

# Knole Development Centre

Cygnets Hospital, Godden Green, Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 0JR

## Inspection dates

1–3 May 2018

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The strong moral purpose of the headteacher ensures that meeting pupils' complex needs is at the heart of the school's work.
- Cygnets Healthcare's head of education and special educational needs case coordinator provide highly effective support to the headteacher and staff which has improved the quality of education at the school.
- Staff are highly skilled and know their pupils very well. Because of well-planned teaching and thorough assessment, pupils' learning needs are met consistently. Parents and carers agree that their child is taught well. Pupils are appreciative of the teaching they receive.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils, including the most able pupils, make strong progress.
- Efficient communication strategies with hospital staff contribute to seamless support for pupils.
- Staff are caring and highly skilled in supporting pupils' well-being. The school is a haven of calm.
- Leaders have developed a rich and varied curriculum. Pupils enjoy a wide variety of courses, including extra-curricular activities such as a music club.
- The proprietor has made sure that governance arrangements are effective and that the independent school standards are met well. Governors are knowledgeable and highly skilled.
- Pupils say that they feel very safe at the school and parents agree that their child is safe. Safeguarding is a strong feature of this school.
- While the school has improved attendance markedly since the last inspection, some pupils' low attendance hampers their academic progress.
- In mathematics, pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to explain how they approach and solve real-life numerical problems.
- Until recently, leaders had not monitored the success of their improvement plans sharply enough.

### 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?

- Continue to develop strategies to improve the attendance of pupils.
- Improve teaching in mathematics by ensuring that pupils have opportunities to apply their knowledge to solving real-life problems.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - improvement plans provide precise actions to show what will be achieved at key points
  - leaders continue to monitor sharply the outcomes of their actions.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The headteacher is determined that pupils receive the best education possible. Staff share this approach, and a teacher representing the views of others said, 'We want pupils to do well, get better and move on.' The school, attached to a hospital for children with social, emotional and mental health issues, has been developed to provide pupils with a stable environment where they make good progress.
- Leadership has been strengthened recently with the appointment of a head of education and a special educational needs case coordinator. They serve Knole Development Centre and two other schools that are part of Cygnet Healthcare Ltd. These leaders have introduced highly effective guidance and quality assurance processes. This has resulted in increased impetus in recent times, leading to improvement in the curriculum and standards.
- Staff morale is high. They feel well supported by leaders. Training across all three partner schools helps staff to share expertise and develop knowledge and skills within this highly specialised setting. Regular training provided by the special educational needs case coordinator is received well by teachers. Staff say their skills have improved with this expert support. Recently appointed teachers speak positively about their induction training. The head of education and headteacher have introduced robust performance management procedures and provide regular feedback to teachers. Leaders support teachers' development well. Teachers and other staff say they are valued and feel part of a strong team.
- Leaders provide a flexible curriculum. A core curriculum of English, mathematics and science is supplemented by a wide range of additional subjects. Key stage 4 pupils continue to follow their option courses, started at their previous school to which most return when they have recovered from their illness. Teachers and other staff develop successful communication with other professionals in pupils' former schools so that pupils are supported effectively. Leaders waste no time in developing programmes for pupils to follow so they achieve well.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong and is embedded throughout the curriculum, particularly through well-designed personal, social, health and economic education lessons. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They understand the importance of tolerance and respect for those with characteristics that differ from their own.
- Staff enrich the curriculum through visits, such as trips to the cinema to see a film after studying a book in the extra-curricular book club. Pupils have also visited a local zoo to supplement learning.
- Leaders' high-quality communication with hospital staff ensures that the school provides seamless support for pupils. Communication is regular with parents, including phone calls and reports that show pupils' progress in their emotional well-being and academic study. Parents and careers are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. Parents' comments included, 'Staff go the extra mile and have built my child's confidence' and, 'Staff certainly do their best to give pupils exactly what they need.'

- The school does not receive the funding for disadvantaged pupils. Support is highly individualised for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged.
- Leaders have begun to sharpen how they find out about the success of their actions. Until recently, leaders' plans were not precise enough and some actions did not result in swift enough improvements.
- At the time of the inspection, there were few pupils in the sixth form. While leaders have recently developed a pathway approach to the sixth-form provision as a response to the last inspection report, there has not been opportunity yet to demonstrate the effect of the new curriculum on students' progress.

