

Magdalen Court School

Victoria Park Road, Exeter, Devon EX2 4NU

Inspection dates

7 November 2018

Overall outcome

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

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i)

- At the time of the previous standard inspection, leaders had not ensured that there was an appropriate curriculum policy in place that enabled pupils to learn effectively across subjects. This included ensuring that pupils were prepared well for the opportunities and experiences in British society. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve were too low. Assessments were inaccurate. Too often, teaching did not meet the needs of pupils as it did not take account of what pupils know, can do, and understand. Work set was often too easy. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) was weak. Leaders showed a lack of knowledge needed to drive improvements across the school.
- Since the previous inspection, the new headteacher, supported by the trustees, has developed a new curriculum policy, and has ensured that schemes of work appropriately cover a wide range of subjects. Through the headline of 'belong, believe and achieve', there is an emphasis on ensuring that pupils feel that the curriculum is relevant to them and encourages them to be part of the school community. The curriculum aims to provide pupils with the independent skills they need to equip them for their next steps in education or employment. The changes in policy are recent and have not yet been successfully adapted into learning experiences for pupils who have education, health and care (EHC) plans. Despite the school being successful in ensuring that pupils feel secure and ready to learn, too often learning for these pupils does not match their needs.
- The standards in this paragraph remain unmet.

Paragraph 2(2), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(e)(ii), 2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(g), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i)

- The newly appointed headteacher has put in place a new scheme of work to support pupils' personal, social, health and economic education. The timetable has been reorganised to ensure that there are frequent times for pupils to reflect and discuss important issues that support their preparation for their next steps. A programme of visitors to school also helps pupils to develop aspirational yet realistic choices about their future careers.
- The standards in this paragraph are now met.

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

- The headteacher has put a new assessment framework in place. Underpinning this is a range of regular diagnostic tests to ensure that teachers have reliable information about what pupils know, can do, and understand. Leaders and teachers cannot yet show the impact of their use of assessment information to accurately target resources and make appropriate adaptations for pupils.
- There are clearer and higher expectations in place. The trustees have ensured that additional resources are in place to support pupils' learning. For example, there are new books ready for the recently formed school library. Parents are extremely positive about how settled and happy their children are at the school and how this is often in contrast to other learning experiences they may have had. The headteacher has an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses that exist in the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Leaders are aware that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good. Too often, work is still not matched well to pupils' needs and, therefore, they do not acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability.
- The standards in this paragraph remain unmet.

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

Paragraph 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(v)

- At the time of the previous inspection, the curriculum did not ensure that pupils were provided with a well-rounded education and an understanding of other cultures and religions.
- The headteacher and trustees place an emphasis on the development of community values, and a caring attitude towards others permeates the school. Parents resolutely praise the contribution that school staff make in supporting their children to grow in self-esteem and confidence. Through the improvements to the personal, social, health and economic and religious education provided, more pupils develop their understanding of British values, including tolerance for those with different cultures, faiths and beliefs.
- The standards in this paragraph are now met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 11, 12

- At the time of the previous inspection, the health and safety policy had not been appropriately reviewed and there were insufficient checks to ensure that fire safety procedures were in place. The proprietor has ensured that relevant health and safety laws are complied with. A new health and safety policy has been drawn up and implemented. Staff have a greater awareness of the need to ensure that learning environments are safe. There are secure cupboards in science classrooms to store any hazardous resources.
- The headteacher and trustees have ensured that the school now complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Appropriate training for staff about fire procedures has taken place. Regular checks on equipment take place and pupils have

frequent opportunities to practise the procedure for leaving the building safely.

- The school has a safeguarding policy published on its website that meets current requirements. As reported in the previous inspection, arrangements for safeguarding are effective. There are well-organised arrangements for the recruitment of staff and to ensure that staff receive appropriate training in safeguarding. Staff know what to do to report concerns, and leaders respond decisively to ensure any concerns are followed up in a timely way.
- The standards in these paragraphs are now met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 25

- At the time of the previous inspection, leaders had not ensured that learning environments were maintained well. The trustees have put in place a programme of improvement to the premises. The headteacher ensures that the accommodation and facilities are well maintained.
- The standards in these paragraphs are now met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(h), 32(1)(i)

