

# LVS Oxford

Spring Hill Road, Begbroke, Oxford, Oxfordshire OX5 1RX

## Inspection dates

29 March 2017

### Overall outcome

**The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school provision is implemented**

## Main inspection findings

### Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

#### *Paragraph 7, 7(a) and 7 (b)*

- Safeguarding arrangements are effective. A comprehensive policy for managing safeguarding underpins the work of leaders. The policy is up to date and refers to the latest statutory guidance, including 'Keeping children safe in education', 2016. Leaders publish the policy on the school's website, along with a number of other relevant procedures. There are clear lines of accountability within the safeguarding policy, which staff fully understand and follow diligently. Regular and useful safeguarding training supports the implementation of the policy effectively. For example, staff have been trained in relation to the risk of radicalisation for pupils on the autistic spectrum. Pupils feel safe.
- Leaders undertake a range of effective activities to monitor the implementation of safeguarding. They build on their findings to refine and improve their effectiveness. Consequently, they have already considered the implications of their material change request in relation to their duty to keep pupils safe. Therefore, this standard is likely to remain met if the material change is granted.

#### *Paragraph 11*

- Leaders have adopted an appropriate health and safety policy. Although due for review, the policy is kept up to date. Leaders of education and care work closely with the 'estates team' to make sure that health and safety matters are managed effectively and all statutory responsibilities met. Leaders respond appropriately to incidents when they happen. For example, following an issue where a pupil absconded from the school, leaders amended their risk assessments and made changes to the perimeter of the site to add greater security. Therefore, this standard is likely to remain met if the material change is granted.

#### *Paragraph 12*

- Leaders give fire safety the appropriate priority. The local fire officer has assessed the school's buildings and fire safety practices. He complimented leaders on their effectiveness. The systems for monitoring health and safety ensure that appropriate

checks are carried out on the school's fire alarm, fire extinguishers and emergency lighting. There are appropriate fire exits from all learning and communal spaces. Leaders commission an external company to assess their processes for managing fire safety. They use the feedback they are given to improve their practices further. Leaders have ensured that the school fully complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Refurbished buildings, as part of the school's adaptations in readiness to expand, are appropriately fitted with fire safety features. Leaders are rightly waiting for the fire officer to sign off the new rooms before they begin using them for learning. Therefore, this standard is likely to remain met if the material change is granted.

#### *Paragraph 14*

- Pupils are appropriately supervised in lessons, during breaks and when moving around the school site. Leaders have secure plans to ensure that ratios will continue to be one adult to every four pupils, should the expansion be granted. This ratio is appropriate and generous given that the school serves pupils who are high functioning, including those with Asperger's syndrome. Therefore, this standard is likely to remain met if the material change is granted.

#### *Paragraph 16, 16 (a) and 16 (b)*

- Leaders have adopted and implemented an effective risk-assessment policy. Leaders understand the importance of 'risk versus benefit' assessment. They utilise useful training led by the trust to ensure that staff understand the relevance of assessing and reducing risk. Staff implement the policy well. Risk assessments are in place for the premises, for educational activities and for specific work in the school, such as the self-run kitchen.
- Teachers complete appropriate risk-assessments when organising educational trips and visits. Leaders have already given careful consideration to the potential risks in expanding the numbers of pupils in the school. For example, there are currently a range of break-out spaces where pupils can go when feeling particularly anxious or need to have their sensory needs met. Leaders have clear plans of how they will expand the number of areas across the grounds to meet the likely widening need if they increase their numbers. Therefore, this standard is likely to remain met if the material change is granted.

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

#### *Paragraph 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21*

- Recruitment processes are robust. Leaders work closely with the human resources department of the trust to ensure that policies and procedures are effective. When new staff are appointed, clear systems ensure that all statutory checks are made on their suitability. These checks are recorded appropriately on a single central register. Leaders seek at least two references for new staff from former employers. These are checked against strict criteria. If necessary, leaders follow references up to fill any gaps in the information they have been sent. There are strong systems for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of all safeguarding systems. Therefore, this standard is likely to remain met if the material change is granted.

## Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

### *Paragraph 22*

- The premises and accommodation at the school are excellent. Leaders ensure that the buildings are very well maintained. New classrooms have been created and are near to completion. Leaders have put the safety and needs of the pupils at the forefront of their minds in the design and development of the new rooms. Consequently, the new classrooms are of a very high standard. The classrooms have appropriate lighting. They are very well resourced. For example, a new home-economics learning area has several workstations where pupils can prepare and cook food. Not only will the new spaces make it possible for the school to expand, but they will also allow a significant expansion to the curriculum opportunities available for current pupils. Therefore, this standard is likely to remain met if the material change is granted.

### *Paragraph 23, 23 (1), 23 (1)(a), (b), (c)*

- The school already has extensive, suitable toilet and washing facilities for the sole use of pupils. There are separate toilets and changing facilities for boys and girls. There are appropriate showers available to pupils for use after physical education lessons. There are already sufficient toilets to accommodate an expansion to 98 pupils. Leaders have considered the organisation of the curriculum to ensure that, should the school expand, the numbers needing access to showers at the same time will not increase. Therefore, this standard is likely to remain met if the material change is granted.

### *Paragraph 24 (1), 24 (1)(a), (b), (c), 24 (2), 24 (3)*

- Pupils benefit from a well-resourced medical room. Pupils have access to appropriate areas should they be sick or injured, where they are supervised appropriately. These arrangements will remain regardless of the plans for expansion. Pupils admitted to the school do not have complex needs. Therefore, this standard is likely to remain met if the material change is granted.

### *Paragraph 25*

- The school site is maintained to an exceptionally high standard. The on-site estate manager and his team undertake regular and timely activities to ensure that the buildings remain well maintained. The school opened in September 2014 following extensive refurbishment. The high standard of décor, cleanliness and functionality remain. The new classrooms have been finished to a similarly high standard. Therefore, this standard is likely to remain met if the material change is granted.

### *Paragraph 26*

- Leaders have ensured that all classrooms and learning spaces have appropriate acoustics. This is particularly pertinent because of the sensory needs of many of the pupils. For example, in the dining hall, sound buffers have been installed onto the walls to reduce echo. In the newly created, refurbished classrooms, specialist lighting has been installed to ensure they emit no 'buzz' which would cause pupils with sensory processing issues difficulty. Therefore, this standard is likely to remain met if the material change is granted.

*Paragraph 27, 27(a) and (b)*

- Leaders have ensured that all buildings are lit appropriately for the activities that will take place within them. For example, there are bespoke classrooms for art which have extra lighting. The new, refurbished classrooms are designed for specific activities, including a home-economics learning space with cookers. Appropriate lighting and sources of natural light have been put into each space. The school site has appropriate outdoor lighting. Therefore, this standard is likely to remain met if the material change is granted.

*Paragraph 28 (1), 28 (1)(a), (b), (c), (d), 28 (2)(a), (b)*

- Pupils have access to appropriate drinking water from a range of sources from across the school. All toilets and wash spaces have appropriate supplies of hot and cold water. Drinking water is labelled properly. Hot water poses no risk of scalding. Therefore, this standard is likely to remain met if the material change is granted.

*Paragraph 29 (1)(a) and (b), 29(2), 31(a), (b), and (c)*

- The school is set in extensive grounds. There are plentiful areas for the teaching of outdoor physical education. Leaders ensure that pupils access a range of physical education experiences. For example, as well as formal lessons in traditional invasion games, pupils have access to horticultural studies. Pupils access indoor physical education through the use of a local college's indoor facilities.
- Pupils benefit from a wide range of outdoor spaces in which they can play. There are useful resources that pupils can access in their own time, including outdoor trampolines. Therefore, this standard is likely to remain met if the material change is granted.

