

# The Davenport School

The Lodge, Foxborough Hill, Sandwich, CT13 0NY

**Inspection dates**

18 September 2018

**Overall outcome**

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

## Main inspection findings

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

*Paragraphs 7, 32(1), 32(1)(c)*

- At the school's material change inspection in December 2017, weaknesses relating to welfare, health and safety arrangements led to several standards not being met. This included the standard relating to safeguarding. At the start of that inspection, the school's safeguarding policy also did not meet requirements. During the inspection, leaders rectified the issues and uploaded a compliant policy to the school's website.
- The school's proposed action plan, outlining how leaders intended to tackle the weaknesses, was accepted with modifications by the Department for Education (DfE). The proposed actions to meet the standard in this paragraph were predominantly centred around ensuring that all related requirements detailed in other parts were met, such as those relating to health and safety, welfare and recruitment checks.
- The specific issues that led to the standard in this paragraph being previously unmet have been addressed. Suitable welfare, health and safety arrangements are now in place. The single central record now meets requirements. However, leaders have not taken all necessary action regarding updated safeguarding guidance from the Secretary of State that was issued in May 2018 and came into effect on 3 September 2018. Consequently, the standard in this paragraph remains unmet.
- The school's safeguarding policy does not take account of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018. For example, the school's policy does not cover peer-on-peer abuse or reflect the fact that additional barriers might exist when recognising concerns for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. The safeguarding policy published on the school's website at the start of this inspection was out of date.
- Staff have had recent training that covered some aspects of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2018. However, leaders have not checked whether staff have read and understood the required parts of the updated guidance. Some have not.
- The previous full standard inspection found that safeguarding was effective. Training staff is a high priority. Staff are well informed about many of the potential safeguarding risks and vulnerabilities pupils may face. They know well and are confident in the school's processes for acting on any identified concerns. Close daily links between

education and care staff are well established and help promote the welfare of pupils.

- Relationships between adults and pupils are strong. Pupils readily approach and interact with staff and leaders. They are confident that adults will resolve any issues or concerns they have.
- Elements of the standards contained in these paragraphs remain unmet.

#### *Paragraphs 11, 12 and 16*

- The December 2017 inspection found that leaders did not implement important risk assessment or health and safety policies effectively. Many important risk assessments had not been carried out. Some fire safety certificates were missing, although some of these were obtained during that inspection. Fire safety documentation did not clearly identify the responsible person. There were significant weaknesses in the fire risk assessment.
- The proposed action plan provided assurance that after the inspection fire safety arrangements were promptly established. It also stated that all areas of the school were now covered by detailed risk assessments. However, it did not specify that necessary risk assessments were in place for the external areas used by the school. Consequently, the action plan was only accepted with modifications which included carrying out risk assessments on external areas.
- Internal and external risk assessments show balanced consideration of potential risks relative to the space and activity. Risk assessments also assign responsibility for implementing the relevant control measures. The implementation and effectiveness of some risk assessments are reviewed and evaluated through meetings, for example in those about individual pupils. Others are not yet due for review.
- Systematic fire safety arrangements are now established. The nominated person is clearly identified on the emergency plan. The fire risk assessment follows a detailed and methodical approach, covering aspects such as prevention of fire, detection and response. It also outlines regular checks intended to ensure that risks are controlled and minimised. Log books show that these checks are reliably and routinely carried out.
- The standards contained within these paragraphs are now met.

#### *Paragraphs 9, 10 and 14*

- Standards relating to pupils' behaviour, bullying and deployment of staff were previously met and continue to be met. However, the previous full standard inspection, which concluded in February 2017, identified areas for improvement regarding pupils' behaviour. Leaders are making reasonable progress addressing these areas.
- The proprietor has ensured that the required behaviour and anti-bullying policies are in place and implemented. Leaders have recently introduced new systems aimed at making it easier to track and analyse patterns of behaviour. The very early stages of the emerging analysis indicate a decrease in incidents over time. There are detailed records of one identified case of bullying since the previous full inspection.
- Pupils are well supervised. The ratio of adults to pupils is sufficient to meet pupils' needs. At different times throughout the day of the inspection, during and between lessons, most pupils were behaving well. There were occasions where individual pupils struggled to manage their emotions and behaviour. Staff managed these situations well,

swiftly calming tensions and preventing any escalation.

- Pupils' views, attitudes and engagement in school are more positive than at the time of the previous inspection. They are now more settled in their permanent accommodation and the atmosphere is much calmer.
- Leaders are understandably reflective about judging where to place expectations of pupils' behaviour. They are mindful of balancing aspiration of what they wish pupils to achieve with the need to take account of pupils' complex histories and needs. Staff observed dealing with disruptive behaviour demonstrated their judgement by being firm but non-confrontational. Staff benefit from regular opportunities to discuss together the incidents they have tackled and strategies they have used. Leaders report that this has helped achieve a greater consistency of approach.

