

Limpsfield Grange School

89 Bluehouse Lane, Limpsfield, Surrey, RH8 0RZ

Inspection dates 10–11 December 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Overall effectiveness of the boarding experience/Overall effectiveness of the residential experience		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Outstanding leadership and management have resulted in excellent provision and rapidly improving outcomes over the past three years.
- The exceptional academic and personal opportunities offered ensure that this school makes an enormous difference to the learning of all groups of students. All students, including those with additional special needs, make rapid and sustained progress, achieving outstandingly well from their individual starting points.
- A high proportion of outstanding teaching enables most students to make better-than-expected progress in English and mathematics, and in their personal development.
- Students acquire high-quality accreditation, including GCSEs, by Year 11 and benefit from college courses that prepare them well for their futures.
- Students' behaviour is outstanding because of excellent relationships between students and staff and because of the strong, supportive environment in which all students thrive.
- Attendance rates are above those of mainstream secondary schools and students say that they feel very safe and secure.
- Subjects and topics meet students' needs extremely well, and they benefit from exciting off-site activities such as theatre visits and The Duke of Edinburgh's Bronze, Silver and Gold award scheme
- The governing body has a very accurate view of the school's work and manages the budget very well. High-quality training to improve teaching is provided and additional funding is always spent for the benefit of students who are eligible for it.
- The school meets the national minimum standards for residential special schools.
- The residential provision makes an exceptional impact on students' lives.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 16 lessons jointly with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a few shorter visits to check students' learning, and listened to some younger students read.
- Activities were observed in the residence both before and after school, and discussions were held with students and staff.
- Inspectors spoke to several different groups of students, both in the school and in the residence.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and managers, the head of care, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body and a local authority representative.
- The inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information about students' progress, planning and monitoring documents, safeguarding information and residence documentation, and looked at students' books jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors took account of the 14 parent responses to the online survey (Parent View) and also took account of the 20 responses to the staff inspection questionnaire.

Inspection team

Denise Morris, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Kate Robertson

Additional inspector

Gaynor Moorey

Social care inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school caters for girls from across Surrey and a few from neighbouring authorities who are supported by a statement of special educational needs for a range of difficulties including: autism spectrum disorders; speech, language and communication difficulties; learning and/or emotional difficulties. Most also have additional disorders. Students have a wide range of attainment when they enter the school.
- About 52% of students have autistic spectrum disorders and about 25% have additional speech and language difficulties; a very few others have behavioural difficulties.
- Most students are White British. A small minority is from African, Indian or Pakistani backgrounds. A very small proportion speaks English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for certain groups, including pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those looked after by the local authority) is just above average.
- All students in Years 7 and 8 benefit from catch-up funding.
- Older students attend vocational courses at East Surrey College.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that teaching enables all students to make their best progress in every lesson by:
 - having even higher expectations of the amount and quality of work that each student is capable of achieving in every lesson so that the pace of their learning is even better
 - ensuring that all teachers always place a strong focus on regularly checking the roles of teaching assistants so that they can fully monitor the impact of the support provided and the progress of students who work with them.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- When they enter the school, students' attainment is usually well below average for their age on account of their wide range of needs and associated difficulties. Students quickly settle and start to catch up, achieving outstandingly well in all areas of learning.
- All groups of students, including the few from minority ethnic backgrounds, those with additional autistic spectrum disorders, those with speech and language difficulties and the few with behavioural needs, achieve outstandingly well in English and mathematics.
- Most students make better-than-expected progress in English. They quickly improve their reading and writing skills, reading fluently by Year 9 and writing extended compositions by Year 10. Students of lower ability also make better-than-expected progress and as a result all students acquire at least the entry level qualification in English by the time they leave school. More-able students acquire good quality GCSEs in relation to their abilities.
- Almost all students make much better than expected progress in mathematics. This is evident in the way that many acquire accreditation, including GCSEs in mathematics, with a few students taking early-entry GCSEs in Year 10. Students' excellent progress is evident in their books and in lessons, where they work at a fast pace, eager to solve problems. In Year 10, for example, students quickly improved their understanding of decimals as they learned how to show different amounts of money as a decimal.
- In almost all mathematics lessons, students work fast and sustain concentration as they welcome the high levels of challenge that are provided for them.
- Students read regularly. Most students take their reading books home every day and those in the residence read in the evenings. This has resulted in standards rising so that the vast majority of students rapidly improve their reading skills once they start at the school. Excitement about their trip to see 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory' in London, for example, had encouraged many students to read more books by the author, Roald Dahl.
- Students' confidence in using their communication skills improves as they move through the school. Older students, for example, show high levels of confidence as they stand up in class to present their ideas. In English, Year 10 students were using the work of the painter Breughel to find and describe characters. They showed high levels of confidence and self-esteem as they described their character to others in the class, using a variety of vocabulary.
- Students in Year 11 make outstanding progress on their vocational courses undertaken at East Surrey College, preparing them extremely well for further training and employment. Students have a wide choice of courses and also undertake work experience in the local community in Years 10 and 11, working in shops and schools.
- Students eligible for the pupil premium make better-than-expected progress, particularly in English and mathematics, which is similar to other students in the school. Students in Years 7 and 8 who receive support through catch-up funding make rapid progress because of the additional support provided for them.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The very high quality of teaching across the school enables all groups of students to make excellent progress in their learning and their behaviour. Very positive relationships, small class sizes and very high levels of support meet the needs and abilities of each individual student exceptionally well.
- The teaching of English has been improved through some excellent appointments and effective training. As a result, staff have a very clear understanding of students' abilities and can help them overcome some of their difficulties through the use of approaches that suit their needs. Consequently, the vast majority make excellent progress in writing. Evidence in the older students' English books shows some outstanding improvements over time.
- The teaching of mathematics is a particular strength and is very successful because teachers

