

Wemms Education Centre

W Block, Therfield School, Dilston Road, Leatherhead, KT22 7NZ

Inspection dates

11 September 2018

Overall outcome

The school does not meet the independent school standards relevant to the material change. The material change has already been implemented

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

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

- The school's safeguarding policy does not take full account of the latest guidance issued by the Secretary of State. It does not reflect some important aspects of the advice contained within 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2018). For example, there is not enough information about the school's policy and procedures regarding peer-on-peer abuse. The policy does not reflect clearly enough the additional barriers that can exist when recognising abuse and neglect suffered by pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities.
- The proprietor knows and understands the updated guidance. She has written a clear statement of intent that outlines the main changes that need to be incorporated in the school's policy. However, the statement has not been followed up with the required action. The proprietor correctly points out that properly adapting the school's policies in response to the updated guidance requires care and thought, but the distraction of the school's change of premises has delayed this important process.
- Some parts of the updated guidance were already reflected in the school's existing policies and procedures. Safeguarding training for staff has been suitably prioritised and was updated at the start of the academic year. Importantly, the proprietor has ensured that all staff have read and are familiar with the most recent guidance.
- The school does not currently have a website. However, policy documents are available to parents and carers on request.
- The single central record does not contain all the required checks on the suitability of staff and governors.
- Elements of the standards contained within this paragraph are unmet.

Paragraphs 11, 14 and 16

- The proprietor understands and suitably prioritises health and safety arrangements. The school's written policy is implemented effectively. In the constantly changing

situation created by ongoing renovation work, the proprietor has ensured that the assessment and management of risk are ongoing. Pupils can only access parts of the building and grounds that are safely habitable.

- Written documentation shows a systematic approach to identifying potential risks relating to a range of activities. As risk assessments are updated to fully reflect the new accommodation, the proprietor is sensibly building on effective practice established at the previous premises, adapting as necessary. Leaders use risk assessments well to identify priorities for further reducing and controlling risk.
- Where further work is required in the already functioning spaces, temporary control measures are in place, for example through careful deployment of staff.
- With a significantly increased number of pupils and a high proportion of new pupils, the second day of term was running smoothly. Pupils were focused and attentive in lessons and as they moved around the school. The proprietor's proposals for increasing staff as and when the roll increases further are likely to be more than sufficient.
- Each element of the standards contained in these paragraphs is met.

Paragraph 12

- Since the very recent move to the new premises, the proprietor has not ensured compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- There is no fire safety risk assessment in place. The proprietor reports that a fire safety officer has verbally confirmed the suitability of a word-of-mouth fire alarm process as opposed to an automatic alarm. However, the full implications and the proposed implementation of this at different times of the day, including when there are few people on site, have not been risk assessed.
- Systems and processes for regular fire safety checks have not been established. The proprietor intends to transfer previously effective practice established at the former premises. However, there is no record that initial checks, for example of evacuation routes, were carried out prior to the start of term. Some fire safety and evacuation signs and fire extinguishers are still to be fitted.
- A fire safety consultant is booked to visit shortly to provide expert advice to the proprietor aimed at ensuring related fire safety duties are fulfilled. Staff have undergone relevant fire marshal training. The proprietor reports that a practice evacuation was carried out on the first day of term, although there is no proper record of this.
- The standard contained within this paragraph is not met.
- The proprietor has not ensured that all the standards contained within this part are met.

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

Paragraphs 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21

- The single central record does not include details of all the required checks on the suitability of adults. It does not show that a prohibition from teaching check has been carried out on teaching staff. The proprietor is confident that these checks have been

carried out, but there was no documentary evidence of this available during the inspection. The proprietor reports that much of the school's documentation is yet to be transferred from the previous premises.

- The proprietor admits that she has not checked whether any governors have been legally prevented from taking part in the management of an independent school (a section 128 direction). Although this search will have been made as part of barred list checks for school leaders, confirmation of that fact is also not specified on the single central record.
- The proprietor has ensured that all adults who come into regular contact with pupils have been subject to enhanced criminal records checks and have not been barred from working with children.
- The school does not make use of supply staff.
- The proprietor has not ensured that all the standards contained within this part are met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 22, 23, 24, 25, 26 and 27