#### *Paragraphs 13 and 15*

- Standards relating to first aid arrangements, and admissions and attendance registers, also continue to be met. There is a sufficient allocation of trained first aiders and detailed records of treatment and medication are kept. The electronic system the school uses to record pupil admissions and attendance allows for all the required information to be stored, retrieved and analysed.
- The proprietor has not ensured that all standards in this part are met.

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

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

- The material change inspection found that the proprietor had not conducted all necessary prohibition checks on adults. Checks on whether staff were disqualified by association were not made.
- The plan stated that all missing employment checks would be undertaken and included on the single central record.
- All required checks on the suitability of staff and directors have been carried out and recorded on the single central record. This includes the relevant prohibition and disqualification checks for both staff that teach pupils and those involved in the school's management.
- All standards in this part are now met.

### Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

#### *Paragraph 25*

- The health and safety issues identified at the time of the December 2017 material change inspection meant that the standard in the paragraph was unmet.
- The action plan submitted to the DfE indicated that remedial action was promptly undertaken following the inspection and complete by the time the plan was finalised.
- Health and safety procedures are now properly established. The premises are secure, well organised, clean, tidy and maintained to a suitable standard.

- The standard contained within this paragraph is now met.

#### *Paragraph 23*

- The school now has pupils in Year 7, who were aged 11 at the start of the school year. However, the school does not have showers for pupils to use following physical education (PE), which is the requirement for pupils from this age. Leaders' intention in the future is to take pupils offsite for PE, but these arrangements are not yet in place. Therefore, an element of the standard in this paragraph that was previously judged to be met is now unmet.

#### *Paragraphs 24, 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30*

- The remaining standards in this part that were previously met are still met.
- All spaces are clearly assigned and fit for their intended purpose. There is ample light and reasonable acoustics conducive to running a school. Classrooms are bright, attractive and provide suitable conditions to allow effective teaching and learning. Due to a delayed furniture delivery, Year 7 pupils temporarily do not have appropriate desks and chairs, which leaders are confident will be imminently resolved.
- The outside area is sparse but safe. It provides adequate space for PE and for pupils to play at breaktimes. Pupils have free access to clearly labelled drinking water inside and outdoors. Toilets are arranged individually in rooms that can be secured from the inside with an integral washing facility. Pupils' and adults' toilets are situated separately.
- The designated medical room is suitable for the short-term care of sick or injured pupils. It contains a washing facility and is opposite a toilet facility, which has an adjustable sign to indicate whether it is occupied currently by staff or pupils.
- The proprietor has not ensured that all the standards in this part are met.

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

#### *Paragraph 34*

- The material change inspection found that because the proprietor had not ensured that all the independent school standards were met, the standards in the leadership and management paragraph were also unmet.
- The action plan submitted to the DfE indicated that prompt action had already rectified many of the identified issues by that point, although there were omissions relating to particular risk assessments. The proprietor has ensured that these risk assessments are now complete and in place.
- The proprietor has not ensured that the whole of the proposed action plan has been implemented. The final part states that action will be taken to ensure that all standards are met, but the school still does not meet all requirements of the independent school standards.
- The proprietor's oversight and leaders' checks against the independent school standards are not sufficiently thorough or reliable to ensure that all requirements are continuously met.
- Contrary to advice from the DfE, the school has more pupils on roll than permitted by its

registration. The school has also begun to operate from its new premises.

- There is a notable commitment, passion and determination to improve future life chances for the school's pupils. This vision is clear. Deliberate and effective action to promote pupils' well-being is evident at all levels of the school.
- The previous standard inspection identified that improvements were needed in the day-to-day running of the school, and the quality and leadership of teaching, especially of writing.
- There is now a much more systematic and structured approach to both the daily running and leadership of the school. This is evident in many ways and is true for both processes focused on individual pupils, such as additional-needs-plan reviews, and programmed leadership meetings, used to help sustain the momentum of improvements.
- The head of education oversees this and the partner secondary school, which was judged good at its most recent inspection. Leaders are taking a strategic approach to build capacity across both sites, including through succession planning for future staff changes. The well-conceived strategy is to incorporate successful practice from the secondary site to help secure improvements on the primary site.
- Leadership of teaching has strengthened. A logical cycle of observing teaching and providing pertinent feedback to staff is established. Leaders' documentation shows where this is making a difference and teaching is improving. Targets set for staff to improve their practice are clear and appropriate.
- Improving pupils' writing has been identified as a priority for the current academic year. The teacher in charge has thoughtful and rational plans for how to tackle this in the school's context. The intention is to use reading to help break down many pupils' barriers and previously negative attitudes to writing. The very early stages of this showed positive signs in a key stage 2 comprehension lesson visited during the inspection.
- The proprietor has not ensured that all elements of the standard in this part are 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, as set out in the annex of this report. 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.

