

Woodland Grange School

11 October 2016

Loxwood Road, Cranleigh, Surrey GU6 8HP

Overall outcome

The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2), 2(2)(a), 2(2)(b), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(e), 2(2)(e)(i), 2(2)(e)(ii), 2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(g), 2(2)(h) and 2(2)(i)

- At the last full inspection, the school's curriculum was found not to meet the needs of pupils. There were many omissions and little evidence of policies, schemes of work or planning to deliver a consistent and effective curriculum. The range of subjects taught was not broad and balanced.
- Since the last full inspection, a great deal of work has been undertaken in order to put in place the foundations required to deliver a good or better quality of education at the school. This includes formulating an action plan to address the weaknesses and unmet independent school standards identified at the last full inspection. This plan was approved by the Department for Education in June 2016.
- Fundamental to addressing this part of the independent school standards has been the introduction of a completely new curriculum policy, supported by appropriate schemes of work. These take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of the school's pupils, including learners in the sixth form.
- Specific subject policies underpin the school's commitment to provide pupils with the educational experiences they require. This includes the school's developing 'enterprise' education strand, which focuses on providing pupils with engaging and purposeful experiences of real-life learning through the study of land management and other aspects of rural agriculture. The school's extensive grounds and range of buildings are well suited to this. The recent appointment of a member of staff with specific responsibility for this aspect of the curriculum is evidence of school leaders' commitment to develop this strand of pupils' education.
- Personal, social, health and economic education is supported by the school's new 'enterprise' and more traditional 'humanities' strands of its curriculum. Assemblies that focus on themes such as determination, responsibility, trust and freedom also support the school's work to promote citizenship and link well with ensuring that the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of pupils is met. Simple yet effective initiatives such as rescuing battery-reared hens have already started to have an impact on pupils' attitudes to learning. Records of egg production, linked to sales, and calculating the profits and losses associated with such an enterprise are already engaging pupils and have great potential to be developed further.

- School leaders, all appointed since the last inspection, have a clear vision for moving the school forward. Aspects of the school's curriculum that were not met at the last inspection are now fundamental to the ethos and culture of the school. Respect for others, and a growing understanding of the values of democracy, the rule of law and what it means to be a citizen in modern Britain are all part of the day-to-day life of the school. Because of this, pupils have a growing understanding of the needs and differences of others.
- Careers guidance has been introduced, delivered by a suitably qualified professional, who is independent of the school. The school is particularly keen to ensure that pupils look outward to beyond the school and plan for their next steps. Informal visits to local mainstream schools or colleges have now been introduced, tailored closely to each individual's needs, with a view to allowing pupils to make more informed choices about their next steps in education. This includes learners who are above compulsory school age.

Paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g) and 3(h)

- At the last full inspection, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment was found to be inadequate and did not meet the needs of pupils at the school. Staff were not held to account for pupils' learning.
- Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching has improved. Newly appointed teaching staff, including those who are part of the school's leadership team, are delivering increasingly effective learning opportunities for pupils across the school, including in the sixth form. Because of the high level of need of pupils at the school, most teaching is delivered on a one-to-one basis, or, when appropriate, in small groups.
- Evidence seen in classroom visits, including evidence seen in pupils' books, indicates that systems are now in place to ensure that pupils are receiving a daily timetable of lessons based on the school's new curriculum. Science and mathematics books, in particular, showed work that was pitched at an appropriate level for each individual pupil. In an English lesson, the use of film media engaged a pupil's interest well and careful questioning from the teacher to extend the pupil's use of descriptive language was particularly effective.
- The school's resources have been developed well since the last inspection. The introduction of four new classrooms in the grounds has enabled a more flexible approach to delivering lessons in art and design, for instance. Pupils also benefit from new amenities that form the provision for the school's new 'enterprise' curriculum, with one pupil explaining how he felt that this was definitely a good idea, and that he was looking forward to using the facilities more in the future.
- Most pupils engage well with learning activities and show good attitudes to their work. However, the complex social and emotional needs of some pupils mean that on occasions they are unable to engage with the learning planned for them by staff. Nevertheless, because of good procedures for behaviour management, disruptions to learning are kept to a minimum.
- Because school leaders have been effective in implementing the action plan by introducing a curriculum and framework for delivering a taught timetable, progress has been made in improving the quality of education at the school. However, there has not been time for school leaders to fully assess the impact of their actions, particularly in relation to ensuring consistently good or better teaching, or monitoring the progress pupils are making.

- New systems put in place in the summer of this year are only just beginning to provide leaders with the information required for them to monitor pupils' outcomes. Baseline assessments are now in place, but more time is needed for the quality of education to be judged to be fully effective.

