



Vranch House School Self Evaluation Form (SEF) 2017-18

December 2017



Previous Inspection

(Conducted under the Ofsted 2013 Independent School Inspection framework)

Date of last Ofsted Inspection:		7–9 July 2015
Judgment areas from last Inspection	Grade	Comments for improvement from last Ofsted
Leadership and management	2 - Good	<i>{No qualifying statement made against this judgment in that Ofsted report}</i>
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1 - Outstanding	
Quality of teaching	2 - Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Some teachers do not plan and provide activities that are challenging enough for all pupils.</i> ▪ <i>Classroom staff do not always use all forms of communication, especially signing, gestures and other helpful cues, when speaking to pupils. This limits their understanding and, thus, their progress</i>
Achievement of pupils	2 - Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>School staff do not promote pupils' individual learning goals consistently throughout the day, particularly their communication skills</i>
Early years provision	1 - Outstanding	



Self-Evaluation – Autumn 2017 (Using the current Ofsted 2016 Independent School Inspection framework)

Overall Effectiveness is: **Good+**

What has been done to maintain or improve this area this year?

- Head of Education (HoE) and Head of Therapies (HoT) facilitating and ensuring joint working
- Development of the VIEW Curriculum
- Development of Earwig Academic as evidence capture, assessment and parent engagement tool
- Maintained focus on Teaching & Learning Observations and Performance Management Supervisions
- All staff received Safeguarding and Child Protection training to Level 3
- Both Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) trained to Safeguarding and Child Protection Level 6
- Introduction of Performance Management Supervision for HLTAs
- Wellbeing Supervisions introduced for teachers and HLTAs
- Vranch House compliance with the Independent School Standards (2016) audited and found to be fully compliant

What have the impact of these changes been?

See each judgement area below

This area is not yet Outstanding because:

We still have two or more judgement areas at 'Good', see below.

Effectiveness of Leadership and Management is: **Outstanding**

What has been done to maintain or improve this area this year?

A new Head of Education (HoE) was appointed for September 2016 and has worked hard to maintain all the excellent practice already in place at Vranch House, whilst simultaneously drawing closer together the work of Education staff and Therapists to deliver more joined-up provision.

Through dialogue with teachers and therapists, it was decided that 5 formal teaching inputs per day of last academic year was no longer appropriate. Our pupils require ample time to transition between lessons, assist in personal hygiene and eating routines and process new information; the 5-session day did not allow sufficient time for many of these essential functions to be performed and still provide effective learning in every session. The number of formal inputs per day has been reduced on class timetables to 3 per day.

The HoE reviewed at length the needs profile of Vranch House pupil cohorts and found the curriculum model and assessment tools being used were inadequate in meeting the unique needs our pupils. With the Teachers and Therapists, the HoE reviewed curriculum models used by other leading schools and defined three key 'domains' and seven areas development that replace traditional 'subjects'. From this basic premise, the VIEW Curriculum has been devised and details can be found in our 'Curriculum Policy' and under the **Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment section** of this self-evaluation document.)



Effectiveness of Leadership and Management

(Continued from previous page)

In 2016, the Standards & Testing Agency recommended that schools discontinue their use of the P-Levels for assessing the progress of pupils who are working below the standard of the national curriculum tests (Rochford 2016). The seven 'Aspects of Cognition and Learning' for assessment for pupils with severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties (SLD/PMLD) are met by the VIEW Curriculum as detailed in the matrix below:

		VIEW Curriculum						
		Language & Social communication	Understanding and using language	Self-Advocacy	Physical wellbeing	Working towards independence	Integrating the senses	Exploration and creativity
Aspects of Cognition & Learning	Responsiveness	X	X	X	X		X	X
	Curiosity	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Discovery	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Anticipation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Persistence	X	X	X	X	X		
	Initiation	X	X	X		X	X	X
	Investigation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

In Sept 2017 the HoE and Head of Therapies (HoT) delivered whole school INSET on a 'One Vranch' approach on how **all** staff at Vranch House need view their delivery of service as 'Vranch House staff' in the first instance, as opposed to a historically held view of being a 'therapist' or 'teacher' first and foremost. This is an essential part of the making the VIEW curriculum truly effective: shared practice, objective setting, assessment and review/reporting.

