

Great Howarth School

Great Howarth Road, Rochdale, Lancashire OL12 9HJ

Inspection dates

19 September 2017

Overall outcome

The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material changes relating to the school provision are implemented

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 2, 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)(c), 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)(f), 2(2)(g), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i)

- There is a clear written policy supported by schemes of work for the proposed primary age range of pupils and the existing secondary-age pupils. The written plans show that the staff intend to teach the required range of subjects for the primary-age pupils, through topic work, with a strong emphasis on developing the basic skills of speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy. The proposed timetables for primary-age pupils show the intention to provide full-time supervised education for them.
- Plans for pupils in key stage 5 are based on individual needs. The proposals have realistic timetables, starting with GCSEs and functional skills at levels 1 and 2. Appropriate plans are in place for A-level qualifications, should these be suitable for individual pupils. However, the aim is that pupils for whom A levels are suitable will access mainstream education. The curriculum plans for key stage 5 also include provision for pupils who attend college part time.
- The school intends to personalise the curriculum, basing methods, approaches and topics on the individual interests, aptitudes and abilities of each pupil, including any who arrive with an education, health and care plan. Planning shows that staff intend to ensure that the curriculum does not undermine fundamental British values.
- The school has developed an appropriate programme of personal, social, health and economic education, which reflects its aims and encourages respect for others, including those with protected characteristics, as set out in the 2010 Equality Act. There is a suitable range of planned visits to places of interest and opportunities to participate in community projects and work experience to help prepare pupils for the experience of life in British society.
- The school continues to provide appropriate careers advice for secondary-age pupils to enable them to make informed choices about their future careers and to help them

to fulfil their potential. Leaders have established good relationships with external careers guidance advisers and with work placement providers. There are plans in place to extend this to key stage 5 pupils.

Paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g), 3(h), 3(i), 3(j), 4

- The curriculum is likely to ensure that primary-age pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress. Sample lesson plans show that teaching is suitably planned to enable pupils to acquire new knowledge, skills and understanding according to their ability.
- Teachers intend to motivate the learning of primary-age pupils through interesting topic work such as 'Shiver and Shake' and 'Amazon Adventure'. Topic plans show that pupils will have opportunities to apply their intellectual, physical and creative effort, maintain interest in their work and think and learn for themselves.
- Samples of lesson-planning show that the school is likely to deliver well-planned lessons and use effective teaching methods and resources.
- Appropriate systems of assessment are in place to determine the starting points for learning for all pupils, including the proposed primary age range. These systems include the use of standardised tests for reading, comprehension and spelling. The assessment of mathematical skills and science takes account of previous assessment information.
- The school has appropriate systems in place to track the academic progress of secondary-age pupils using examination grades and criteria across the range of subjects. The headteacher has also developed appropriate systems for tracking the progress of primary-age pupils in English, mathematics, science and personal, social, health and economic education, based on the national curriculum. Staff are currently developing systems to track the progress of primary-age pupils in other subjects.
- Current resources are suitable for primary-age pupils, such as the internet for research, a range of different media for aesthetic and creative education, and musical equipment to develop their musical skills.
- Current assessment procedures show that good effort is rewarded with positive comments and pupils are encouraged to improve their attitudes to learning. Effective strategies are in place for managing pupils' behaviour.
- The well-established systems and teachers already used for secondary-age pupils will be extended to include those in the sixth form.
- The standards for the quality of education provided are likely to continue to be met if the Department for Education (DfE) decides to approve implementation of the material change.

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

Paragraph 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), 5(d)(iii)

- Planning shows that the school actively promotes mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The programmes for personal, social, health and economic education for primary-age pupils contain well-chosen topics to promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including fundamental British values.

The plans include opportunities for pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures.