provide many practical examples that students really enjoy. Students work fast and have high levels of confidence. Year 9 students, for example, benefited from high-quality teaching that helped them to build on their previous skills to solve simultaneous equations. High-quality challenge through very specific questioning ensured that all students achieved exceptionally well and made excellent progress.

- Students' books show that marking and assessments of their skills provide very supportive and helpful comments to enable students to improve further and understand what is expected of them.
- Most teachers plan high-quality, challenging tasks for all the students in their class and make effective use of support staff to improve students' skills. On a very few occasions, expectations are not quite as high and the support that staff provide to individual students, or to small groups, is not checked regularly enough to ensure that students' progress is being improved. At these times the pace of students' learning dips slightly so that learning is good rather than outstanding.
- Teachers engage well with the residence and with parents, who are rightly very pleased with the quality of teaching and learning at the school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Students' behaviour is exemplary. They value their school and the staff and are polite, helpful and eager to please. Students respect others and regularly work together to achieve their aims.
- Students fully understand the importance of staying safe on the internet and in the community.
- The school council assured inspectors that there is no bullying at the school of any kind. Any teasing, they say, is quickly dealt with. Students' outstanding behaviour in and around the school is fostered by exceptionally high expectations and excellent role modelling by staff.
- It is evident that students enjoy school greatly and this is evident in their above-average, and improving, attendance.
- Students' behaviour and attitudes are fostered extremely well by the exciting range of challenges and the very high expectations that staff provide for them. As a result, exclusions are rare and there are far fewer persistent absentees than in other special schools.
- Students really enjoy their work to gain The Duke of Edinburgh Awards and describe many of their challenges as 'amazing', 'exciting' and 'challenging'. One student told the inspectors that 'I never thought I would be able to do things like this', and another commented, 'The school really encourages and supports us'.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted extremely well through the very wide range of excellent activities for both day and residential students. This means that students are fully prepared for their lives after leaving school because of the high levels of trust, support and modelling that staff provide.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher has a strong belief that all the students at the school can achieve outstandingly well and she promotes very high aspirations for each and every one of them. She drives improvement rigorously and is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and subject leaders. Together they have built effectively on the good performance of the previous inspection to promote outstanding practice and excellent teaching, learning and behaviour.
- Parents agree that their children achieve outstandingly well. All the parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire said that they would recommend this school to other parents. Those who spoke to the inspectors said that the school had changed their lives and those of their children.

