

New Forest Small School

1 Southampton Road, Lyndhurst, SO43 7BU

Inspection dates 10–12 December 2014

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management	Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Early years provision	Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- School leaders have not developed a systematic approach to improving the effectiveness of school procedures.
- New systems to monitor and improve the quality of teaching are not fully developed.
- Arrangements to monitor the effectiveness of the early years provision are underdeveloped.
- The school's proprietors have not ensured that all the independent school standards are met.

The school has the following strengths

- School leaders have ensured that teaching is good overall and an effective curriculum is used. This enables students to make good progress with their academic and personal development.
- Students achieve good results in their GCSE examinations, including in English and mathematics. Some do exceptionally well.
- Students, and children in the early years setting, behave well in school.
- Although one independent school standard in this area is not met, arrangements to promote the well-being of students, and children in the early years, are effective and they are safe in school.

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 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements. The details are listed in the full report.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with a day's notice. The inspector observed 10 lessons. Three lessons were jointly observed with one of the headteachers.
- The inspector looked at students' work and spoke to students about it. He held meetings with the senior leaders, staff members and students.
- He looked at documentation including policy statements, schemes of work, teachers' planning and records of students' progress and of staff training.
- The inspector considered the responses of 37 parents and carers who had completed the Ofsted Parent View online questionnaire. Responses from 12 staff were also taken into account.

Inspection team

John Gush, Lead Inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The New Forest Small School is an independent day school for boys and girls aged three to 16 years.
- The school was founded in 1994 as a Montessori pre-school. It aims to tailor its curriculum 'to suit the specific needs of each individual child, ensuring that no child is ever academically left behind or socially excluded'. In addition, the school offers flexi-schooling, designed to support those parents and carers who also home educate their children.
- It is owned and operated by its two headteachers. The school's only middle leader is the leader of the early years provision.
- Currently, there are 74 students on roll. Of these, 21 are children in the early years setting, 18 of whom attend on a part-time basis. There are never more than 14 children in the early years at any one time.
- A further 14 students only attend for part of the school week. These students are educated at home when they are not in school.
- Mixed age classes are used so that students of similar abilities are taught together. This includes the early years setting where some children remain for an additional year.
- One student has a statement of special educational needs. Applications for education and health plans are being made for a further two students. Four others are identified as having special educational needs and each has an individual education plan.
- Students join the school at a variety of ages. For some this follows difficult experiences in previous schools involving school phobia and bullying.
- No students are in the care of their local authority or speak English as an additional language.
- The school does not use any off-site training.
- The school was last inspected in 2011, when its quality of education was judged to be satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality and impact of leadership and management by:
 - developing a more rigorous approach to monitoring and improving the quality of teaching, so that students achieve their best
 - sharpening the school's procedures for checking all aspects of the school's operation, including the students' welfare, health and safety
 - ensuring the independent school standards are met.
- Improve the quality and impact of leadership and management in the early years by developing procedures to monitor the effectiveness of the provision and the achievement of children.
- Improve the quality of teaching in order to further raise students' achievement by:
 - ensuring that all teachers use their knowledge of students' abilities so that the students all learn as well as they should
 - ensuring that all students are encouraged to present and store their work in a neat and orderly manner.
- **The school must meet the following independent school standards**
 - ensure that the school's attendance registers are maintained in the required manner (paragraph 17)
 - ensure that suitable changing facilities and showers are available for students who take part in physical education (paragraph 23A(1) and 23A(1)(c))
 - ensure that the school's accommodation for the short term care of sick and injured pupils includes a washing facility (paragraph 23B(1) and 23B(1)(b))
 - ensure that all the required information is provided or made available for parents, carers and others, including the name and contact address of the school's proprietors (paragraph 24(1) and 24(1)(b))
 - ensure that the school's policy regarding the safeguarding of children is published on the school's website (paragraph 24(1) and 24(1)(c)).