HoE attended training event for Operation Encompass and disseminated the core messages and actions from having signed-up to this to all key staff involved.

In response to the sad passing away of three of our pupils with life limiting medical conditions, the HoE reviewed the mechanism by which information surrounding these events is shared with staff, pupils and parents, as well as how the management team support and facilitate the grieving process. The HoE arranged for colleagues from Little Bridge House (a respite provision with a specialism in child bereavement) to come and facilitate an open discussion with Vranch House staff around bereavement and grief. Based on feedback from this input by Little Bridge House staff, and wider reading, the HoE met with the HoT and Chief Executive of Vranch House and subsequently wrote a one-page protocol for an agreed response to news of the death of a pupil. Furthermore, detailed guidance was written by the HoE on how, as Vranch House staff, we will cope with grief and move past our bereavement thereafter.

What have the impact of these changes been?

All of the requirements in the Independent School Standards continue to be met at Vranch House. The Management Team have created a whole organisation culture that focusses on meeting the needs of the pupils we serve as well as supplying well-scaffolded challenges to help them excel in their development.



Governors and Trustees have continued to supply challenge and support to all new initiatives brought in last academic year and have an accurate and informed view of the satisfaction of the staff, parents and (where obtainable) pupils who comprise the primary stakeholders in Vranch House School.

Practice, vigilance and recording with respect to Safeguarding in the School are all Outstanding; **all** staff are trained above national expected standards. Record keeping, including significant events and body maps, is comprehensive and concerns acted upon in a timely manner by the Designated Safeguarding Officers. Key staff are aware of our duties as a partner school under Operation Encompass.

Staff now feel reassured that they will be informed and supported in a timely fashion in the event of the death of a pupil. We now have a protocol and guidance for staff that are transparent and practicable, this has also reinforced staff confidence in Management Team

Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment is: Good+

What has been done to maintain or improve this area this year?

In order to achieve the wide spectrum of aims and aspirations for our pupils at Vranch House, as set out in our 'Curriculum Policy', we have continued to develop the 'Vranch Independence Education and Wellbeing (VIEW)' Curriculum. It is important to note that the staff at Vranch House are working hard to depart from a divided model of Education versus Therapy and subject-driven methods of teaching.

In tandem with the continual development of this new curriculum the HoE has continued to explore Earwig Academic as an evidence capture and assessment tool for use with the VIEW Curriculum target cache. This software is app-based and can be run from the laptop and tablet devices already in use in classrooms. This software is part of a move away from labour-intensive paper forms of recording and assessments that are also unwieldy to produce data and reports from. The VIEW curriculum has now been loaded into the assessment area of Earwig Academic and is now used daily to mark progress against VIEW objective alongside evidence capture, in a one-step record and assess entry.

After a small sample trial, the HoE invited all parents of Vranch House pupils to request a unique login so that they could view their child's progress and achievement each day, in near-real-time.

Working with the teachers to retain the best of prior effective practice, all long term, medium term and weekly lesson planning formats have been revised and standardised across the school. A non-punitive, but development-focussed schedule of Teaching & Learning Observations has been introduced this academic year, by the HoE. Teachers are guided in the Autumn term to conduct Peer Observations to better understand each other's skills and knowledge, reflecting on their own practice and creating opportunity for meaningful informal professional dialogue around day-to-day classroom practice.



What have the impact of these changes been?

The VIEW Curriculum has been stated by teachers, parents, governors and trustees as a major improvement to provision at Vranch House. It has led to a more needs-led approach to target setting and delivery within teaching sessions; as a result, learning goals are now both more appropriately challenging and achievable.

As of November 2017, all parents and carers of Vranch House pupils have unique logins and +70% of parents and carers regularly access, and comment on, their child's 'timeline' (the live repository for their child's evidence record) within Earwig Academic.

Therapists have used VIEW and Earwig to co-locate their programs of work with pupils, which has led to teachers and education staff carrying out 'therapy' interventions as they are no longer viewed as 'separate' to 'education' objectives; they are part of the same unified curriculum.