Paragraph 4

- During the last full inspection, systems to monitor pupils' performance and progress over time were found to be ineffective. Leaders' evaluations of the school's effectiveness were inaccurate and did not pay attention to pupils' progress.
- Despite the many recent improvements made by the executive principal and other school leaders, systems to provide evidence of pupils' outcomes are not yet fully established or proven to be effective. Because of this, this paragraph of the independent school standards is not met.
- Because not all standards that were checked in this part of the independent school standards are met, this part of the independent school standards is not fully met.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Paragraphs 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(i), 5(b)(ii), 5(b)(iii), 5(b)(iv), 5(b)(v), 5(b)(vi), 5(b)(vii), 5(c), 5(d), 5(d)(i), 5(d)(ii) and 5(d)(iii)

- At the last full inspection, the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils was found to be ineffective due to the limited provision afforded to this aspect of pupils' education by the school.
- Since the last inspection, school leaders have laid the solid foundations of a new curriculum. Consequently, staff are increasingly effective at providing pupils with a good-quality education. This includes ensuring that the pastoral care and social and emotional well-being of pupils are given a high priority. Because of the complex needs of pupils, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is delivered in a bespoke manner. This aspect of the school's provision is now strong.
- Opportunities to learn about the cultures and faiths of other people are built into the curriculum well. Festivals and celebrations associated with different religions, the Jewish festival of Hanukkah for instance, are now studied as part of the curriculum.
- Events of national importance such as the recent referendum to leave the European Union form part of the school's provision to promote British values and help pupils have a clearer understanding of democracy and the rule of law. Pupils are also encouraged to follow national and international news, with teachers using current affairs as a basis to stir pupils' interest in life in the wider world.
- Pupils are increasingly aware of the impact of their own actions on others, particularly if those actions impact on learning. They are encouraged to analyse their own behaviour in order to reflect and respond to specific situations. One-to-one informal meetings at the start and end of the school day help staff and pupils identify the triggers to poor behaviour.
- Higher expectations from school leaders and teaching staff have also helped reduce the amount of disruption seen in classrooms. School leaders have instilled a culture that promotes tolerance and respect between staff and pupils, even when emotions are running high due to the complex needs of individual pupils. This approach is helping pupils to more readily understand and respect the opinions of others, and the school is a more harmonious place as a result.
- All standards that were checked in this part of the independent school standards are met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 7(a) and 7(b)

- Arrangements to promote the welfare, health and safety of pupils and staff were found to be inadequate at the last inspection. Safeguarding was not effective. Robust systems, records, checks and training to ensure the safety of pupils were not in place.
- Because of the actions of school leaders and the board of directors, arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school are now effective.
- The school's policies and procedures to ensure that pupils are safe are fit for purpose and follow current guidance. The school's safeguarding policy is published on its website. The policy meets current government guidelines. The single central record of checks on the suitability of staff and proprietors is compliant with current legislation and administered effectively.
- Inspection activities to explore the school's day-to-day arrangements to ensure the safety of pupils, including site security and the maintenance of buildings, gave no cause for concern. Staff were able to explain why they feel that pupils are safe and talked about the much improved culture in the school to ensure the safety of pupils. During a formal discussion, a pupil told the inspector that he felt the school was a safe place to be, and that there had been many improvements to all aspects of the school in the last year.

Paragraphs 9, 9(a), 9(b) and 9(c)

- At the last full inspection, expectations of pupils' behaviour were too low. There were no clear strategies to support pupils with challenging behaviour.
- School leaders have introduced a new policy for pupil behaviour. This policy is implemented effectively and understood well by pupils and staff alike. The policy sets out clearly the sanctions available when pupils' behaviour falls short of expectations. School leaders have also ensured that staff have undertaken appropriate training in order help them to intervene and de-escalate instances of poor conduct when they happen.
- Throughout the inspection, most behaviour witnessed was appropriate, especially within classrooms. However, due to the complex social and emotional needs of pupils, some instances of poor behaviour or emotional outbursts from pupils were witnessed. Where this was the case, staff used appropriate strategies to de-escalate situations, ensuring that pupils were safe at all times.
- During the inspection, it was clear that expectations of pupil behaviour are high. The school's own records of sanctions for incidents of serious breaches in behaviour are detailed. Although these records have been introduced since the last full inspection, they already provide evidence of improving behaviour.

Paragraph 10

- At the last inspection, personal development, behaviour and welfare were found to be inadequate. Pupils were found not to be safe from bullying.
- Staff work hard at ensuring that pupils understand the consequences of their actions on others. It is clear to see that the culture of the school actively promotes respect between the pupils themselves. A new anti-bullying policy is in place to help staff and pupils understand what constitutes bullying. School leaders were able to give clear examples of where bullying had occurred in the past, what they had done to stop it, and what actions had been taken to further minimise the risk of bullying.

Paragraph 13

- At the last full inspection, this paragraph of the independent school standards was not met. Robust systems and training to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils were not in place.
- The school's arrangements for ensuring that first aid is administered in a timely and competent manner are sound. Staff have been appropriately trained. Facilities to administer first aid are appropriate. A written first-aid policy is in now in place.

