

# Cressex Lodge School (SWAAY)

Independent school standard inspection report

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## Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended 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.<sup>1, 2</sup>

## Information about the school

Cressex Lodge School (SWAAY) is an independent day school located in a village near Bracknell. It is part of a residential provision which provides both education and therapeutic treatment and it operates collaboratively as part of a therapeutic community provided by SWAAY Child and Adolescent Services Ltd. The school opened in 1994 and it is registered for up to 18 boys, aged between 11 and 16 years, who have specific social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. There are currently nine boys on roll aged between 12 and 16 years, some of whom have moderate, specific and complex learning difficulties. There are five students with a statement of special educational needs. Students come from all over the world but mainly from the United Kingdom and all are under the care of their respective local authority. Students join the school with a history of interrupted schooling and generally remain at the school for a minimum of two years. The school was last inspected in June 2009. It has been under new ownership since September 2011. Following the retirement of the previous headteacher in 2011, a new headteacher was appointed in September 2012.

The school aims:

'to work together to support the whole development of each young person towards responsible adulthood. Through practice based on the SWAAY philosophy we offer the highest levels of care; an individualised curriculum for each young person to reach his full educational potential and a personalised programme for each to improve his social and emotional skills.'

## Evaluation of the school

Cressex Lodge School (SWAAY) provides a satisfactory quality of education and partially meets its aims. Students enjoy school and make satisfactory progress in their academic learning as a result of a satisfactory curriculum and satisfactory teaching. They make good progress in their spiritual and moral development due to the combined impact of the good therapeutic curriculum and the arts. Although some students behave extremely well, behaviour is satisfactory overall. While students feel well cared for by the staff, the provision for their welfare, health and safety is inadequate as a result of gaps in safeguarding arrangements that include deficiencies

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<sup>1</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents).

<sup>2</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents).

in health and safety procedures. The school has not made as much progress as expected since the last inspection and does not meet a number of regulations for independent schools.

## **Quality of education**

The satisfactory curriculum has some strengths, the main one being the therapeutic curriculum led by a multi-disciplinary team. The information from a wide range of initial psychological assessments of each student is summarised for school use to inform pastoral care and educational provision. Well-established daily routines give students and residential and school staff the opportunity to share information to ensure close monitoring of students' emotional state. Students benefit from a tailor-made programme of speech and language therapy and one-to-one support that focuses on developing their communication skills. Students develop a broad range of basic skills through courses leading to AQA entry level certificates and GCSEs, as well as through the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN). The curriculum includes all the required areas of learning with an appropriate focus on English, mathematics and science to prepare students for their next stage of education or working life. There is good provision for students' personal, social, health and citizenship education. Students receive adequate careers advice to help them make informed decisions about their future. Physical education (PE) is timetabled four days per week and consists of a suitable range of sports. The curricular provision has the flexibility to fast-track gifted and talented students. Good quality individual educational plans support students' learning very effectively.

However, there are shortcomings in the curricular provision. With the withdrawal of geography, history and modern foreign languages in the past 12 months or so, the curriculum has narrowed. Despite the recent re-introduction of history, the curriculum fails to fulfil the requirement of the statements of special educational needs of some students to have access to the full National Curriculum. The provision for developing reading skills is satisfactory but not structured into a coherent programme and not sufficiently resourced. Consequently, students who join with reading skills well below their chronological age make satisfactory rather than good progress in reading. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used in some subjects but overall insufficiently to support students' learning, owing to an inadequate number of computers. While some schemes of work are well constructed, others are insufficiently detailed to support the teaching, particularly in English, theatre studies and ICT. There are no schemes of work for history. The information on the curriculum covered by each student in every subject is not collated centrally, which does not help in facilitating monitoring activities.

Teaching and assessment are satisfactory overall. While there are examples of good teaching in the school, there are significant weaknesses in the assessment framework. Staff say that they are eager to develop their teaching skills. Students appreciate the positive relationships established by staff in lessons and, when asked what they like best about the school, they reply, 'the teachers, they are kind and helpful.' The staff command respect and promote good behaviour in lessons. Very small groups enable teachers to know their students well. Staff generally use very

effective questioning that deepens students' understanding of topics and assesses their learning. Where the teaching is good, it is based on high expectations of what students can achieve; good subject knowledge; clear learning objectives and desired outcomes; as well as tasks, methods and resources that match students' needs and prior attainment closely and challenge students to excel. Tutors and teachers deployed as 'helpers' are briefed thoroughly and actively support individual students' learning. These lessons are conducted at a brisk pace and students cover a good amount of work and make good progress. Where the teaching is satisfactory, it has good features but also specific weaknesses. Learning objectives are not always clear and lesson plans focus on what students will do without identifying precisely what they are intended to learn. In other instances, students' creative and investigative skills are restricted by an overuse of worksheets; or time is not used wisely and the pace of learning drops; or there are missed opportunities to engage students in self- or peer-assessment; or the helper is not deployed effectively. In such lessons, students only make satisfactory progress. On occasions, where the teaching is weaker, the tasks planned meet the needs of some students loosely and only partially meet the needs of others. As a result, most students progress at a satisfactory rate but others do not make the expected progress.

