

Zelda School

Holifield Farm, Bonallack Lane, Gweek, Helston, Cornwall TR12 6UJ

Inspection dates

7 March 2019

Overall outcome

The school is unlikely to meet all the independent school standards when it opens

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 2(1), 2(2), 3 and 4

- Leaders have drafted curriculum plans which cover the requirements of the early years foundation stage. Leaders' plans for key stage 1 include a range of subjects, including English, mathematics, art, technology, physical education and religious education. The policy and plans translate into learning that reflects pupils' aptitudes and abilities. Teaching is adapted to take account of pupils' prior knowledge.
- Work in books shows pupils developing their letter formation and writing. Pupils are writing complete sentences. Number work includes performing basic operations. A structured reading scheme is in place and pupils are assessed to identify when they are ready to move on to a more demanding text.
- Teachers have ensured that the classrooms are suitably stimulating. Good-quality resources are available.
- Trips, visits and visitors enhance the curriculum and help pupils develop an understanding of public institutions, including the police and fire service. Visits from a health visitor and dentist promote healthy lifestyles.
- Personal, social, health and economic education is integrated with the overall provision. This builds on the school's ethos, exploring other pupils' needs and promoting discussions about topics, which often include current affairs.
- Assessment systems are in place which evaluate pupils' attainment in most areas of learning. The assessment system records what pupils know and understand. This is reflected in the annual reports to parents.
- In the early years, assessments are moderated internally, and externally, by the local authority.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

Paragraph 5

- Teachers plan learning to celebrate the festivals of different cultures and religions, including Diwali, Eid, Easter and Christmas. Pupils have explored some of the religious texts, such as the Qur'an. This builds respect and understanding of other religions.
- British values are promoted through teaching right from wrong and giving children freedom to explore. Teaching encourages pupils to grow in confidence and self-esteem. During the inspection, a group of pupils in the early years were learning about their own identity as Cornish residents. Teachers discussed St Piran and pupils created the county's flag.
- When opportunities arise, and in regular circle times, teaching staff explain the protected characteristics by talking about differences. Staff explain about pupils' special needs and help children understand how these can make life more difficult for them.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7

- The proprietor has published the school's safeguarding policy on the website. The policy reflects the latest statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State. The designated safeguarding leader and her deputy have been appropriately trained.
- The trustees, leaders and managers have not ensured that the school's recruitment procedures meet the requirements as set out in 'Keeping children safe in education' (2018). Several pre-employment vetting checks have not been carried out for members of staff. Recruitment records show gaps in the employment history of staff which are unaccounted for. References do not comply with the requirements of statutory guidance. The single central record includes little of the required information and has some errors.
- Trustees and leaders have not given enough thought to staff training in safeguarding. Although the weekly staff meetings provide an opportunity to discuss any concerns, there is little evidence of staff being made aware of the indicators of harm and particular local risks.
- The standard in this paragraph is not likely to be met.

Paragraphs 9-14 and 16

- The headteacher and teaching staff have developed a behaviour policy that fosters good relationships between pupils and with staff. Suitable sanctions are in place for when a pupil does not meet the school's expectation. A record of incidents of poor behaviour is maintained.
- Leaders and managers have ensured that the environment is well maintained. The arrangements for pupil supervision by staff, fire safety, first aid and risk assessments are likely to meet the respective standards.
- The standards in these paragraphs are likely to be met.

Paragraph 15

- The proprietor has a loose-leaf admission register. It does not include the date of admission, the date the pupils left the school or the school they moved on to.
- The attendance register lists the pupils and the time they arrived in the morning and the time they are expected to finish. The register does not meet the requirements as set out in the 'Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations'.
- The standard in this paragraph is not likely to be met.
- Overall, the standards in this part are not likely to be met.