Paragraph 14

- At the last full inspection, it was found that staff were not addressing poor behaviour adequately.
- During the inspection, it was clear to see that relationships between pupils and staff are positive, and that a culture of mutual respect is now developing well across the school. Supervision of pupils at all times of the school day is effective. Routines for the start and end of the school day are sensible and work well. Adaptions to the school site and changes to the way pupils are managed at lunch- and breaktimes ensure that pupils are cared for and supervised in an appropriate manner at all times.
- All standards that were checked for this part of the independent school standards are met.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

Paragraphs 20(1), 20(6), 20(6)(a), 20(6)(a)(i), 20(6)(a)(ii), 20(6)(b), 20(6)(b)(i), 20(6)(b)(ii), 20(6)(b)(iii), 20(6)(c), 20(8), 20(8)(b) and 20(8)(c)

- At the last full inspection, it was found that safeguarding was not effective because robust systems, records and checks were not in place.
- The school's work to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors is effective. The single central record of staff and proprietor checks is administered well and contains all the information required to ensure that this part of the independent school standards is met.

Paragraphs 21(1) and 21(6)

- At the last full inspection, it was found that safeguarding was not effective because robust systems, records and checks were not in place.
- The school's work to ensure the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors is effective. The single central record of staff and proprietor checks is administered well and contains all the information required to ensure this part of the independent school standards is met.
- All standards that were checked in this part of the independent school standards are met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraphs 33, 33(c), 33(d), 33(e), 33(f), 33(g), 33(h), 33(i), 33(i)(i), 33(i)(ii) and 33(j)(i)

- At the last full inspection, it was found that the board of directors had not put into place essential systems, procedures or policies to ensure that complaints were handled in an appropriate manner.
- The school's complaints policy is now fit for purpose and published on the school's website. The policy complies with the requirements of part 7 of the independent school standards.

- During the inspection, the executive principal was able to explain different aspects of the school's policy on handling complaints or parental concerns very well. This included a specific example of a parental concern that had been successfully dealt with since the introduction of the new policy.
- All standards that were checked in this part of the independent school standards are met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)

- At the last full inspection, the quality of leadership and management of the school was found to be inadequate. Many of the independent school standards were not met.
- It is clear that there have been many improvements at the school since the last full inspection. At the root of this have been the changes in the membership of the board of directors, and the appointment of a new executive principal, a new vice-principal and a new senior teacher. Collectively, school leaders have put in place the many changes needed in order for the school to make the rapid improvements that were required. As a consequence, many of the independent school standards that were not met at the previous inspection are now clearly met.
- However, while firm foundations have been put in place, evidence of the impact of these changes on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not yet strong enough to provide sufficient evidence that part 1 of the independent school standards is fully met.
- Because not all of the preceding independent school standards checked in this inspection were met, the standards in part 8 are not met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

Paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e) and 3(g)

- The proprietor must ensure that the teaching at the school:
 - enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught
 - involves well-planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time
 - shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons
 - demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught
 - demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and uses information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress.

Paragraph 4

- The proprietor must ensure that a framework for pupil performance to be evaluated, by reference to the school's own aims as provided to parents or national norms, or to both, is in place.

Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)

- The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school:
 - demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently
 - fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
 - actively promote the well-being of pupils.

School details

Unique reference number	135999
DfE registration number	936/6277
Inspection number	10020613

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	Day special school for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural needs
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	7 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	8
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	2
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Sussex Educare Limited
Chair	Amanda Rogers
Executive principal	Simon Reynolds
Annual fees (day pupils)	£45,000–£86,000
Telephone number	01403 752350
Website	www.woodlandgrangeschool.com
Email address	info@woodlandgrangeschool.com
Date of previous standard inspection	1–3 December 2015

Information about this school

- Woodland Grange is a day school providing education for up to 18 pupils aged between seven and 19 years of age, all of whom have special educational needs relating to behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.
- There are currently eight pupils on roll, aged between nine and 18 years, who all have an education, health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs. All joined the school with challenging behaviour. Some have very complex needs.

- Very few pupils are disadvantaged and qualify for additional funding (for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after).
- Both the executive principal and vice-principal have been in post since January 2016, joining the school after the last full inspection when the school's overall effectiveness was judged to be inadequate.
- There have been a number of changes to the board of directors since the last full inspection.
- There have been a number of changes to teaching and support staff since the last inspection. Most staff at the school have been appointed since the last inspection.
- One learner in the sixth form attends a registered alternative provision on a part-time basis.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- This was the first progress monitoring inspection since the last full inspection.
- As a progress monitoring inspection, this inspection was carried out without notice.
- The school's action plan to address the failings identified in the last full inspection was approved by the Department for Education on 2 June 2016.

Inspection team

Clive Close, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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