

Dove School

194 New Road, Staincross, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S75 6PP

Inspection dates

5 June 2019

Overall outcome

The school meets 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(d), 2(2)(d)(ii) and 2(2)(g)

- During the previous standard inspection in February 2018 inspectors judged that the curriculum did not cover the full age range of pupils and did not prepare pupils fully for life in modern Britain. The proprietor had not ensured that there was a comprehensive curriculum policy and the headteacher had not developed appropriate schemes of work for primary pupils and post-16 students.
- At the first progress monitoring inspection in March 2019 inspectors found that there had been significant improvements in the curriculum available to pupils and, as a result, the previously unmet independent school standards relating to the quality of education provided were now met.
- The headteacher has ensured that the curriculum policy and schemes of work are appropriate for the full age range of pupils who may attend the school. The curriculum policy describes the school's approach to topic-based learning at key stage 2 and details the provision for qualifications and programmes that prepare pupils for the next stage of their education and training.
- The curriculum documents convey the ethos of the school. For example, in the opening part of the curriculum policy the headteacher explains how the curriculum programme is designed to meet the social, emotional and mental health needs of pupils.
- The improvements to the quality of education required by the previous standard inspection are now embedded and the headteacher is clear on the next steps that she feels are required for continued school improvement. For example, while the primary curriculum offer is now secure the headteacher has identified the need to gain more training for staff in the school in the area of primary-phase language development.
- This standard was met at the previous progress monitoring inspection and continues to be met.

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

Paragraph 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(ii), 5(b)(iv) and 5(b)(vi)

- During the previous standard inspection inspectors found that the curriculum was not fully preparing pupils for life in modern Britain and teachers were not developing pupils' understanding and tolerance of people with different lifestyles and beliefs, especially in relation to the protected characteristics described within the Equality Act (2010).
- At the initial progress monitoring inspection inspectors found that the proprietor had ensured that appropriate training had been provided for teachers and, as a result, the teaching of fundamental British values was being delivered across the curriculum.
- The headteacher has now introduced a tracking system to monitor pupils' personal development and celebrate achievements in this area. The tracking system allows parents and carers to communicate concerns about individual pupils that can be addressed by teachers in their planning for the personal, social and health education of individual pupils.
- The headteacher has developed work experience and training programmes in partnership with local businesses and the local college of further education. These programmes support pupils' personal development and help them to transition to the next stage of education and employment.
- This standard was met at the previous progress monitoring inspection and continues to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a) and 7(b)

- Safeguarding was judged to be effective at the previous standard inspection and the previous progress monitoring inspection and continues to be effective.
- The headteacher has produced a safeguarding policy and designed school systems relating to different aspects of safeguarding and child protection in line with current government guidance.
- The school does not have a website but the safeguarding policy is available upon request. The headteacher's monitoring systems show that the policy is adhered to when there are any concerns about a pupil's welfare.
- Staff training is up to date and staff are secure in their knowledge of how to protect children and be active participants in effective safeguarding practices as well as ensuring that health and safety requirements are implemented.
- The headteacher has developed well-organised systems to foster and monitor the safety and well-being of pupils. The admissions register complies with statutory requirements and risk assessments for individual pupils are in place.
- This standard was met at the previous inspection and continues to be met.

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

Paragraph 18(2), 18(2)(a-c), 18(2)(c)(i-iv), 18(2)(d), 18(3), 20(6), 20(6)(a), 20(6)(a)(i-ii), 20(6)(b), 20(6)(b)(i-iii), 20(6)(c), 21(1-3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(i-viii), 21(3)(b) and 21(6)

- The proprietor ensures that pre-employment checks are completed in line with current government guidance. The headteacher maintains a central register of this information, which is monitored by the proprietor.
- The proprietor ensures that staff receive training in child protection so that they are aware of their duties in safeguarding the pupils in their care.
- These standards were met at the previous inspection and continue to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 27(b)

- At the previous standard inspection inspectors identified that the external light did not work and so did not comply with that part of the independent school standards. At the first progress monitoring inspection carried out in March 2019 inspectors found that the external light was now in full working order.
- This standard was met at the previous progress monitoring inspection and continues to be met.

