able students study a range of subjects at GCSE or entry level as appropriate to their needs and aptitude. Lower ability students

receive accreditation for their achievement in terms of personal and life skills through the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) qualifications. As a result, all students at the end of Key Stage 4 have the opportunity to achieve appropriate qualifications in relation to their needs.

- The three students in the sixth form are currently completing their Key Stage 4 studies. This is because disruption in their previous educational placements and home lives had significant impact on their learning.

The sixth form provision

is inadequate

- There are currently three students on roll in the sixth form, all in their first year. Each follows an individualised curriculum tailored to their needs, interests and abilities.
- It is not possible to comment on the achievement or behaviour of students in the sixth form as this would identify individual students.
- There are no matters of concern relating particularly to the sixth form that differ from those identified elsewhere in this report.

What inspection judgements mean

School	
Grade	Judgement
Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Requires improvement
Grade 4	Inadequate

Detailed grade characteristics can be viewed in the *Non-association independent school inspection handbook* which is published on the Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140053.

School details

Unique reference number	134388
Inspection number	454206
DfE registration number	301/6002

This inspection was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as inserted by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, 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	Day special school for pupils with social, emotional, behavioural difficulties (SEBD), moderate learning difficulties (MLD) and autistic spectrum disorder (ASD)
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	44
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	3
Number of part time pupils	0
Proprietor	Herman Allen
Headteacher	Claire Waddingham
Date of previous school inspection	24–26 September 2013
Annual fees (day pupils)	£44,000 to £60,000
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