

Stepping Stones School Hindhead

Tower Road, Hindhead, Surrey GU26 6SU

Inspection dates

16 July 2018

Overall outcome

The school is likely to meet all the independent school standards that are relevant to the material change

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 2, 3

- Pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum. A variety of subjects are offered to pupils in all key stages. In key stages 4 and 5 a suite of qualifications are available to ensure that pupils are well prepared for their future destinations.
- The school's curriculum plans include an appropriate focus on English and mathematics, and the knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils will need to acquire. In addition, well-designed programmes of study for art and design, science, history, information technology (IT), personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, physical education (PE), religious education (RE), geography and music provide pupils with a strong grounding in British values and prepare them well for life in modern Britain.
- The school's schemes of work and programmes of study encompass a range of suitable teaching approaches and methods that promote pupils' learning and motivation.
- Leaders support the development of pupils' skills and interests effectively. Pupils receive regular impartial careers guidance, along with a range of work-experience placement opportunities that foster their interests. As a result, pupils are well prepared for future employment.

Paragraph 4

- Pupils' progress and attainment are assessed regularly against national expectations for pupils' ages and starting points.
- The school is likely to meet all aspects of this part of the independent school standards if the material change is implemented.

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

Paragraph 5

- Leaders have a clear overview of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development in place to ensure a consistent approach to this aspect of pupils' development.
- Curriculum overviews emphasise the school's active promotion of the fundamental values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance for people of all faiths and cultures. There is a clear commitment from all staff to use opportunities in class or in extra-curricular activities to promote these values.
- Pupils have opportunities for trips, visits and enrichment activities in addition to the timetabled curriculum. Such activities include opportunities for pupils to learn about their local community and the world around them. Leaders also plan regular opportunities for pupils to carry out charitable work and contribute actively to the local community.
- The school is likely to meet all aspects of this part of the independent school standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7

- The school focuses on the individual needs of pupils and this has been the main focus behind the material change request. This change would enable leaders to increase their capacity to support pupils with moderate physical and learning difficulties who live within Surrey and the surrounding areas. School leaders have pupils' education and welfare at the centre of all they do.
- The school's safeguarding and child protection policy is up to date and takes account of the current guidance from the Secretary of State. The policy is appropriate for the proposed school and the ages of the pupils to be admitted.
- The executive headteacher has attended training at an appropriate level as the designated safeguarding leader. She has attended recent updates and has a secure awareness of her statutory and moral duty to keep pupils safe.
- All key policies, including that for safeguarding, are available on the school's website. Paper copies are also available on request.
- Pupils are appropriately supervised at all times. Leaders have carefully considered the application of increased pupil numbers and the requirement to recruit new staff. Leaders anticipate reaching maximum capacity of 95 pupils by September 2019.
- The new staffing structure for September 2018 will require three additional teachers and five additional teaching assistants. Recruitment has secured these positions. These ratios are likely to enable the school to continue to provide the high level of care and supervision that pupils currently receive.

Paragraph 11, 12, 14

- School leaders have ensured that there is a written health and safety policy in place. The policy is implemented effectively by staff. As a result, the site is well maintained, and procedures are followed consistently by all staff to make sure that pupils are safe. Usefully, leaders have produced a health and safety induction booklet for staff to make the policy even more accessible.
- The fire logbook is up to date and carefully maintained. The school has a detailed fire policy which is clear about the procedures and staff responsibilities in the event of a fire. Fire equipment is externally monitored and a risk assessment has been completed by an approved independent assessor.

Paragraph 16

- Risk assessments associated with the premises are carried out frequently. For example, the site manager undertakes weekly checks on fire points. All checks on emergency lighting, portable appliances, fire extinguishers and premises are undertaken at appropriate intervals to ensure that risks associated with the school environment are minimised.
- The school is likely to meet all aspects of this part of the independent school standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

Paragraph 17, 18, 19, 20, 21

- The school is likely to meet all the requirements of this standard should the material change be granted.
- The single central record is compliant. It has been maintained well and demonstrates that the appropriate checks are carried out before staff are employed by the school. The executive headteacher and members of the governing body are trained in safer recruitment.
- The single central record is maintained by the finance officer and monitored by the school business manager.
- There are six trained designated safeguarding leads at the school. As a result, there are suitable staff in place to deputise when the person responsible for safeguarding is off-site.
- The designated leads and all staff receive appropriate training and regular updates regarding legislation and information pertinent to individual pupils.
- Leaders are committed to pupils' well-being and liaise closely with social services in the best interests of pupils. They are aware of the role of the local authority's designated officer and the need to contact this officer if they are concerned about the conduct of staff.
- The safeguarding policy meets statutory requirements and is in line with current legislation and guidelines. The policy is published on the school's website. Safeguarding is embedded within the culture of the school, and as such, staff and

governors are very clear about their responsibilities.

- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They feel listened to and know that someone will help them if they feel anxious.
- The school is likely to meet all aspects of this part of the independent school standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 19, 30, 31

- The school operates across two sites, Tower Road and Undershaw. Buildings are equipped with appropriate toilet and washing facilities, including showers. There is drinking water available throughout the school.
- All pupils have access to facilities at the school's Undershaw site, which includes a purpose-built science laboratory, art room and hydrotherapy pool.
- Leaders have ensured that there is a suitable room dedicated to the short-term care of sick or injured pupils at each site. Rooms are equipped with a washbasin and have a toilet nearby.
- Leaders make use of the very large area outside the building for PE and recreation. Recent improvements to this space include a new multi-use games area. The school also benefits from some large indoor spaces that can be used for games and recreation in bad weather.
- Classroom spaces are suitably furnished and have sufficient light, heating and ventilation to ensure that they are suitable learning environments. Sound insulation has been installed in classrooms. Consequently, the acoustics within classrooms and other learning environments are suitable.
- The school is likely to meet all aspects of this part of the independent school standards if the material change is implemented.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34

- Leaders and those responsible for governance demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to help them fulfil their roles. They know and have implemented the requirements of the independent school standards well.
- Leaders and governors are driven to provide a high standard of education for pupils and are acutely focused on pupils' progress and attainment. They demonstrate determination for pupils to succeed.
- The executive headteacher and proprietor work together effectively. They are not afraid to debate and discuss what is best for the school, working hard to balance their vision for the pupils with statutory requirements.
- Governors have a clear regard for financial sustainability and the need to provide the best possible education. They rigorously hold leaders to account for the work of the

school.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school is suitably adapted to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

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	134833
DfE registration number	936/6584
Inspection number	10055019

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	Other independent special school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	The governing body
Chair	Norman Stromsoy
Executive headteacher	Melissa Grigsby
Annual fees (day pupils)	£24,000–£36,000
Telephone number	01428 609 083
Website	www.steppingstones.org.uk
Email address	enquiries@steppingstones.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	14–16 June 2016

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	7 to 18	7 to 19	7 to 19
Number of pupils on the school roll	82	95	95

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	82	95
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	82	95
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	82	95
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	82	95

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	13.6	17.1
Number of part-time teaching staff	2	2
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	Not applicable

Information about this school

- Stepping Stones is an independent special school. The school operates across two sites and has places for up to 82 pupils. There are currently eleven classes: two for key stage 2 pupils, three for key stage 3 pupils, four for key stage 4 pupils and one for key stage 5. By the time they leave the school, pupils complete qualifications, up to and including A levels.
- The last standard inspection took place in June 2016, when the school was found to be providing a good standard of education. All of the independent school standards were judged to be met.
- All pupils have education, health and care plans. The school caters for pupils with

moderate physical or learning difficulties. Pupils join the school with a range of abilities and varied levels of achievements across different subjects. All pupils are referred from five local authorities: Hampshire, Surrey, West Sussex, Sutton and Kingston.

- The school aims to 'change lives for the better and strive to ensure that every child can realise their potential and make their unique contribution to society'.
- Currently, all pupils access specialist facilities for science, PE and design technology at the Undershaw school site. Animal-assisted therapy is accessed by some pupils off-site.
- Five pupils are currently on dual placements at local colleges and home-based tuition services.
- Pupils have the opportunity to learn employability skills in the school's cookie bar shop in Hindhead, and on a range of work-experience placements in Year 9.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the second material change inspection of the school; the previous material change inspection happened in March 2017, where pupil numbers were increased to 82. The inspection focused on whether the school was likely to meet the independent school standards relevant to the material change requested by leaders.
- Her Majesty's Inspector met with the proprietor, the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject leader and the chair of the governing body. Curriculum plans, schemes of work, resources and policies were also scrutinised.
- The inspector discussed arrangements for safeguarding, including the school's approach to child protection, site security and safer recruitment.
- Meetings were held to discuss the proposal for the material change, including how leaders intend to prepare parents, staff and pupils for the proposed changes.
- The inspector toured the school site in order to check the suitability of the building, rooms and outside area. She also carried out observations of teaching and learning across the school.

Inspection team

Emma Sanderson, 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 2018