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

require improvement

- The school's leaders have not made sure that all the standards for independent schools are met. The information made available for parents, carers and others does not provide the name and address of the proprietors. The policy about the way the school ensures the safety of students and children in the early years is not published on the school's website. Also, the school's medical room is not fitted with a washbasin and the students do not have access to changing facilities and showers for their games and physical education lessons.
- School leaders have a good knowledge of the school's strengths. However, they do not have a systematic approach to making sure that areas for change and development are identified and that suitable actions are carried out. In addition, they have not set up a procedure to make sure that policies are always rigorously checked and adhered to. As a result, they cannot be sure that the school is consistently providing the best possible opportunities for students' learning and personal development.
- The headteachers gauge the effectiveness of teaching through regular visits to classrooms. They provide valuable advice and guidance to teachers. They have recently started to record the outcomes of these visits. However, the processes to make sure that teachers use the advice they receive are not fully developed. Because of this, teachers do not always get the help they need to improve students' learning and achievement.
- The school's leaders set high expectations for respect, hard work and cooperation from students and teachers alike. They generate a very positive atmosphere for learning and behaviour which leads to the students making good progress and achieving well.
- Students study a broad range of subjects, based on the requirements of the National Curriculum. Because of this, they develop well in a broad range of areas, including their literacy and numeracy skills. The school promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. It is imbued with a strong commitment to fairness, the value of good relationships across the school and no discrimination. This results in students being well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school makes sure that students have a good understanding of their options for further education when they leave and the possibilities for work that are open to them. Students are encouraged to carry out work experience placements. The school makes good use of the knowledge and connections of parents and carers to broaden the range of possible placements for students.
- Appropriate arrangements ensure all students, including children in the early years, are kept safe. One of the headteachers is the designated lead person for safeguarding and she has received the required advanced level training in child protection. In addition, all staff undertake child protection training regularly. The required checks to make sure that all staff members are suitable to work with children meet requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The school has no governors. The headteachers are the proprietors of the school.
 - They are active and committed to promoting the continued development of the school.
 - They have a good range of information about students' achievements. However, they are not able to reward good teaching because they do not gather robust information about the quality of teaching.
 - They have not ensured that checking systems are well enough used so that all the Independent School Standards are met.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good, including children in the early years. They attend school regularly and are usually on time for their lessons and ready to start work.
- They get on well together irrespective of age, gender or background. Students who have transferred from other schools say that this is one of the aspects of the school they appreciate the most. They also form warm, but respectful, relationships with teachers and other staff members. This leads to a good atmosphere in the school that promotes learning and personal development well.
- Students say that bullying is extremely rare and that when it occurs staff deal it with quickly and effectively. They are knowledgeable about the dangers of bullying through mobile phones and social media. Discriminatory language is not heard at the school and students know the reasons why it is to be

avoided.

- Staff promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. As a result, students are self-assured learners who can express their thoughts and opinions with clarity. Lessons in history, religious education and personal, social and health education help them gain an understanding of their own and other cultures. Tolerance and understanding between different sections of the community are promoted effectively.
- Students are active fundraisers. They take the lead in the school's successful work in supporting local and international causes. In history, English and other lessons, students develop useful knowledge and understanding of British values, including the rule of law and democratic principles.
- Students are encouraged to take responsibility for the school environment. They carry out their allotted tasks willingly and this supports the smooth operation of the school well.
- The school has a clearly stated policy that requires all staff members to ensure partisan political views are never promoted.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure requires improvement. This is because the independent school standard that relates to the attendance registers is not met. The registers do not provide clear information about students who are not at school. This means that the school cannot be certain about the whereabouts of students.
- All other standards regarding the welfare, health and safety of students, and the suitability of staff to work with children, are met. As a result, students and children in the early years are safe in school.
- Students say that they feel safe in school. They appreciate the school's emphasis on openness and tolerance, and the fact that they are able to be themselves. They learn how to stay safe whilst using the internet and to avoid danger. Parents and carers appreciate the school's efforts to ensure students' safety.
- Careful arrangements make sure that students are safe when they go on educational outings and visits. Staff are trained in first aid and the procedures necessary to ensure students' health and safety and their safety in the event of fire are correctly carried out.
- Security arrangements are robust. The identity of all visitors to the school is checked and they are signed in and out.