## **Governance**

- Governance arrangements are overseen by a national board and members are suitably skilled and experienced. A local governance board, including hospital senior staff, provides close scrutiny of the school's performance.
- Governors require the headteacher to provide them with regular reports that include information about pupils' progress, attendance, safeguarding and well-being. A recent school review identified strengths and areas of improvement that provided further challenge and support to school leaders. Governors monitor school leaders effectively.
- Governors ensure that the independent school standards are met consistently.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have established effective systems to make sure that statutory safeguarding requirements are met. A comprehensive safeguarding policy is available on the school's website, together with other related policies. Leaders' checks made when recruiting staff are recorded in detail in a single central register.
- Leaders have developed a strong safeguarding ethos. The school prides itself on being a safe and secure place so that pupils can thrive. Regular training ensures that staff are kept up to date with the latest advice and guidance.
- Leaders have developed a detailed risk assessment policy that provides helpful guidance to staff about assessing and minimising risk. Written risk assessments covering the school premises and pupils' off-site visits are monitored carefully by the headteacher.
- Pupils say they are safe while they are at school. Parents agree that their child is safe at school.

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

**Good**

- Teachers know their pupils well. They go to great lengths to find out about the pupils' starting points through diagnostic tests and discussion with the pupils' previous schools. Teachers make bespoke, detailed learning plans so that pupils' individual needs are met well. The activities they plan for all abilities provide suitable challenge and support to enable pupils to learn effectively.
- Pupils typically attend the school for a short period of time while they are in hospital care. Leaders have developed a finely tuned assessment system so that pupils' progress can be

measured lesson by lesson. Teachers continually check and record pupils' progress and adapt learning plans if necessary. Teachers and pupils thrive in this highly structured and methodical assessment framework. Teaching is effective and pupils make strong progress across the curriculum.

- The school is well resourced with teaching equipment that supports learning. A wide range of musical instruments supports pupils to demonstrate their musical skills. Communication resources, such as cards and posters, support the needs of pupils with significant autism spectrum conditions.
- Outside facilities, such as a small artificial sports pitch, a gym, an allotment and a recreation area, provide ample opportunities for learning outside the classroom.
- Teachers have focused on strengthening pupils' literacy skills. Across most subjects, teachers have high expectations of standards of writing and provide guidance for pupils to improve if needed. For example, in GCSE examination preparation, pupils are helped to understand the requirements of exam questions and practise writing accurately and with depth about a topic. For example, in science, higher-attaining pupils are guided through physics concepts in a structured way so that answers capture exactly the key points that need to be made to demonstrate understanding.
- The teaching of reading is well developed. A comprehensive library provides pupils with a wide range of stimulating reading material across a selection of genres. Pupils also have access to electronic reading devices with pre-loaded books. Teachers say that pupils read often.
- Teachers across the curriculum, and especially in English, use questioning well to find out what pupils know and can do. They develop pupils' learning well by encouraging pupils to talk and write about their understanding.
- Teaching in mathematics is less well developed. Pupils have not got enough opportunity to explain how they solve real-life problems. Pupils' work shows that while teaching provides models of mathematical calculations and methods, pupils do not explain their approach to solving problems.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders promote care and compassion for pupils very well. Pupils join the school having been admitted to hospital. All staff care deeply for the well-being of pupils. The school has a calm and supportive atmosphere and pupils respond positively, are safe and grow in confidence.
- The hospital therapy team, mental health medical experts and occupational therapists work with teaching staff to provide effective support to pupils while they are at school. Daily briefings enable school staff to understand precisely the day-to-day needs of pupils. Because of excellent communication and shared knowledge between professionals, pupils are well cared for.
- Pupils receive impartial and useful careers advice, especially when they are approaching discharge from hospital. Staff support pupils to consider their next steps, including school,

college and apprenticeships.