Revisions to curriculum and planning expectations have led to a far clearer flow in planning and delivery of thematic based teaching and learning that is focussed around the needs and interests of our pupils, rather than being subject target-driven. With renewed clarity of teaching focus and improved tools to plan for, and capture, individual progress more time is available for pupils to apply what they have learnt and practice key skills.

Renewed focus on rounds of Teaching & Learning Observations, particularly the use of Peer Observations, as part of a 'Community of Best Practice' has led to teachers becoming more whole-school orientated in their thinking, as opposed to focussing solely on their own class.

This area is not yet Outstanding because:

The VIEW curriculum is still in development as it has only been fully implemented over the Spring and Summer terms 2017, as has the use of Earwig Academic to record and assess progress against this curriculum. Review of the use of these initiatives has so far proven that teaching and learning is indeed more pupil focussed; evidence being captured on Earwig Academic is appropriate and of high quality, with insightful commentary and sound use of the VIEW curriculum assessment grids.

Personal Development, Behaviour & Welfare is: Outstanding

What has been done to maintain or improve this area this year?

The new VIEW Curriculum introduced at Vranch House includes '*Emotional and Social advocacy*', '*Physical wellbeing*' and '*Working towards independence*' as key 'areas of development'. This curriculum has been devised to assess and meet the individual and unique needs of our pupils as well as maintain the appropriate level of learning challenge. See also 'PSHE in the VIEW curriculum' document produced by the HoE to demonstrate how this curriculum meets the PSHE and RSE requirements set out by the DfE.

All parent and pupil feedback received via questionnaires, annual reviews and other meetings indicate that pupils are happy with the care and education they receive and enjoy attending the School.



A large number of our pupils have acute medical needs, which can lead to short stays in hospital, recurrent ill health and they also attend respite provision during term time. Outside of these 'force majeure' factors, attendance remains high.

All staff at Vranch House, from the Heads of Education and Therapy to Mealtime Assistants and Admin staff receive Safeguarding and Child Protection training to Level 3 on an annual basis. The Heads of Therapy and Education (Kate Moss and Ian Norton respectively) are the Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) at Vranch House and complete Safeguarding and Child Protection Level 6 training. Both of the DSOs hold regular Supervisions with their respective staff in which the 'wellbeing' of the teachers/therapists themselves and the pupils and families with which they work is discussed. The HoE undertook training in Operation Encompass and is the main point of contact at the school for reports of domestic violence.

All of our Teachers and Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs) have undertaken online training to ensure they understand the requirements of the PREVENT duty. All staff, led by the teachers and HLTA, act as key advocates for the School in identifying individuals potentially at risk of being approached by radical or extremist groups.

There have been no incidences of bullying this academic year and challenging behaviours have been exhibited by only 1 pupil. The class staff of the pupil in question have been trained in the Antecedent, Behaviour and Consequence (ABC) model of behaviour management and work proactively to remove and minimise the antecedents of this pupil's behaviours.

What have the impact of these changes been?

See above '**Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment**' for the impacts of the VIEW curriculum. Staff feel secure in their ability to safeguard the wellbeing and safety of our pupils and themselves. In the case of the pupil who can exhibit challenging behaviour, excellent teamwork between the class staff, HoE and external professionals has kept disruption in effective learning to an absolute minimum in that class.

Outcomes for Pupils are: Good+

What has been done to maintain or improve this area this year?

As part of the process for drawing up the School Development Plan, the HoE undertook a scrutiny of the setting of targets for Annual Review and the achievement against these targets (Pupil Outcomes), in the academic year 2015-2016. All such targets can be assessed a having been:

- 'Achieved' - all areas of the target have been met
- 'Partially Achieved' - some but not all aspects of the target have been met
- 'Not Achieved' – no aspects of the target have been met



Outcomes for Pupils

(Continued from previous page)

The HoE has set the goal for the forthcoming academic year to increase the number of targets 'Achieved' and reduce the number of 'Partially Achieved' targets by working closely with the teachers to ensure all targets set are observable, focussed in term of progress anticipated and realistically achievable within an academic year (or with few exceptions, by the end of a Key Stage). The HoE has also been working with staff to reduce the number of 'Not Achieved' targets by ensuring outcomes are not critically dependent on a pupil being in full health for the whole academic year. These goals appear as action points in the School Development Plan 2016-17. The introduction of the VIEW Curriculum has started a renewed approach to setting and delivering outcomes for pupils: this is now needs-led, as opposed to P-Level or subject-driven.