- Building and renovation works are ongoing at the school's new premises. Despite the proprietor's best efforts to make reasonable temporary and contingency arrangements, these are not sufficient to ensure that all standards are met.
- Currently, the school does not have suitable toilet and washing facilities for the sole use of pupils. Plumbing and building work to rectify this situation are not finished. In the meantime, staff and pupils are sharing access to four individual and lockable cubicles and shared handwashing facilities. The door to the handwashing area has been removed so that this space is open to the school's reception area.
- The proposed facilities intended to be designated as accommodation for the care of sick or injured pupils take account of the relevant requirements. However, currently, the washing and toilet facilities are not ready, so the related elements of the standard are unmet.
- Although temporary control measures have been put in place, work to ensure that all reasonable action is taken to ensure pupils' health and safety is not yet complete. For example, in addition to incomplete fire safety arrangements, there are missing locks on some doors to areas to which pupils should not be able gain unsupervised access. The proprietor has sensibly identified the need to fit safety catches to the first-floor windows, but these are yet to arrive.
- Functioning classroom areas are well organised, well lit and fit for purpose. Care has been taken in planning to ensure suitable acoustics according to intended activities for each area. However, lights on the stairway are yet to be connected. At present, light cast from each floor is sufficient as a temporary arrangement, but not suitable in the long term.
- Pupils go off site for physical education to facilities that include provision for showering. However, when finished, it is intended that the school will also have a wet room as part of its medical facilities.

Paragraphs 28 and 29

- Water supplies are clearly labelled to make clear what is and what is not suitable for drinking. There is a ready supply of hot and cold running water and the proprietor has ensured that the associated temperature checks are in place.
- An adequate outside space is already available for pupils. A larger space, not currently in use, is still being prepared with an attractive decking area and landscaping. When ready, the available space is likely to be sufficient for the proposed number and age range of pupils.
- Although the proprietor has put contingencies in place and has reasonable plans for ongoing work, at present there are unmet standards within this part.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34

- The proprietor demonstrates a sound understanding of the requirements of the independent school standards. However, hindered by several unforeseen and challenging circumstances, the implementation of the proprietor's plans has fallen behind the ambitious intended timescale.
- The material change has already been implemented. The school has begun operating from its new premises and admitted considerably more pupils than it is currently registered to take.
- As the school expands, the proprietor is taking reasonable steps to strengthen leadership capacity. Governors and the senior leadership team play an increasing role in ensuring that the independent school standards are met. Leaders and staff are working hard to ensure that the school's high educational standards and pupils' well-being are not compromised by the move.
- The proprietor does not meet the standard in this part because some of the standards in other parts are not continuously 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 are relevant to the material change, as set out in the annex of this report.

School details

Unique reference number	142416
DfE registration number	936/6006
Inspection number	10068168

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 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 special school
Proprietor	Joy Wemms
Chair	Alan Dean
Headteacher	Joy Wemms
Annual fees (day pupils)	£38,000
Telephone number	01372 276499
Website	No website
Email address	wemmsmaths@gmail.com
Date of previous standard inspection	9–11 May 2017

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	10 to 20	10 to 20	10 to 20
Number of pupils on the school roll	30 on roll (registered for 16)	60	60

Pupils

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

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	27	60
Number of part-time pupils	3	60
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	30	60
Of which, number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan	22	60
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	22	60

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	20	35
Number of part-time teaching staff	40	60

Information about this school

- Wemms Education Centre is a special independent school offering education to pupils who cannot cope in mainstream education. The school offers alternative provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, pupils who have school phobia, those with social, emotional and mental health issues, and pupils who have been excluded from full-time education.
- The previous standard inspection took place from 9 to 11 May 2017 and judged the school's overall effectiveness to be good.
- The principal is also the proprietor.
- The material change has already been implemented. The day before this inspection, the school began operating from its new premises in a standalone block on the Therfield School campus. The school is registered for 16 pupils, aged 10 to 20. At the time of this material change inspection, there were 30 pupils on roll, three of whom

were part time.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education because the proprietor had applied to make changes to the school's registration. The proprietor wished to change premises and increase the number of pupils on roll.
- This was the first material change inspection.
- Prior to the visit, the inspector's preparations included familiarising himself with the context and inspection history of the school.
- On site, the inspector held meetings with the headteacher, who is also the proprietor, and the chair of governors. He also met other staff and pupils as he toured the premises with the headteacher.
- While touring the site, inside and out, the inspector took account of the current situation of the premises, as well as the plans, intentions and ongoing developments taking place.
- The inspector checked policies, records and documentation in relation to the specific independent school standards that were within the scope of this inspection. This included checking the single central record and safeguarding policy.

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

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 7(b) such arrangements [to safeguard pupils] have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 12 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

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.
- 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)(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)(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

- 23(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), the standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 23(1)(a) suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided for the sole use of pupils.

- 24(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that suitable accommodation is provided in order to cater for the medical and therapy needs of pupils, including–
 - 24(1)(a) accommodation for the medical examination and treatment of pupils; and
 - 24(1)(b) accommodation for the short term care of sick and injured pupils, which includes a washing facility and is near to a toilet facility.
- 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.
- 27 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 27(a) the lighting in each room or other internal space is suitable, having regard to the nature of the activities which normally take place therein.

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.

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.

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