*Paragraph 30*

- Boarding facilities are of a similarly high standard as the main school. There are already more bedrooms than the number of boarders the school is registered to accommodate. Should the material change be agreed, there will remain more bedrooms than boarders. Current management of the boarding facilities is a strength. Recent social care inspections have found the leadership and management of the residential provision to be good. Therefore, there is no reason to believe that should the number of boarders increase, the minimum standards would not remain met.

**Part 6. Provision of information**

*Paragraph 32(1)(c)*

- The school's safeguarding policy is published on the school's website. Therefore, this standard is likely to remain met if the material change is granted.

## Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

### *Paragraph 34(1)(a), (b) and (c), 34(2)*

- Leaders have taken effective action to ensure that they are well placed to meet the demands of the requested expansion of the school. The new classrooms have been refurbished to a very high standard. Current buildings are plentiful and are also maintained to a very high standard. Policies and processes for mitigating risk and keeping pupils and boarders safe are established and managed effectively. Leaders have robust plans for managing the transition from current numbers to the proposed increase in pupil numbers. For example, leaders expect to increase numbers systematically and in line with pupil numbers. The trust provides a useful overview of the work of leaders. There is a clear business plan to support the expansion. The business plan has been aligned to the plans to improve education and the quality of boarding provision. Consequently, leaders are very well placed to adapt the school appropriately to changing numbers. Therefore, this standard is likely to remain met if the material change is granted.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The school is likely to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that are relevant to the material change.

## School Details

Unique reference number	141208
DfE registration number	931/6015
Inspection number	10033377

This inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards relevant to the material change that the school has applied to make.

Type of school	Special
School status	Independent residential special school
Proprietor	Licensed Trade Charity
Chair	Ian Mullins
Headteacher	Mrs Louisa Allison-Bergin
Annual fees (day pupils)	£37,500
Telephone number	01865 595170
Website	<a href="http://www.lvs-oxford.org.uk">www.lvs-oxford.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:enquiries@lvs-oxford.org.uk">enquiries@lvs-oxford.org.uk</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	12–14 May 2015

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Number of pupils on the school roll	44	98	98

## **Information about this school**

- LVS Oxford is located in a former priory in Oxfordshire. The school educates secondary-aged pupils who have a diagnosis of autism. The proprietors are the Licensed Trade Charity.
- During the school's first inspection, in May 2015, there were 24 pupils on roll from 11 to 18 years of age. Most pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan. Local authorities fund most pupils, but some places are funded by parents and carers. The school draws pupils from six local authorities.
- The school was subject to a material change inspection in August 2015.
- The school aims 'to equip young people to become successful learners in charge of their learning, and to help them develop into confident individuals in control of their feelings and actions'.
- The school was first registered in June 2014 and opened in September 2014. It received its first inspection by Ofsted in May 2015, when it was judged to provide a good quality of education.



## Information about this inspection

- This material change inspection visit was carried out at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) to check the suitability of plans to increase the roll by evaluating the maximum capacity of the school.
- The school is currently registered for 48 places. These are made up of 28 day pupils and 20 boarders. The proprietor would like to increase the school's capacity from 48 to 98 places. Leaders wish to accommodate 68 day pupils and 30 boarders. The school will continue to accommodate pupils from 11 to 19 years of age.
- Despite the request to increase the number of boarders, leaders are not planning to use any of its boarding facilities as additional classrooms to accommodate the proposed increase to the number of pupils on roll. The proprietor has converted some outbuildings into teaching accommodation within the school.
- Her Majesty's Inspector visited classrooms, accompanied by the head of centre, and toured all parts of the school. The tour included the refurbished outbuildings and boarding facilities. He met with leaders to discuss plans for expansion, safeguarding arrangements and the management of health and safety. He also conducted a scrutiny of documentation.

## Inspection team

Matthew Barnes, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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