- At the time of the previous inspection, leaders were not able to show evidence of annual accounts of income received and expenditure incurred by the school for pupils, including those who have an EHC plan who are wholly or partly funded by a local authority. The proprietor has increased the administrator support for the school, and this information is now available. The headteacher has reviewed and improved the arrangements for reviewing EHC plans. Leaders have a clearer understanding of how funding is used to support pupils who have these plans.
- The standards in these paragraphs are now met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- At the time of the previous inspection, the trustees did not have an accurate view of the school's performance. The roles and responsibilities of school leaders were unclear. There was a culture of low expectations. The school was over reliant on external support. Leaders were not ensuring that teachers were held to account for the quality of teaching and learning and for the standards that pupils achieve. Leaders were not promoting effective training and professional development for staff. Leaders had not ensured that pupils attend school well. The proprietor had not ensured that the independent school standards were met. This remains the case. Although a number of the independent school standards are now met, others to do with the quality of teaching, learning and assessment remain unmet.
- The trustees now have a more accurate view of the school's performance. They receive termly reports from the headteacher that show the progress being made against the independent school standards. Trustees have also ensured that they receive external advice and support for their roles. Changes to the leadership structure have started to be made. The new headteacher is supported by a national leader of education. Work has

started to promote higher expectations for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. A programme of professional development has begun. Teachers are being held to account for the quality of their work.

- However, these improvements are very recent. The school improvement plan is still being developed. The structure for leadership is not fully in place. The school is still reliant on external support to ensure it continue to make the right improvements.
- The standards in these paragraphs remain unmet.

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.

The school now meets the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are–
 - 2(2)(d) personal, social, health and economic education which–
 - 2(2)(d)(i) reflects the school's aim and ethos; and
 - 2(2)(e)(ii) enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options; and
 - 2(2)(e)(iii) helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential;
 - 2(2)(g) where the school has pupils above compulsory school age, a programme of activities which is appropriate to their needs;
 - 2(2)(h) that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress; and
 - 2(2)(i) effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.

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

- 5 The standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met if the proprietor–
 - 5(a) actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
 - 5(b) ensures that principles are actively promoted which–
 - 5(b)(v) further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures.

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[12].

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 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)(h) where a pupil wholly or partly funded by a local authority (except where funding is solely for free of charge early years provision in accordance with the duty contained in section 7 of the Childcare Act 2006[16]) is registered at the school, an annual account of income received and expenditure incurred by the school in respect of that pupil is provided to the local authority and, on request, to the Secretary of State;
 - 32(1)(i) where a pupil with an EHC plan wholly or partly funded by a local authority or other body through public funds is registered at the school, such information as may reasonably be required for the purpose of the annual review of the EHC plan is provided to the responsible local authority.

School details

Unique reference number	113623
DfE registration number	878/6045
Inspection number	10061323

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 school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	40
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	4
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Mr and Mrs J Jenner
Chair	Mr J Jenner
Headteacher	Sarah Wrightson
Annual fees (day pupils)	£6,900–£9,450
Telephone number	01392 494 919
Website	www.MagdalenCourtSchool.co.uk
Email address	admin@MagdalenCourtSchool.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	28–30 November 2017

Information about this school

- Magdalen Court School is a co-educational, non-selective day school registered for 250 pupils aged between five and 18 years of age. Currently, there are 40 pupils on roll, aged from five to 18 years.
- There are a significant proportion of pupils with EHC plans.
- The school's previous standard inspection was in November 2017.

- A new headteacher was appointed in April 2018.
- The school does not use 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 that 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.
- The inspection was the first progress monitoring inspection since the previous standard inspection and was carried out with no notice.
- After the previous inspection, which found the school's overall effectiveness to be inadequate, the school was required to produce an action plan explaining how it would meet the independent school standards that were unmet at this inspection. This action plan, evaluated on 9 April 2018, was judged as being not acceptable.
- Prior to the inspection, the lead inspector scrutinised a range of documentation, including that provided by the registration authority for independent schools, the previous inspection report and the subsequent action plan drawn up by the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with school leaders, including a representative from the board of trustees, to discuss the effectiveness of actions taken since the previous standard inspection. She also held discussions with staff and pupils. The inspector scrutinised a range of documentation, including curriculum plans and information about assessment, health and safety and safeguarding. Along with the headteacher, she visited classrooms to observe learning and evaluated a sample of pupils' work. The inspector met with a group of parents and took an email sent to Ofsted during the inspection into account.

Inspection team

Tonwen Empson, 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 unmet at this inspection

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if–
 - 2(1)(a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively; and
 - 2(1)(b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work–
 - 2(1)(b)(i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan.
- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school–
 - 3(a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;
 - 3(b) fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves;
 - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
 - 3(d) shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons;
 - 3(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;
 - 3(f) utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range;
 - 3(g) demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress;
- 4 The standard in this paragraph is met where the proprietor ensures that a framework for pupil performance to be evaluated, by reference to the school's own aims as provided to parents or national norms, or to both, is in place.

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.

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 looked after children, 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