The quality of teaching

is good

- All the Independent School Standards that relate to the quality of teaching are met. The good teaching that results enables students to make good progress.
- While teachers have high expectations of students, they generate a relaxed atmosphere for learning. This enables students to learn at the pace that suits them best. As a result, teachers help them to develop their reading, writing, communication and mathematics skills well across all their subjects.
- Teachers use strong subject knowledge to engage students. They use a good variety of techniques to draw students into their lessons and interest them in the subject matter. This includes homework, which is used well to extend learning.
- Teachers regularly assess students' work, and they gain a valuable understanding of what they know and can do. Most teachers use this information well to plan lessons so that activities are set at the right level. However, in some lessons, students' progress is limited because teachers do not engage all students well enough. As a result, some finish their work quickly and do not know how to go further, whilst others are not able to follow the lesson content.
- Although some students present their work neatly and with care, others are not helped to do so. The folders some students use to keep their work in are scruffy and not well organised. This makes it more difficult for them to take pride in their work and their achievements.
- In many lessons across the school, teachers motivate students well with discussion and debate. They challenge their ideas well. This helps students to develop thinking skills and extend their understanding.
- Learning support workers work alongside students with special educational needs and disabilities. They provide valuable motivation and help students to take an active part in their lessons. This enables these students to make good progress.
- Good communication takes place between teachers and parents and carers. This includes the parents and carers of those students who are partly home educated. This enables all students to supplement their learning at home.

The achievement of pupils**is good**

- Students achieve well and make good use of the school's broad curriculum that provides a suitable range of examination subjects. The Independent School Standards that relate to students' achievement are met.
- The school has devised its own arrangements to measure students' progress as the students move through the school. These show that students make continuous good progress overall. However, they do not allow a comparison to be made with that of other students nationally.
- In Years 10 and 11, all students are prepared for between five and 10 GCSE examinations. These include English, mathematics and science subjects, as well as psychology, music and art. The students achieve well, with some making exceptional progress. A few students take their first examinations in Year 10. This does not hinder progress in other subjects.
- The most able students are highly motivated and respond very well to the opportunities offered at the school. This includes regular individual tutorials and stimulating teaching. Some gain an outstanding range of examination results. These include students who have experienced substantial difficulties with education before joining this school.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs benefit from the attitude of tolerance and respect for all that is promoted by the school. This, together with the additional support they receive, helps them to achieve well in their examinations.
- Students are active in regular music and drama performances and produce good artwork. These opportunities successfully broaden their acquisition of skills and understanding and their academic and personal development.
- All students enjoy regular physical education and they take part actively in the weekly lesson that involves the whole school. This includes a good variety of games, as well as football and basketball. The students develop a good range of skills, including both social interaction and physical prowess.

The early years provision**requires improvement**

- The early years provision requires improvement because leaders and managers have not ensured that all the Independent School Standards are met. In addition, leaders of the early years do not monitor the effectiveness of the provision systematically enough. New arrangements to analyse children's progress and achievements are being developed, but are not yet in regular use.
- Analysis carried out during the inspection indicates that early years children make reasonable progress from their starting points. Although some make good progress, others make less than reasonable progress, especially in the areas of literacy and mathematics. This is because the school is choosing to encourage a very gradual build up of children's abilities in these areas. Some children remain in the early years setting whilst others of their age move to the primary department. Those who remain in the early years setting make good progress overall as they move through the school.
- All children have regular opportunities to develop their awareness of phonics (the sounds letters make). This is valuable in helping children to develop early literacy skills.
- Children with special educational needs and disabilities are carefully monitored so that they receive the support they need as they develop. Good partnership arrangements exist with external professionals to make sure the setting gets relevant expert advice to help them provide tailored support to individual children.
- The setting provides a wide range and balance of learning opportunities. The constraints of the building do not allow children to move freely between indoor and outdoor activities. However, regular outdoor play and learning enable children to develop movement skills and physical health well.
- Good relationships exist between staff members and children, and this enables children to settle well into the life of the school. Children behave well, listen attentively and respond appropriately to questions and requests. They mix well and play together in harmony.
- The staff work well together and this provides a good learning experience that helps children to develop knowledge and skills. This also enables children to build up their speaking and listening skills and to gain the confidence to speak in a group.
- Children are well looked after by the staff members. They are well supervised at all times. Staff take appropriate steps to make sure children are secure in the setting. They carry out regular checks on the premises and resources to ensure children's health and safety.
- Staff members work well with parents and carers and keep them regularly informed about their children's progress in the setting and about their personal development and well-being.

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	136112
Inspection number	447181
DfE registration number	850/6075

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	Independent, co-educational primary and secondary school, with early years provision
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 16 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	74 (no more than 60 at any one time)
Number of part time pupils	32
Proprietor	Nicholas and Ali Alp
Chair	N/A
Headteacher	Nicholas and Ali Alp
Date of previous school inspection	6–7 July 2011
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,040 - £7,920
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