- The strong support for families both from the school and from the residential staff has a strong impact, illustrated by the level of students’ successes. Close links between the school and the residence have a very positive impact on the outstanding quality of care and support and on students’ achievements.
- Leaders make very effective use of the national standards for teaching and use them well in their uncompromising drive to maintain the very high quality of teachers’ skills. There are many excellent examples of staff at all levels progressing up the pay scales because of high-quality training, which has helped them to improve their effectiveness and seek promotion.
- Leaders monitor the school’s outcomes rigorously and keep close checks on teaching and learning. This has resulted in high-quality provision across the school, although they recognise the issue that this report has highlighted. Subject leaders regularly check their areas and monitor the progress of each student so that they put additional support in place where necessary to ensure no students fall behind.
- Regular training in aspects such as safeguarding and behaviour ensure consistent practice across the school.
- The local authority provides excellent and accurate support to leaders in relation to data management and interpretation. The school has a low level of support because the local authority recognises the strong improvements and the rigorous practices that the school has developed.
- There are some excellent links with local schools and businesses, which the school uses to provide vocational experiences for students in Years 10 and 11. These fully benefit students as they prepare for their futures.
- The excellent range of subjects and topics taught provides outstandingly well for the particular needs and abilities of all students. Outdoor learning is a key factor in building students’ confidence and preparing them for college.
- Leaders successfully eliminate discrimination through their very effective policies and procedures which make sure that all students have equal opportunities to take advantage of all the experiences on offer.
- Safeguarding procedures fully meet requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is extremely supportive, proving excellent challenge to leaders. The governors are fully involved in monitoring provision, checking teaching and behaviour and looking carefully at how well students achieve. They rigorously check how well the school and the residence are doing, so that they have a very clear view of what is working well. Governors have an excellent range of skills which they use to benefit the school. Consistent monitoring and full involvement in evaluating the school's outcomes mean that members know how effective the school is. Excellent management of finances means that the money allocated for students’ premium funding is used to enrich the learning of those students and to provide additional support so that these students’ achievements and progress are at least as good as their classmates’. Governors are rigorous about ensuring that the best teachers and staff are rewarded.

Outcomes for residential pupils	are outstanding
Quality of residential provision and care	is outstanding
Residential pupils’ safety	is outstanding
Leadership and management of the residential provision	are outstanding

- Residential provision at this school is of an outstanding quality. The impact of the boarding provision has made an exceptional impact on the quality of the students' lives.
- Students care for each other and show genuine concern for their welfare as well as that of the staff. One young person said, 'We are like a family and I have loads of sisters'.
- The young people are able to develop their personal, social and cultural development through a broad and varied array of activities and events. Each young person is worked with on an individual basis and strives towards increasing independence.
- Through a unique care planning system the students are involved in their own planning on a daily basis, which helps them to take responsibility for and make decisions about their daily lives.
- The students gain confidence from relationships with caring, supportive and professional staff who are key to the students' continued development and enjoyment while accessing boarding provision at the school.
- The plans ensure that the students increase their independence and life skills at a rate commensurate with their abilities and that the staff have high aspirations for them to fulfil their potential.
- Students are enabled to play a part in the local community and the wider community through activities and fund raising for different charities such as breast cancer. All activities are risk-assessed to ensure the safety of the students.
- Students receive guidance on personal care and social welfare issues and have access to resources to inform them about potentially risky situations such as the use of the social network sites, relationships and potentially abusive situations. This helps students to take well-informed responsibility for keeping themselves safe.
- Students are supported with their health and well-being, which includes information and support for any individual issues.
- Everyone is acutely aware of each student's vulnerabilities. As a result of this, the school is conscientious and rigorous in ensuring their safety. Close liaison with safeguarding teams as well as organisational monitoring ensures all issues are addressed and investigated in detail so that the students' well-being is protected and promoted.
- Continuing professional development ensures that all members of staff receive the training and support needed to keep their practice up to date and of an excellent standard.
- Management of the residential provision is of an outstanding standard. A well-organised and conscientious senior management team is supported by a multi-layered, robust external monitoring system which informs practice and development. This ensures that excellent standards of practice are maintained.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

Boarding/Residential provision		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	A school which provides an exceptional quality of care and significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 2	Good	A school which provides a high quality of care that exceeds minimum requirements.
Grade 3	Adequate	A school which meets minimum requirements but needs to improve the quality of care it provides.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school where minimum requirements are not met and the quality of care has serious weaknesses.

School details

Unique reference number	125459
Social care unique reference number	SC013885
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	426398

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

The inspection of residential provision was carried out under the Children Act 1989, as amended by the Care Standards Act 2000, having regard to the national minimum standards for residential special schools.

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Girls
Number of pupils on the school roll	68
Number of boarders on roll	25
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jackie Tanner
Headteacher	Sarah Wild
Date of previous school inspection	17–18 November 2010
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