Teachers assess students' attainment every term using the level descriptors of the National Curriculum in most subjects. However, the method of recording these assessments does not give a clear picture of students' rate of progress over time. Some teachers involve students in the assessment of their own learning by giving them constructive verbal feedback, helpful written comments and termly opportunities to check their progress against attainment targets. However, this good practice is not consistent throughout the school. Furthermore, while some teachers' assessments are secure, other staff are insufficiently supported in developing their expertise to ensure accuracy when judging the standards attained. The range of baseline assessments is insufficiently broad to inform teachers of students' prior attainments with precision when they join the school. Not all teachers use the available information with sufficient rigour when planning work for individual students. Consequently, when students join the school, they work through tasks that match their needs either broadly or closely in some lessons but insufficiently so in others. As a result, and despite some good teaching, students, including those who have specific learning difficulties, make satisfactory progress over time in relation to their varying starting points. They leave school with a sufficient range of qualifications to be able to further their education or find work.

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

While students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall, their spiritual and moral development is good. Students enjoy school and their attendance is excellent. The therapeutic curriculum, combined with creative subjects, makes a strong contribution to developing students' self-knowledge and self-esteem. Students reflect on their behaviour, emotions and learning during handover sessions at the beginning and the end of the school day, and during lessons. They learn to use their imagination and to express themselves in art, music and theatre studies and develop high levels of self-confidence and good

communication skills when participating in school productions. Their strong sense of right and wrong is reflected in their respect for staff and for their learning environment. Students are polite and considerate. They respect space boundaries and most wait for their turn to speak in meetings. Students' behaviour is satisfactory overall and it contributes positively to learning. Some students display exemplary behaviour and have a calming influence on others who struggle to behave well at all times.

Students' social and cultural development is satisfactory. Students interact positively with staff. They learn to negotiate with others when relationships become uneasy through collective meetings in which they gradually resolve conflict in a socially acceptable manner. Where students have opportunities to work together, for example in theatre studies, they develop good team work and social skills. However, these opportunities are limited. Students' cultural and multicultural awareness is fostered through the curriculum, especially the arts. However, their knowledge is not enhanced by educational visits. Students learn about British institutions mainly in citizenship, and they visit the local library and sports centres. However, they have no opportunities to practise citizenship.

## **Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

While the staff provide good day-to-day care, gaps in safeguarding arrangements mean that the provision for students' welfare, health and safety is inadequate. Staff do not receive the appropriate level of training in child protection at the required intervals. While suitable risk assessments are carried out for outings and activities, there are no risk assessments of the premises. Consequently, some risks have been unidentified. Staff are helped to manage students' behaviour without the use of restraint by a detailed behaviour policy, protocols and recent training. However, not all staff have the confidence to deal with challenging behaviour. Incidents are recorded regularly but not sufficiently analysed to further improve students' behaviour. Students report that there are few instances of bullying. However, this area of the school's work is not supported by an up-to-date policy. There is a correctly maintained attendance register but no admission register. The procedures for first aid, fire safety and checking the references and medical fitness of staff meet requirements. Students feel safe because they are well supervised and they trust the staff to deal with any concern effectively. Students' awareness of healthy lifestyles is fostered through the curriculum, fruit snacks, staff support at break times and frequent opportunities to exercise vigorously.

## **Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors**

The school has robust recruitment procedures. All the required checks are carried out on staff and proprietors before confirmation of their employment and they are suitably recorded in a single central register. Personnel files are meticulously maintained.

## **Premises and accommodation at the school**

The premises provide pleasant and well-maintained teaching accommodation that enables effective learning to take place. Interesting displays of students' work enliven the learning environment. Although all upper floor windows are fitted with devices that restrict their opening, students' safety is at risk because the devices were found to be ineffective. The school makes good use of local sports facilities but under-uses the spacious garden.

## **Provision of information**

The school does not provide all of the required information for parents, carers and placing authorities. The regulations not met are listed at the end of this report.

## **Manner in which complaints are to be handled**

The complaints procedures do not meet some of the requirements that are listed at the end of this report.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.<sup>3</sup>

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the quality of education provided (standards in part 1) and must:

- ensure that there are appropriate plans and schemes of work for English, history, geography, theatre studies, a modern foreign language and ICT and that the curriculum policy is implemented effectively (paragraph 2(1))
- where students have a statement of special educational needs, ensure that the education provided fulfils its requirements (paragraph 2(2)(e))
- ensure that the teaching involves well-planned lessons, effective teaching methods, suitable activities and appropriate management of class time (paragraph 3(c))
- ensure that teachers show a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the students, and that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons (paragraph 3(d))
- provide resources that are sufficient in quantity, quality and range for the teaching of reading and provide a sufficient number of computers to support students' learning and develop their ICT skills (paragraph 3(f))
- ensure that there is a framework in place to assess students' work regularly and thoroughly, and that information from such assessment is utilised to plan teaching so that students can make progress (paragraph 3(g)).

