

Acorn School

Seckington Cross, Winkleigh, Devon EX19 8EY

Inspection dates

10 June 2019

Overall outcome

The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7

- Leaders, including the headteacher and proprietor, have a keen awareness of the need to safeguard pupils and promote their welfare. They have a good knowledge of current safeguarding requirements, as well as health and safety legislation. Leaders have used this information well to prepare the premises for the arrival of more pupils.
- The safeguarding and child protection policies are published on the school's website. These are up to date and comply fully with relevant government requirements, such as, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2018).
- Leaders have taken appropriate steps to ensure, as far as is practicably reasonable, that the premises and accommodation are likely to meet the full range of all pupils' social, emotional, behavioural and physical needs. Therefore, pupils are likely to be able to access their full curriculum entitlement through safe on-site practice under leaders' current plans and proposals.

Paragraphs 11,12

- Leaders implement an effective health and safety policy. It is up to date and includes mandatory information pertaining to the health and well-being of pupils, staff and visitors.
- Leaders have been diligent in ensuring that they are fully compliant with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and related activities. As a result, the school's premises and practices are likely to keep pupils, staff and visitors safe when the new building becomes operational.
- Leaders have followed advice well to minimise the risk of harm to others from fire. For example, fire alarms and equipment, including extinguishers and fire doors, are fully installed. A suitable muster point and evacuation plan are in place. Three members of the current staff are trained as fire wardens.
- Leaders' records and logs for fire testing and maintaining equipment in the current building are comprehensive and up to date. These provide firm evidence that those

responsible for running the school are taking all aspects of fire safety seriously.

Paragraph 14

- The overwhelming majority of pupils likely to be on the school's roll, if not all pupils, will be placed with an education, health and care (EHC) plan. This is likely to mean that supervision for all pupils will include a teacher as well as additionally named adult support. Therefore, supervision and staff deployment are likely to fully meet requirements.

Paragraph 16

- Risk assessments are in place for a wide range of activities that the school provides. A risk assessment for the current premises has been drafted. Controls to manage risks are well considered and likely to be effective.
- If the change is implemented, the school is likely to meet the relevant standards contained in this part.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 22–31

- Leaders have actively considered the breadth of the curriculum. They have given due consideration to how the accommodation may be best utilised to promote and enrich pupils' learning, development and experiences. For example, there are designated spaces for pupils to receive individual counselling and/or therapeutic support.
- Most sporting activities and outdoor play take place away from the proposed school site. Risk assessments and suitable controls are in place to ensure pupils' safety, including for changing. Although there is currently no need for a shower block on site, one is being installed in anticipation that sporting activities could be held on the school's site in the future.
- Adequate provision is made for the medical examination and treatment of pupils.
- All rooms have suitable heating and ventilation. Restrictors to window openings on the first floor were being fitted during the inspection. All rooms have adequate lighting and there is suitable external lighting to the front and side of the premises.
- Leaders have ensured that, as far as is practical and reasonable, other standards in this part are likely to be met. For example, drinking water is clearly labelled and heaters or other water supplies are unlikely to pose a risk of scalding pupils.
- There is still some work to take place to ensure that the outdoor play space is fit for purpose and of a similar quality as the current play space. However, standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34

- Leaders, including the headteacher and directors/proprietors, are experienced in running independent special day care schools. Leaders and staff have an in-depth knowledge of the particular needs and vulnerabilities of the pupils likely to use this provision. As a result, the facilities are likely to be fit for purpose in providing high-quality care and education for all pupils, including those with an EHC plan.
- The school's leaders are highly focused on safeguarding. Consequently, systems, processes and policies are already in place to protect pupils at this site. Leaders are diligent in their assessments and subsequent referrals of pupils already in the school to make sure that pupils' needs are fully met.
- The standards in this part are likely to be fully met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school is likely to 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.

School details

Unique reference number	135773
DfE registration number	878/6061
Inspection number	10106849

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 likely compliance with the independent school standards relevant to the material change that the school has applied to make.

Type of school	Day school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Phoenix Learning and Care Ltd
Chair	Jon Pain
Headteacher	Mrs Abigail Heard
Annual fees (day pupils)	£47,789.81–£73,602.87
Telephone number	01271 859720
Website	www.phoenixschools.org.uk
Email address	acornschool@plcl.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	31 January 2019

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	9 to 16	9 to 16	9 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	10	35	35

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	10	35
Number of part-time pupils	1	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	10	35
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	10	35
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	10	35

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	4	11
Number of part-time teaching staff	1	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	5	8

Information about this school

- Acorn School is an independent day school for boys and girls aged nine to 16. The proprietor wishes to extend the number of pupils accessing the provision.
- All pupils across key stages 2 and 3 are currently educated in one building. The proposed arrangements involve the current building housing key stage 2 pupils only

and the second, much larger building, housing only key stages 3 and 4.

- The school was last inspected in January 2019 for a material change related to a change of site and change of age-range. There were no pupils educated at the site at this time.
- Pupils attending the school have special educational needs and/or disabilities and an education, health and care plan.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

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 162 of the Education Act 2002.
- The inspector held discussions with the head of centre and undertook a check of the proposed premises and evaluated the policies required under the independent school standards and other documents relating to health and safety.
- No pupils were present during this inspection.

Inspection team

Tracy Hannon, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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