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

Paragraphs 18(1)–21(8)

- The proprietor has not ensured that all the necessary pre-employment checks have been carried out for the staff currently in place. The procedures in place are not suitably robust and do not meet the requirements set out in the most recent guidance.
- The required checks for members of the proprietorial board have not been undertaken. So far, trustees have undertaken Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and have provided the information required by Companies House. The full range of checks set out in the independent school standards has not been completed.
- The proprietor keeps a register of the DBS checks carried out. A few of the details are not correct. The register does not include the details of any of the other checks that are required.
- Leaders do not expect to employ agency staff.
- The standards in this part are not likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1)–29(1)(b)

- The site includes two yurts which are connected to wooden structures containing toilets, washing facilities and the kitchen. The outdoor area includes a workshop for technology and interesting play areas and gardens that the children tend. A field, next to the school, provides an expansive area for outdoor play and sport. The premises and outdoor spaces are maintained to an acceptable standard.
- The school does not have mains electricity or a generator. Therefore, lighting is by natural daylight in the main. Auxiliary lighting is available from the adjacent farm should it be necessary. External lighting is provided by solar-charged, battery-powered lamps.
- Toilets are contained in individual cubicles. Wash-hand basins are located close by and have warm and cold running water. The facilities for the short-term care of sick and injured pupils are located in the same area. This space doubles up as a staff office.
- The yurts are heated by wood burners which were installed the day before the inspection. Robust fire-guards are in place around them to prevent pupils from burning themselves. They provide a comfortable temperature in the classrooms.

- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraphs 32(1)-32(3)(f)

- The proprietor has documentation available in hard copy for parents and others on request. Some information is also published on the school's website, including the contact details for the school and the proprietor. It includes all the information required in this part of the standards.
- All the information requested during this inspection was provided by leaders, including annual reports of pupils' attainment, individual learning plans for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and the required policies.
- The standard in this part is likely to be met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33

- The complaints procedure allows for any concerns to be resolved informally as the first stage. The key worker system ensures that this can be done at a very early stage. The proprietor has arranged for formal complaints to be investigated by one of the trustees. If a complainant remains dissatisfied by the outcome, then two trustees who have not had any involvement in the complaint, joined by an independent person, will convene as a panel to hear the complaint.
- At each stage, the proprietor has made arrangements for the outcome of any complaint to be communicated to the complainant and recorded on the school's incidents and concerns log. The correspondence, statements and records relating to complaints are retained for inspection. Those seen by the inspector demonstrate that the procedure is effective.
- The standard in this part is likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1)-34(1)(c)

- The trustees have not ensured that all the independent school standards are likely to be met. They do not have sufficient understanding of the safeguarding requirements set out in 'Keeping children safe in education' (2018) or the requirements of the 'Education (pupil registration) regulations'.
- Missing pre-employment vetting checks mean trustees cannot confirm that all staff who have been appointed are suitable to work with pupils.
- The standard in this part is not likely to be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The trustees are keen to ensure that any pupil could attend the school. Arrangements are in place to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils can access the curriculum and the school site.

Statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage

- Leaders and managers have maintained their compliance with the statutory requirements. All staff currently employed are trained to an adequate standard, are up to date with their paediatric first-aid training and follow the school's systems. High staff-to-child ratios mean that pupils are supervised well.
- The learning and development provision gives due regard to each of the early learning goals. Teaching staff plan learning to help pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Staff who are already employed have an enhanced disclosure and barring service check in place. They receive periodic safeguarding training, but this is quite general.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school is unlikely to meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements, as set out in the annex of this report.

Proposed school details

Unique reference number	146777
DfE registration number	908/6004
Inspection number	10093463

This inspection was carried out under section 99 of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards that are required for registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Preparatory school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	Zelda School
Chair	Anna Roberts
Headteacher	Zelda Astley
Annual fees (day pupils)	£5,220
Telephone number	07400 576 116
Website	www.zeldaschool.co.uk
Email address	zelda.astley@zeldaschool.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

Provider already operating

Number of pupils of compulsory school age	4
Number of pupils of compulsory school age for whom a statement is maintained under section 324, or who is looked after by a local authority	None
Total hours operating as a school per week	32.5 hours
Total hours of teaching provided per week	27.5 hours

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	2–7	2–8	2–8
Number of pupils on the school roll	47 (of whom 4 are of compulsory school age)	60	60

- It is recommended that the number of pupils in any one session be limited to 36 pupils.