What have the impact of these changes been?

Although it is still too-early to evaluate the impact of the work that has gone into addressing the writing of Outcome statements for pupils, the HoE anticipates far fewer 'Partially Achieved' and a reduction in 'Not Achieved' targets and therefore an increase in Outcomes fully 'Achieved' at the review point of this School Development Plan action for development, in May/June 2018. Outcomes are all now pupil-centred and focus on the acquisition/maintenance of skills that are most important to the individual pupil and their families. This approach now ensures that pupils are constantly working within their 'zone of proximal development' (Vygotsky, L. S. 1978) and are well prepared for each next stage in their learning and development.

This area is not yet Outstanding because:

See comments as per '**Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment**' above.

Early Years Foundation Stage provision is: Good+

What has been done to maintain or improve this area this year?

Vranch House remains fully compliant with all Independent School Standards with respect to Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision. To meet the needs of a sudden influx of nursery aged children, we operated a bespoke Nursery class at Vranch House which catered for 4 pupils, between January and July 2017. This provision was staffed with a qualified Nursery Nurse and Teaching Assistants (TAs), as required.

In line with the rest of the school, Safeguarding and Child Protection practice in this provision has been beyond reproach. Any concerns are logged on Significant Event / Body Map forms and a chronology of concerns is kept up to date for each child. There have been no behaviour issues and pupils have been keen to attend this provision, with a low absence rate.



What has been done to maintain or improve this area this year?

(Continued from previous page)

As per the National Curriculum in Key Stage 1 and 2 within rest of the school, the EYFS presents a variety of developmental stages, and ultimately Learning Goals, which refer to 'pseudo-normal' childhood development. Many of these descriptions of development are not appropriate or achievable for those with physical and/or neurological disabilities. As a consequence, the Nursery Nurse experienced difficulty in demonstrating pupil progress against the EYFS, even though our VIEW Curriculum outcomes for these children were achieved and demonstrate they have made clear developmental progress and gained valuable learning this year.

Since September 2017 we have only 2 Nursery aged children; 2 too few to trigger the minimum number of pupils for a bespoke Nursery to be viable. As a result, these children are part of Class 1 with Reception aged children. The Class 1 teacher (who herself is also a qualified Nursery Nurse) has been working with the HoE to map the descriptors within the EYFS developmental stages to the VIEW Curriculum objectives. The aim of this process is to produce a look-up reference tool by which the Class 1/Nursery practitioners can deliver the VIEW curriculum on a day to day basis and periodically and efficiently report on progress against the EYFS, as required.

What have the impact of these changes been?

The capacity for a separate EYFS Nursery provision and continuity of Nursery Nurse expertise at Vranch House continues to ensure a secure start into education for some very fragile children. Having a qualified teacher who is also a qualified Nursery Nurse lead such a small, yet individual group in their daily activities and sessions such as Hydrotherapy, has meant that they have enjoyed a happy mix of 1:1 inputs and chance to socialise and make friends in a larger peer group.

This area is not yet Outstanding because:

Reporting progress against the EYFS is not providing a clear picture of the small-step developments made by our Nursery-age pupils. Within this academic year, the Class 1 teacher and HoE will complete the mapping of the EYFS developmental stages and Learning Goals accurately to the VIEW Curriculum. This should allow for the current Class 1 teacher, and any subsequent teachers, of pupils of EYFS age to accommodate the salient and relevant developmental stages of the EYFS within their delivery of the VIEW Curriculum.



Key judgement Summary

	Inadequate	Requires improvement	Good	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness			✓	
Effectiveness of leadership and management				✓
The quality of teaching, learning and assessment			✓	
Personal development, behaviour and welfare				✓
Outcomes for children and learners			✓	
Early Years Foundation Stage			✓	