- Pupils voice opinions about school organisation in meetings with school and hospital staff. However, leaders have identified that the curriculum does not provide quite enough opportunities for pupils to express their views about wider topics.
- Pupils are proud to be at the school. They say they appreciate having focused support in small classes. Pupils' exit questionnaires state positive feedback about the support they have received while at the school.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders have successfully improved attendance and punctuality. Both have risen rapidly from a very low base at the time of the last inspection. Should pupils feel too anxious to attend school, staff visit them in their hospital ward. Teachers go to great lengths to provide tempting work and activities for pupils. Staff liaise with hospital professionals to emphasise the importance of pupils' attendance at school. Nevertheless, attendance is still too low and, as a consequence, some pupils' educational progress is hampered.
- The school is a haven of calm. There is no disruption in classrooms. Teachers are excellent role models, gently reassuring pupils constantly. Pupils are eager to gain rewards and positive feedback. Staff rarely use sanctions as they are not needed.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Pupils enter the school at different ages and times of the school year, depending on their hospital admission. Many have fragmented education experiences in the recent past. When pupils join, initial assessments identify the exact needs of the pupils and these are thoroughly understood. This meticulous attention to pupils' needs means that once pupils are well enough to attend school, they get off to a flying start.
- Teachers track the progress of pupils rigorously and effectively. This enables any stall in learning to be rectified quickly and learning plans are reworked. As a result, pupils currently in the school are making consistently strong and sometimes rapid progress.
- The school has had relatively few pupils leaving the school in recent years in Year 11. Comparisons to national figures cannot be meaningfully made, nor would they be appropriate as pupils have spent a relatively short period of time at the school. Nevertheless, while at the school, many pupils have achieved GCSE qualifications in a range of subjects.
- Pupils have opportunities to follow new courses according to their interest, designed to be completed in a short space of time. Since September, an impressive range of unit qualifications have been achieved across a wide range of subjects, including art, music, humanities and technology.
- Pupils make good gains in their social and emotional development. Leaders and teachers know this to be the case because teachers assess pupils' social and emotional skills in addition to their academic progress. Pupils say that they make good progress while they attend the school and are prepared well for their next stage of education and training.
- Teachers ensure that the most able pupils are appropriately challenged so they keep up

with difficult work. Teachers ensure that work is not too easy and pupils make good progress. Pupils are encouraged by their achievement and gain much satisfaction from their work at school.

- Pupils with moderate learning difficulties are well supported. Teachers focus successfully on improving pupils' literacy, numeracy and wider skills.

## School details

Unique reference number	140960
DfE registration number	886/6142
Inspection number	10039168

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 special school
Age range of pupils	12 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	7
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	2
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Nicky Macleod (Cygnet Healthcare Ltd)
Headteacher	Glen Wilkinson
Annual fees (pro rata)	£29,445
Telephone number	01732 763491
Website	<a href="http://www.cygnethealth.co.uk/locations/cygnet-hospital-godden-green/knole-development-centre">www.cygnethealth.co.uk/locations/cygnet-hospital-godden-green/knole-development-centre</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:knoledevelopmentcentre@cygnethealth.co.uk">knoledevelopmentcentre@cygnethealth.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	30 September–24 November 2015

## Information about this school

- Knole Development Centre is a small special school for pupils who attend the on-site Cygnet Hospital. It is located in a rural setting in the Kent Weald.
- The school is part of Cygnet Healthcare Ltd which runs hospitals across the country and three schools. The proprietor of the school is also the chief executive of Cygnet Healthcare Ltd.
- The school caters for pupils who have a mental illness in addition to behaviour, emotional



and social difficulties, or autism spectrum disorder.

- The school is registered for 24 pupils aged 12 to 18 years. Currently only seven pupils attend the school as part of the hospital is closed for refurbishment. There are two students in the sixth form.
- The school opened in May 2014. This is the school's second Ofsted inspection.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector met with the headteacher, Cygnet Healthcare's head of education, the special education case coordinator and two groups of staff. The inspector held a telephone discussion with the proprietor. A meeting took place with two representatives of the local governance board.
- Telephone conversations were held with a number of parents.
- The inspector toured the school with the headteacher. Pupils and staff were observed working in lessons and around the school. Current and past pupils' work from a range of subjects was scrutinised. The inspector spoke with pupils during lessons and a lunch break.
- The inspectors looked at a number of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, information relating to the attendance of pupils, safeguarding documents and minutes from national and local governors' meetings.

## Inspection team

Sue Child, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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