Paragraph 29(1) and 29(1)(b)

- At the most recent standard inspection as well as the first progress monitoring inspection inspectors judged the outdoor space for pupils' use did not meet the required independent school standard. The retaining wall was in a poor state of repair and pupils could have fallen from a height as a result. There was unsafe rubbish, including rubble, in the garden.
- The headteacher has ensured that the rear garden is now safe for pupils to use. The fencing has been improved and encloses the garden more securely. There is new decking around the wall that was found to be in a poor state of repair at the last inspection. The borders and grassed areas are clear of rubble and other rubbish and the garden is now a pleasant place for play and fresh air.
- This standard is now met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32 (1) and 32(1)(c)

- The headteacher has ensured that there is a safeguarding policy which meets current government guidance and a range of other policies and information about the school which are all readily available to parents and carers upon request.
- This standard was met at the previous inspection and continues to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1) 34(1)(a)

- During the previous standard inspection inspectors judged that school leaders were not evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the school and, as a result, were not able to identify all the actions needed for continued school improvement.
- At the first progress monitoring inspection inspectors found that the proprietor had invested in training for the headteacher and commissioned a school improvement adviser to provide additional guidance to the headteacher. The headteacher had increased her knowledge and understanding of the independent school standards and her skills in school self-evaluation and planning for school improvement.
- The headteacher has high expectations of herself and her staff team. She knows her pupils well and is clear in her determination to support each individual pupil to gain qualifications and broaden their knowledge of the world around them.
- The headteacher has developed systems for recording individual assessments and details of pupils' personal achievements which are aiding the monitoring of the overall progress of pupils in the school.
- This standard was met at the previous progress monitoring inspection and continues to be met.

Paragraph 34(1)(b)

- At the previous standard inspection and progress monitoring inspection inspectors had found that school leaders had not fulfilled their responsibility to ensure that the independent school standards were met consistently.
- The proprietor has invested in the outside area of the school and delegated authority for future decisions on maintenance and the improvement of buildings and outdoor areas to the headteacher in order to ensure that any issues with the building can be corrected promptly.
- The proprietor has embedded a management supervision system that gives the headteacher more frequent support and challenge. The proprietor now has more information about the school's strengths and weaknesses and uses this to monitor the progress of pupils and general improvements to the school.
- This standard is now met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The headteacher has developed curriculum resources and additional activities to help pupils understand their world and to foster tolerance and understanding of people with a wide range of lifestyles, beliefs and needs.
- The proprietor has ensured that an accessibility plan is in place and actively implemented in the school.

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 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 29(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that suitable outdoor space is provided in order to enable—
 - 29(1)(b) pupils to play outside.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality and leadership of management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school—
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

School details

Unique reference number	135376
DfE registration number	370/6005
Inspection number	10109112

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	9 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	4
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	0
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Barbara Whittaker
Headteacher	Mrs Claire Spurr
Annual fees (day pupils)	£39,000
Telephone number	01226 381380
Website	http://dovecare.co.uk
Email address	educationstaff@dovecare.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	6–7 February 2018

Information about this school

- Dove School is a small independent special school for pupils aged nine to 18 years who have social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school opened in 2007 and is registered to accommodate up to 16 pupils.
- The school does not provide or use any alternative provision at present.
- The school has recently applied to the Department for Education (DfE) for a change of proprietor.

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. This is the second progress monitoring inspection.
- The previous standard inspection took place on 6 February 2018, when the overall effectiveness of the school was judged to require improvement and several of the independent school standards had not been met. In January 2019, the action plan that was submitted by the school was rejected by the DfE. In March 2019 the progress of the school was inspected. Although there had been an improvement since the 2018 inspection there continued to be some independent school standards that were not met. In April 2019 the school sent an updated action plan to the DfE.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, two teachers and the proprietor. The inspector reviewed curriculum documents, school policies, staff training and safeguarding records. The inspector evaluated the school buildings and outdoor areas.
- This inspection was conducted with no notice.

Inspection team

Patricia Head, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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