- There is suitable provision for encouraging pupils to distinguish between right and wrong. There is a clear code of conduct, supported by a well-conceived system of rewards and sanctions to enable pupils to respond positively.
- Staff plan together to ensure that partisan views are not promoted in the teaching of any subjects. Staff are also informed that, where such political issues are brought to the attention of pupils, they must take reasonable steps to offer a balanced presentation of opposing views at all times.
- The standard for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is likely to continue to be met if the DfE decides to approve implementation of the material change.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)

- The school has a highly developed culture of safeguarding. School leaders and other staff members have a good understanding of their responsibilities with regard to keeping children safe. A good range of appropriate policies and procedures for keeping pupils in key stages 2 and 5 safe are in place. They are aligned with those in place for the current pupils.
- Staff receive frequent and regular updates on safeguarding issues and undertake extensive safeguarding training. Thorough induction processes ensure that all new staff understand the school's safeguarding expectations and procedures. Adults demonstrate a good understanding of the particular vulnerabilities of pupils in the school. As a result, the culture of vigilance in the school places the safety of pupils at its centre.
- The school's safeguarding policy has regard to the latest guidance issued by the Secretary of State. The policy is published on the school's website.
- Strategies for behaviour management are clearly identified in the school's behaviour management policy. There are additional risk assessments in place to identify changes needed for key stage 2 and key stage 5. The policy emphasises the recognition and encouragement of positive behaviour and explains possible sanctions.
- The staff to be appointed, and others employed at other schools operated by the proprietor, are experienced in providing for the proposed age range.

Paragraph 11

- The school has a thorough and comprehensive range of health and safety policies to ensure compliance with relevant laws. For example, all fire safety checks and portable appliance testing are up to date.

Paragraph 12

- The school complies with the relevant fire safety regulations. The school's site manager undertakes regular checks on fire safety equipment and procedures and reports to the headteacher and head office. For example, the fire alarms and doors are checked on a weekly basis. Annual maintenance of items such as fire

extinguishers ensures that they are in operational condition.

Paragraph 14

- Pupils are well supervised at all times, both during lessons and at social times. Staff numbers are sufficient to ensure this. There is a planned increase in staff numbers to accommodate the rise in pupil numbers that the school is proposing in its material change request.
- Given the special educational needs and/or disabilities of the pupils at the school, pupils sometimes present challenging behaviour. The school uses restrictive physical intervention in a considered fashion and all staff are trained in it. The record-keeping of such incidents is extremely thorough and aimed at analysing incidents in order to reduce their frequency. The school's records show that pupils' behaviour improves during their time at the school and that the occasions when physical intervention is used reduce as a result.

Paragraph 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- The school's policies on risk assessment and risk management are up to date and thorough. Individual risk assessments exist for all educational and extra-curricular activities and for all pupils. Risk assessments are used effectively to identify risks and to take steps to reduce potential risks.
- School leaders have ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

Paragraph 17, 18, 18(1), 18(2), 18(2)(a), 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(i), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(2)(c)(iii), 18(2)(c)(iv), 18(2)(d), 18(2)(e), 18(2)(f), 18(3)

- Senior leaders' checks on the suitability of staff are rigorous. All the necessary checks on the background of staff and their suitability to work with children are made. Senior leaders have ensured that all teaching staff appointed since 1 April 2016 have been checked to see if they are the subject of a teacher prohibition order made by the National College for Teaching and Leadership.

Paragraph 19(2), 19(2)(a)(i), 19(2)(a)(i)(aa), 19(2)(a)(i)(bb), 19(2)(a)(i)(cc), 19(2)(a)(ii), 19(2)(b), 19(2)(c), 19(2)(d)(i), 19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3), 19(4)

- The school does not routinely use supply staff. When they are employed, they are subject to the same checks as permanent members of staff, in addition to the information supplied by any agency.

Paragraph 20(1), 20(2), 20(3), 20(3)(a), 20(3)(a)(i), 20(3)(a)(ii), 20(5), 20(5)(a), 20(5)(a)(i), 20(5)(a)(ii), 20(5)(b), 20(5)(b)(i), 20(5)(b)(ii), 20(5)(b)(iii), 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)

- The proprietor is not barred from regulatory activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act. The proprietor of the school has had all the necessary checks made on their background and suitability to work with children.

Paragraph 21(1), 21(2), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(i), 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(a)(iv), 21(3)(a)(v), 21(3)(a)(vi), 21(3)(a)(vii), 21(3)(a)(viii), 21(3)(b), 21(4), 21(5), 21(5)(a), 21(5)(a)(i), 21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(b), 21(5)(c), 21(6), 21(7), 21(7)(a),

21(7)(b)

- The single central record is complete and up to date. It contains all the necessary information on all members of staff. All members of staff, including those newly appointed, have been checked to see if they are the subject of a prohibition order. The standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

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

- Suitable toilet facilities are provided for the sole use of pupils. Separate facilities are provided for boys and girls. They are all individual toilets that are lockable from the inside. These facilities are available in both the main building and the newly refurbished primary school area. There are no shower or changing facilities on site as secondary-age pupils receive all of their physical education lessons off-site.

