

Wemms Education Centre

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

Inspection dates

9 May 2019

Overall outcome

The school meets 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, 7(b) 32(1) and 32(1)(c)

- The previous inspection found that the school's safeguarding policy was not up to date with the latest guidance issued by the Secretary of State. In particular, the policy did not include information about actions that staff should take when reporting peer-on-peer abuse.
- The proprietor quickly rectified the shortcomings found in the safeguarding policy. There are procedures clearly identified for staff to take should there be concerns regarding peer-on-peer abuse, as is required. In addition, there is advice about the additional barriers that can exist when recognising safeguarding issues associated with pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- The updated policy has been shared with staff. They say that they receive regular updates on safeguarding matters. Staff are knowledgeable about reporting procedures should they have a concern about a pupil.
- The school does not have a website. However, the proprietor reminds parents that they can request copies of policy documents at any time.

Paragraph 12

- The school had recently moved into new premises at the time of the previous inspection. It was found that the proprietor had not ensured compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- The proprietor subsequently authorised external experts to carry out a fire risk assessment on the new premises. This comprehensive audit also provided a plan of action for improvements that were required. The vast majority of these actions have been completed.
- Pupils and staff report that there have been several fire drills since last September. Records of the evacuation have been kept diligently and adjustments in practice made as a result. The evacuation procedures have been refined so that the time for clearing the building has been reduced considerably. Careful thought has been given to ensuring that adults or children with physical disabilities are evacuated safely and

quickly.

- Fire extinguishers and fire safety signage are displayed prominently. Records of fire safety equipment checks are also put on view in the reception area.
- Because of the effective action taken by the proprietor, all standards are now fully met.

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

Paragraphs 18(2), 18(2)(b), 21(1), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(iii) and 21(3)(b)

- At the time of the previous inspection there was no record to confirm that all the required checks have been made on the suitability of adults to work with children. Furthermore, checks to ensure that those responsible for governance had not been legally prevented from managing an independent school (section 128 check) were lacking.
- The proprietor has now ensured that all prohibition checks have been carried out. The dates of checks and the name of the person who made them are recorded on the single central register.
- In order to strengthen record-keeping further, the proprietor has commissioned an external company to ensure that checks by school leaders are completed and recorded in a central database.
- As the arrangements for checking and recording the checks are compliant with current regulations, the standards in this part are now fully met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1), 23(1)(a), 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 25, 27 and 27(a)

- Building and renovation works on the new premises were not completed fully at the time of the previous inspection. As a result, a number of standards regarding the suitability of the accommodation were not met. The medical room did not meet requirements and toilet facilities were not available for the sole use of pupils. Health and safety precautions such as locks on doors and catches on windows were missing. The lighting in the stairwell was not sufficient.
- The structural improvements have now been completed. The premises are clean and decorated to a high standard. The accommodation is well lit, soundproofed and is a suitable environment for pupils. Specialist teaching areas, such as for science, and a kitchen are well equipped.
- The medical room is adjacent to a toilet, with running water and a bed.
- There are adequate toilet facilities and wash-hand basins for the sole use of pupils. All have hot and cold running water. A shower is provided for pupils.
- Cupboards and storage areas in those areas prohibited to pupils have suitable locks fitted. The windows have safety catches. Care has been taken to ensure that pupils are not left unsupervised in areas of risk, such as the science laboratory.
- The proprietor has ensured that the premises and accommodation meet requirements and are of a high standard. Because these works and improvements are now completed, this standard is fully met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34, 34(a) and 34(b)

- The proprietor is knowledgeable and understands the independent school standards. The shortcomings of the previous inspection were almost entirely due to the move to the new building. The proprietor had already implemented the material change with a move to a new building prior to the previous material change inspection.
- The proprietor is determined to improve the school. Leaders developed an action plan, as required by the Department for Education (DfE), that showed the steps they would take to ensure that the unmet independent school standards identified in the previous inspection were met. The DfE deemed this action plan acceptable with modifications in March 2019. The school subsequently revised its action plan to incorporate the DfE's required modifications. The improved plan has been implemented quickly within the timescales stated.
- As in the previous inspection, the school exceeds the number of pupils for which it is currently registered. It has 29 pupils on roll but is only registered to take 16. At the time of this inspection the age range of pupils enrolled at the school is 10 to 20. The school is registered to take pupils from 10 to 20.
- The proprietor has put in place external advisors as part of the governance arrangements. In part, these advisors are commercial persons who specialise in supporting school leaders, for example fire and legal experts. The proprietor also has an advisory board comprised of members who are suitably skilled and knowledgeable. They support the headteacher to provide another viewpoint and check that independent school standards are met. They have yet to formalise their work, for example board meetings do not take place and so minutes of discussions and decisions are not available.
- The independent school standards in other parts, found to be unmet in the previous inspection, are now met. Consequently, the standard in this part is fully met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets 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. 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 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;
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

School details

Unique reference number	142416
DfE registration number	936/6006
Inspection number	10103988

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	10 to 20
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	29
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	3
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Joy Wemms
Chair	Alan Dean
Principal	Joy Wemms
Annual fees (day pupils)	£38,000
Telephone number	01372 276 499
Website	No website
Email address	wemmsmaths@gmail.com
Date of previous standard inspection	9–10 May 2017

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 with SEND, pupils who have school phobia and those with social, emotional and mental health issues.

- At present the school is registered to take 16 pupils from age 10 to 20. The school currently has 29 pupils on roll age 10 to 20.
- At the time of the inspection, the vast majority of pupils had an education, health and care plan.
- The previous standard inspection took place on 9 to 11 May and judged the school to be good. A subsequent material change inspection on 11 September 2018 identified unmet standards. The material change had already been implemented at the time of that, and this, inspection.
- The proprietor is also the principal.

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 material change inspection.
- This inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- The lead inspector met with the proprietor, members of staff and a group of pupils.
- Telephone conversations were held with a number of parents and the chair of the advisory board.
- A number of documents were scrutinised, including the single central register of recruitment checks, fire safety records, other safeguarding documents and policies.

Inspection team

Sue Child, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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