

Vranch House School

Pinhoe Road, Exeter, Devon EX4 8AD

Inspection dates

17 July 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 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 2

- Leaders have developed a detailed curriculum policy, which sets out clear incremental steps in pupils' communication and cognitive development, their experience and their independence. Through this, pupils are able to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of a wide range of topics, such as local history, the use of money and comprehension of time. The proprietor intends to add an additional class every second year as the current cohort of pupils progress through the school and into the proposed sixth form. The plans are suitably detailed at this stage. They include the drawing up of 16 to 19 study programmes, in order to demonstrate that the school has the capacity to provide education for pupils aged 13 to 19.
- While the school does not currently have any pupils who speak English as an additional language, it has in the past. As a result, staff are suitably trained and experienced to adapt learning to accommodate this need, should it arise.
- Pupils' personal, social and health education is a high priority for the school. Leaders have plans to build on the work they currently do with younger pupils for the proposed additional year groups. There is a particular focus on increasing independent personal care and administration of medication, where possible.
- Leaders have made initial plans for the provision of impartial careers guidance that will encourage pupils to fulfil their potential. Leaders are aware there is further work to be done to ensure that the school's chosen adviser has sufficient understanding of the pupils' complex needs and can communicate with them effectively.
- If the plans are implemented effectively, the standard is likely to be met.

Paragraph 3

- Schemes of work and weekly plans show a carefully tailored programme of activities for each pupil. They build on the skills, knowledge and understanding that pupils have already acquired.
- The curriculum is suitably wide-ranging and challenging for each pupil to work

towards achieving their potential. The proposals for adaptations to the teaching spaces, such as the 'living skills' room, show how resources will be used effectively in order to develop the independent or supported living skills for older pupils and students in the sixth form.

- The curriculum includes opportunities for the promotion of equality of opportunity and fundamental British values, for example through a democratic election when choosing the termly focus for topic work.
- If the plans are implemented effectively, they are likely to meet the standard.

Paragraph 4

- The head of education has developed a detailed assessment tracking system to record the small steps pupils make as they progress through the school. Plans show how this will be extended to older pupils and to students in the proposed sixth form.
- Leaders plan to use a programme of externally accredited qualifications to provide additional assessment frameworks for the oldest pupils. These will complement the individual learning plans.
- If the plans are implemented effectively, they are likely to meet the standard.

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

Paragraph 5

- The school's ethos and values are broadly Christian. Pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other faiths through their topic work and celebrations of festivals, such as Easter and Diwali. Their cultural awareness is heightened through these studies, such as during Black history month. Assemblies are planned to explore events in the news and to develop pupils' community spirit.
- Pupils and students in the sixth form will be able to consider local issues, meet local politicians and learn about the monarchy.
- If the plans are implemented effectively, they are likely to meet the standard.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7

- School leaders have a good understanding of their responsibilities with regard to keeping children safe. Staff receive regular updates on safeguarding issues which are specific to the needs of Vranth House pupils. Leaders are keenly aware of the risks that pupils and their families may face as a result of extremism or radicalisation and have taken action to ensure that pupils and their families know how to stay safe. The trustees place particular emphasis on keeping pupils and their families safe and give this aspect of their work the highest priority.
- The school's safeguarding policy has regard to the latest guidance issued by the Secretary of State, 'Keeping children safe in education', September 2016. It is published on the school's website. Leaders know that there is a need to supplement this policy to demonstrate how pupils with communication difficulties can share their concerns or experiences.

- The standard is likely to be met.

Paragraph 11

- The school has a detailed health and safety policy, which gives suitable attention to the specific needs of the pupils, such as for those with a tracheostomy, or those fed through a gastrostomy feeding tube.
- Plans to modify the new accommodation have considered the health and safety of pupils and staff, for example by having a showering facility in the toilets and by adding vision panels to classroom doors.
- There are suitable means of escape. Adult supervision arrangements to protect pupils are appropriate.
- If the plans are implemented effectively, they are likely to meet the standard.

Paragraph 12

- The proprietor has ensured compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Fire doors are maintained well, means of escape are clear and equipment, such as fire extinguishers and escape slides, are regularly maintained.
- The standard is likely to be met.

Paragraph 14

- The proposed supervision ratios are high. Due to pupils' needs, they require adult support or intervention available at all times and the ratios proposed are sufficient to facilitate this.
- Additional mealtime assistants are to be recruited to ensure that there is sufficient cover at break and lunchtimes.
- If the plans are implemented effectively, they are likely to meet the standard.

Paragraph 16

- The school has a comprehensive risk assessment policy. Risk assessments are in place for individual pupils, the environment and activities. They are specific to the individual pupil or pupils involved. Specialist staff, including occupational therapists and physiotherapists, review these with the class teacher on a regular basis.
- Where controls are needed to ensure pupils' safety, suitable measures have been developed. The mechanisms that are in place for current pupils will be extended to the older pupils.
- The standard is likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34

- The board of trustees, which acts as the proprietor, has ensured that plans are well developed to ensure that the school can provide education for older pupils.
- There is a strong partnership with those commissioning places at the school and the rationale for extending the age range has been well thought through.
- Trustees and leaders are well aware of the independent school standards and have

made every effort to ensure full compliance. The plans for the addition of pupils aged 13 to 19 have taken into consideration the regulations and seek to actively promote pupils' well-being.

- If the plans are implemented effectively, the standard is likely to be met.

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	113571
DfE registration number	878/6007
Inspection number	10039162

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	Day school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Devon and Exeter Spastics Society
Chair	Julia Tolman-May
Chief Executive Officer	Graeme Wheeler
Head of Education	Ian Norton
Annual fees (day pupils)	£38,340
Telephone number	01392 468333
Website	www.vranchhouse.org
Email address	education@vranchhouse.org
Date of previous standard inspection	7–9 July 2015

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	2 to 12	2 to 18	2 to 18
Number of pupils on the school roll	24	33	33

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	21	33
Number of part-time pupils	3	Nil
Number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities	24	33
Of which, number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan	24	33
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan	24	33

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	5	8
Number of part-time teaching staff	Nil	Nil
Number of staff in the welfare provision	11	19

Information about this school

- Vranth House School is currently an independent day school for boys and girls aged two to 12 years.
- The school is owned and operated by a registered charity, directed and managed by a board of trustees. A governing body oversees the operation of the education services.

- The school provides education for pupils with physical difficulties and/or severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties. Many pupils have a visual impairment.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- There are currently 24 pupils on the school roll, aged between three and 12 years of age.
- The school does not currently use any alternative providers.
- No pupils are in the care of their local authority and none speak English as an additional language.
- The school was last inspected in July 2015, when it was judged to be good.

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 consider whether the school had the capacity to provide education for pupils aged 13 to 19.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the chief executive, senior leaders and the chairperson of the board of trustees to discuss the proposed changes. He reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including policies and procedures, risk assessments and other records maintained by school staff. He also looked at the school's assessment information system and visited the proposed accommodation.
- The lead inspector also reviewed material available on the school's website.
- A letter from the local authority was also considered.

Inspection team

Iain Freeland, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Parent View

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2017