Paragraph 24, 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(1)(c), 24(2)

- The school has a medical room for the short-term care of sick or injured pupils. It has a bed and sink. Toilets are easily accessible from this room. Plans are in place for key stage 2 pupils to be accompanied to use this room when needed.

Paragraph 25

- The school's premises and facilities are maintained to a high standard, ensuring that the health, safety and welfare of pupils are well catered for. The school has sufficient space to accommodate the proposed increase in pupils without this being compromised.

Paragraph 26

- The acoustic conditions of the classrooms, including the newly refurbished primary classrooms, ensure that classrooms are suited to the activities that take place within them.

Paragraph 27, 27(a), 27(b)

- The lighting in all rooms is suitable. Automatic external lighting is in place outside all of the school's buildings. There are plans to install external lighting outside the newly refurbished primary area.

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

- Pupils have ready access to drinking water at all times from water coolers. Washing facilities are available in all toilets. The temperature of the hot water does not pose a scalding risk to users.

Paragraph 29, 29(1), 29(1)(a), 29(1)(b)

- The school has two separate outside spaces, which pupils can use during physical education or to play outside. The secondary pupils currently receive their physical education off-site.
- School leaders have ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change is implemented.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34, 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)

- The headteacher and proprietor demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the learning needs and provision for pupils in key stages 2 and 5. Through their involvement with other settings, they have established links with other schools and agencies with a view to providing for their effective learning. They have a clear vision and purpose for meeting the needs of these pupils.
- The proprietor, headteacher and deputy headteacher have a good understanding of the independent school standards and have consistently ensured that all such standards are met. Senior leaders and all staff are vigilant in safeguarding pupils. Pupils attending the school are especially vulnerable. Adults ensure that pupils are always fully supervised.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

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	135753
DfE registration number	354/6035
Inspection number	10039533

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	SEMH – social, emotional and mental health
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Paul Callander
Headteacher	Jane Cresswell
Annual fees (day pupils)	£39,000
Telephone number	01706 631804
Website	www.horizoncare.co.uk
Email address	greathowarthhead@horizoncare.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	10–12 May 2016

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16	7 to 18	7 to 18
Number of pupils on the school roll	4	35	35

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	4	35
Number of part-time pupils	none	none
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	4	35
Of which, number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan	4	35
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	4	35

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	5	6
Number of part-time teaching staff	none	none
Number of staff in the welfare provision	7	7 plus

Information about this school

- Great Howarth School is part of the Horizon Care and Education Group. The school opened in 2008 as Horizon School Whitefield. It changed its name to Great Howarth School in 2014.
- The school states that its aim is 'to facilitate personal educational achievement in an

environment that is stimulating and inspires individual success'. Its objectives are to:

- value the individual
 - provide a safe environment
 - work to pupils' strengths
 - manage the professional support needs of children
 - maintain close links with families
 - have high expectations of ourselves and others
 - have core values of integrity, courtesy, trust and care.
- Pupils often join the school after a history of exclusion and long-term absence from mainstream schools or other special school provision.
 - Staff specialise in working with young people with a range of complex needs and specifically in supporting pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties.
 - The school is registered for up to 24 pupils, aged from 11 to 16 years.
 - Most pupils have a statement of educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
 - The school uses a variety of external educational providers such as outdoor education providers and Towneley Hall.

Information about this inspection

- The school has applied for a material change to increase its maximum number of pupils on roll from 24 to 35. It has also applied to change its age range from 11 to 16 to seven to 18. The school has refurbished additional classrooms since the last standard independent school inspection to accommodate primary-age pupils. The increase in numbers has been planned to occur gradually.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. A meeting was also held with the safeguarding lead.
- The inspector checked the suitability of the school premises against the relevant independent school standards.
- The inspector scrutinised various school documents and policies, including those relating to safeguarding, health and safety, fire checks, staff training, behaviour and the maintenance of buildings and appliances. Reports on the suitability and safety of the school premises and e-safety procedures were also checked.
- The inspector scrutinised the school's single central record and made checks on the suitability of staff. The school's work to promote pupils' safety, health and welfare was checked, including talking to pupils.

Inspection team

Tanya Hughes, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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