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	4	14
Number of part-time pupils	2	None
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	1	14
Of which, number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan	None	14
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	None	14

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	4	4
Number of part-time teaching staff	7	7
Number of staff in the welfare provision	1	1

Information about this proposed school

- Zelda School is based in two interconnected yurts located within Holified Farm. The farm is on the outskirts of the village of Gweek, Cornwall. The site currently accommodates a Nursery run by the same proprietor. It is the proprietor's intention to increase the number of pupils of compulsory school age. They recognise that in doing so they need to register with the Department for Education, who is the registration authority for schools. The Nursery is currently registered as an early years provider with Ofsted.
- The proprietor operates a second early years setting at a site near the village of Ladock, Cornwall. This site is not included in the application for registration as a school.
- Zelda School aims to develop pupils' understanding through a variety of approaches to learning. There is a particular focus on learning outdoors in the grounds adjacent to the yurts. The proposed school does not have any religious character.
- The proprietor intends to operate a lower kindergarten for pupils aged two to four and an upper kindergarten for pupils aged five to eight. This builds on the current arrangements where up to four pupils of compulsory school age receive their education on a full-time basis.
- The proprietor is clear that reasonable adjustments should be made so that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities can attend.
- The proposed school is owned by Zelda School, a company limited by guarantee. One of the trustees is also the headteacher. There are four other trustees. Together, they form the proprietorial board.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was conducted by Ofsted at the request of the Secretary of State for Education. It was carried out under section 99 of the Education and Skills Act 2008.
- This was the first pre-registration inspection.
- Discussions were held with the chair of trustees, another trustee, who will also be the headteacher, and the deputy manager.
- The inspector undertook a check of the premises and evaluated the policies required under the independent school standards and the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the Equality Act 2010. He reviewed other documents and checked the single central register.
- The proposed school is currently operating as a nursery school. It is registered with, and inspected by, Ofsted as an early years setting. There are currently four full-time pupils on the school roll who are of compulsory school age.

Inspection team

Iain Freeland, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school is unlikely to meet the following independent school standards

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 15 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

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;
 - 18(2)(c) the proprietor carries out appropriate checks to confirm in respect of each such person–
 - 18(2)(c)(i) the person's identity;
 - 18(2)(c)(iii) the person's right to work in the United Kingdom; and
 - 18(2)(e) in the case of any person for whom, by reason of that person living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining such a certificate is not sufficient to establish the person's suitability to work in a school, such further checks are made as the proprietor considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State; and
- 18(3) The checks referred to in sub-paragraphs (2)(c) and (except where sub-paragraph (4) applies) (2)(e) must be completed before a person's appointment.
- 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;

- 20(6)(b) subject to sub-paragraphs (7) to (8), the Chair of the school makes the following checks relating to MB–
 - 20(6)(b)(ii) checks confirming MB's identity and MB's right to work in the United Kingdom; and
 - 20(6)(b)(iii) where, by reason of MB's living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining an enhanced criminal record certificate is not sufficient to establish MB's suitability to work in a school, such further checks as the Chair of the school considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- 21(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor keeps a register which shows such of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (3) to (7) as is applicable to the school in question.
- 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)(i) S's identity was checked;
 - 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;
 - 21(3)(a)(iv) checks were made to ensure, where appropriate, that S had the relevant qualifications;
 - 21(3)(a)(v) an enhanced criminal record certificate was obtained in respect of S;
 - 21(3)(a)(vii) a check of S's right to work in the United Kingdom was made; and
 - 21(3)(a)(viii) checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(e),
 - 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.
- 21(6) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is, in relation each member ("MB") of a body of persons named as the proprietor appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether the checks referred to in paragraph 20(6)(b) were made, the date they were made and the date on which the resulting certificate was obtained.

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;

- 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
- 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

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