## School details

Unique reference number	133298
DfE registration number	886/6089
Inspection number	10056487

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	Other independent special school
School status	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	7 to 12
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	18
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Ethelbert Specialist Homes Ltd
Chair	Leslie Davenport
Headteacher	Julie Bartlett (Head of Education)
Annual fees (day pupils)	£34,112
Telephone number	01304 621836
Website	<a href="http://www.ethelbertonline.co.uk/davenport.html">www.ethelbertonline.co.uk/davenport.html</a>
Email address	headoffice@ethelbert.net
Date of previous standard inspection	31 January–2 February 2017

### Information about this school

- Davenport School is a special day school for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. It is one of two schools within Ethelbert Children's Services. The other school is a secondary school.
- The head of education oversees both schools. There is also a teacher in charge based at this school.
- Pupils who attend usually have an education, health and care plan.
- Almost all pupils have had negative past experiences of education. Many have been excluded or have had significant disruption to their education.

- Since the school was last inspected, it has begun operating at its new premises. It has also admitted two more pupils than it is registered to take. This means that the school is operating outside of its registration.
- The most recent full standard inspection took place in January and February 2017.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.



## 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.
- At the school's previous standard inspection in January and February 2017, the school was judged to require improvement, but all the independent school standards were met. However, because the proprietor subsequently requested changes to the school's registration, a material change inspection was carried out on 18 December 2017. That inspection identified independent school standards that were unlikely to be met if the requested changes were applied.
- On 16 January 2018, the DfE issued a notice requiring the school to prepare an action plan detailing all steps that would be taken to ensure that the school meets the required standards. The covering letter of the same date also informed the proprietor that the material changes were not approved at that stage.
- Ofsted considered the school's action plan on 26 March 2018. Based on Ofsted's advice, the DfE accepted the proposed plan but informed the school that it was required to provide some additional risk assessments. The inspector checked these documents as part of this inspection.
- The inspection was carried out without notice.
- The inspector met several times with the head of education, the teacher in charge and a representative of the proprietor.
- He toured the premises and observed the school at work at different times during the day.
- Joined by leaders, the inspector visited both classes during lesson times and spoke with pupils about their work.
- He spoke informally with a range of staff.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation relevant to the standards that were in the scope of this inspection, including leaders' own review of the implementation of the action plan approved by the DfE.

## Inspection team

Clive Dunn, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

## **Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements**

### **The school does not meet the following independent school standards**

*Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain un-met at this inspection*

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

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
  - 7(b) such [safeguarding] arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

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

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school-
  - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
  - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

*Standards that were met at the previous inspection, but are now judged to not be met at this inspection*

#### **Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools**

- 23(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), the standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
  - 23(1)(c) suitable changing accommodation and showers are provided for pupils aged 11 years or over at the start of the school year who receive physical education.

#### **Part 6. Provision of information**

- 32(1) The standard about the provision of information by the school is met if the proprietor ensures that-
  - 32(1)(c) particulars of the arrangements for meeting the standard contained in paragraph 7 are published on the school's internet website or, where no such website exists, are provided to parents on request.

## **The school now meets the following requirements of the independent school standards**

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

- 11 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.
- 12 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
  - 16(a) the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and
  - 16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

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

- 18(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if-
  - 18(2)(b) no such person carries out work, or intends to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act, or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction.
- 20(6) The standard in this paragraph is met in relation to an individual ("MB"), not being the Chair of the school, who is a member of a body of persons corporate or unincorporate named as the proprietor of the school in the register or in an application to enter the school in the register, if-
  - 20(6)(a) MB-
    - 20(6)(a)(ii) does not carry out work, or intend to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction.
- 21(3) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is-
  - 21(3)(a) in relation to each member of staff ("S") appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether-
    - 21(3)(a)(iii) a check was made to establish whether S is subject to any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction; and

- 21(3)(b) in relation to each member of staff (“S”), whether a check was made to establish whether S is subject to a prohibition order or an interim prohibition order, including the date on which such check was completed.

### **Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools**

- 25 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured.

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

- 34(1)(c) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school actively promote the well-being of pupils.

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