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<sup>3</sup> [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1997/contents/made](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1997/contents/made).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for welfare, health and safety of students (standards in part 3) and must:

- ensure that arrangements made to safeguard and promote the welfare of students at the school have full regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State by ensuring that all staff receive the appropriate level of training in child protection at the required intervals (paragraph 7)
- ensure that there are effective procedures to prevent bullying which have regard to DfE guidance by updating the anti-bullying policy (paragraph 10)
- ensure that there are effective measures to ensure students' health and safety which have regard to the DfE guidance by preparing a thorough risk assessment of the premises and fitting all windows on the first and second floors with devices that effectively restrict their opening (paragraph 11)
- prepare an admission register which is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 17).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the provision of information (standards in part 6) and must:

- ensure that the following information has been provided to parents, carers, parents and carers of prospective students and, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate:
  - the school's address and telephone number
  - where the proprietor is a corporation or a body of persons, the address and telephone number of its registered or principal office (paragraph 24(1)(a)).
- ensure that the following information has been made available to the persons named above:
  - particulars of the school's policy on and arrangements for admissions, discipline and exclusions
  - particulars of educational and welfare provision for students with statements of special educational needs and for students who speak English as an additional language
  - particulars of the curriculum policy of the school
  - particulars of policies relating to bullying, health and safety, the promotion of good behaviour, and sanctions adopted in the event of students misbehaving
  - particulars of the arrangements for tackling bullying, and for promoting students' health and safety on the school premises and on educational visits
  - particulars of academic performance during the preceding school year, including the results of any public examinations
  - details of the complaints procedure adopted by the school, together with details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year
  - the number of staff employed at the school, including temporary staff, and a summary of their qualifications (paragraph 24(1)(b))

- ensure that the safeguarding policy is posted on the school website (paragraph 24(1)(c))
- where a student who is registered at the school is wholly or partly funded by the local authority, ensure that an annual account of income received and expenditure incurred by the school in respect of that pupil is submitted to the local authority and on request to the Secretary of State (paragraph 24(1)(h)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the manner in which complaints are to be handled (standards in part 7) and must:

- ensure that the complaints procedures:
  - provide that if the parents and carers are not satisfied with the response to a written complaint, there is provision for the establishment of a hearing before a panel appointed by the proprietor of at least three people who have not been directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint (paragraph 25(f))
  - provide that where there is a panel hearing of a complaint, there is provision that one person on the panel is independent of the management and running of the school (paragraph 25(g))
  - allow for parents and carers to attend the panel hearing and, if they wish, to be accompanied (paragraph 25(h))
  - provide for the panel to make findings and recommendations and stipulate that a copy of the findings and recommendations are: sent by electronic mail or otherwise given to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about; and available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the headteacher (paragraph 25(i))
  - provide that correspondence, statements and records of complaints are to be kept confidential (paragraph 25(k)).

## Inspection judgements

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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## School details

<b>School status</b>	Independent		
<b>Type of school</b>	Day school for students with specific social, emotional and behavioural difficulties		
<b>Date school opened</b>	May 1994		
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16 years		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys		
<b>Number on roll (full-time pupils)</b>	Boys: 9	Girls: 0	Total: 9
<b>Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs</b>	Boys: 5	Girls: 0	Total: 5
<b>Number of pupils who are looked after</b>	Boys: 9	Girls: 0	Total: 9
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£850 per week		
<b>Address of school</b>	Cressex Lodge, Terrace Road South, Binfield, Bracknell, RG42 4DE		
<b>Telephone number</b>	01344 862221		
<b>Email address</b>	cx@swaay.co.uk		
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Snape		
<b>Proprietor</b>	SWAAY Child and Adolescent Services Ltd		

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**

28 September 2012

Dear Students



### **Inspection of Cressex Lodge School (SWAAY), Binfield, RG42 4DE**

Thank you for your welcome and the help that you gave me when I visited your school. I enjoyed talking to you and observing you at work. You told me that you enjoy school a lot and that you appreciate having teachers 'who are kind and helpful'. I was impressed by your excellent attendance. Your behaviour is satisfactory overall and some of you behave extremely well. I found that your school provides you with a satisfactory quality of education but safeguarding arrangements are not robust enough.

These are the things I liked best about your school:

- The support you receive from the therapy team and school staff, along with art, music and theatre studies, helps you to know yourself better, to know right from wrong and to develop self-esteem, self-confidence and good communication skills.
- The curriculum gives you a choice of qualifications that helps you move on to college or find a job.
- Your teachers enable you to make satisfactory progress and some of you make good progress in some subjects.

To make your school better than it is, I have asked your headteacher to:

- ensure that all staff receive the required child protection training and that all weaknesses in matters of welfare, health and safety are remedied
- give you the opportunity to learn a wider range of subjects and trips, and to have access to a sufficient number of computers and reading books
- ensure that teachers always use detailed plans and the best teaching and marking strategies to help you to make at least good progress
- ensure that the school publishes all the information required for different persons and that it updates its complaints and anti-bullying policies.

You can help your school to achieve this by continuing to attend school every day and working hard.

Yours sincerely

Michèle Messaoudi  
Lead inspector