

# Inspection of Lumiar Stowford

Stowford Manor Farm, Farleigh Road, Wingfield, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 9LH

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Inspection dates: 3–5 December 2019

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Inadequate**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Inadequate**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

**No**

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Leaders have failed to ensure that the arrangements to keep pupils safe are suitably robust. Although leaders and the proprietor have great ambitions for pupils, they have not ensured that pupils receive a good quality of education. They have not made sure that the curriculum plans are meeting pupils' needs well enough.

Pupils enjoy being at Lumiar Stowford. Pupils and staff get on well together. The school has established core values including responsibility and respect. Pupils told us that these help them to work and play together happily. Occasionally, pupils lose interest in their learning, when teachers' expectations are not high enough. They told us that bullying does not happen and they trust adults to sort out any worries they might have.

Some pupils have joined the school after extended periods out of full-time education. Leaders have made sure that pupils settle in well and become more confident. Pupils learn to share their opinions with confidence. However, too many pupils miss too much learning time. They enjoy taking on responsibilities, such as chairing discussions and being a committee member. There are no opportunities at present for pupils to develop their talents in after-school clubs and activities.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Leaders and trustees have not made sure that the requirements of the independent school standards (ISS) have been met in full. Important standards relating to the checks carried out on staff and pupils' welfare, health and safety are not met.

Although trustees have set out the risk assessment procedures in a policy, it is not effective. Staff have not included enough detail in their risk assessments about how to keep pupils safe from potential hazards. The supervision of pupils is not sufficient. Too little thought has been given to pupils' safety due to the nature of the site. So far, trustees have not assured themselves of the effectiveness of this policy. They have plans in place to do so but this had not started at the time of this inspection.

Leaders have not completed all of the required checks to assure themselves that staff and proprietors are suitable people to work with children. For example, teaching staff have not had all the necessary prohibition checks. Missing checks for trustees were completed during the inspection. Leaders also made a few small changes to ensure that the premises standards were met in full.

Leaders have reviewed what they will teach in English and mathematics after assessing what pupils know and can do. The mathematics curriculum is now carefully planned so that pupils gain the knowledge that they need in a logical order. Teachers adapt their plans to make sure pupils' needs are met. However, pupils do not have enough practice in solving mathematical problems.

The school's approach to teaching early reading is beginning to take root. A number of pupils have fallen behind with their reading before joining the school, including some of the older pupils. Staff have checked gaps in pupils' phonic knowledge. They are clear about what pupils need to learn to catch up. However, pupils do not yet practise their phonics sufficiently to become confident in their reading and spelling. Leaders have selected reading materials that challenge and interest pupils. However, the types of writing and range of authors pupils are introduced to are too limited. Most pupils enjoy reading. However, older pupils do not explore the meaning of what they are reading in enough depth.

Leaders' vision for a high-quality curriculum is centred around following pupils' interests and completing projects with real-life application. Leaders set out what pupils should know. Teachers plan lessons that build pupils' knowledge and skills step by step. However, in other subjects, such as history, geography and science, the steps are not as clear. In these subjects, teachers do not use their assessments well enough to make sure that pupils build on what they know and can do already. As a result, pupils complete tasks which are sometimes too easy or too hard. Teachers are alert to this. They are beginning to adapt their teaching to make sure that pupils know and remember more across a range of subjects.

The special educational needs leader is new to her role. She is beginning to make sure that teachers plan work that is better matched to pupils' needs.

Pupils usually behave well when learning. Playtimes are harmonious and pupils understand the consequences of poor behaviour. However, at times pupils lose interest in tasks and become distracted. They lose learning time as a result. Expectations of pupils' conduct when moving around the site and from task to task are not consistent. Pupils' attendance is low. Many pupils do not attend school regularly and, until recently, leaders had not tackled this effectively with parents and carers. Leaders have now begun work to improve pupils' attendance, but it is very early days.

Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education is a strength of the curriculum. This learning helps pupils to understand how to be good citizens and to respect others, including those with protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010. Pupils have a good understanding of fundamental British values, especially democracy. They look forward to weekly 'circle' discussions, where they debate and vote on issues. However, there are gaps in pupils' understanding of different faiths and cultures.

Leaders provide for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development throughout the curriculum. Projects, such as planning a theatre production and weekly farm activities school, enrich the curriculum. However, there are no opportunities beyond the taught curriculum in place to support pupils' wider personal development.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

The school has a detailed safeguarding policy. However, leaders do not show that they have a strong understanding of safeguarding requirements. Leaders updated several risk assessments during the inspection. However, even with the changes, they did not consider the specific risks relating to the school site and the pupils. Planning for pupils' supervision and the management of risks is not good enough.

The school's record of staff suitability checks is incomplete as several checks have not been carried out. However, staff have received some training about how to protect pupils from harm. They know how to report concerns about pupils' welfare appropriately. Teachers have made sure that pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe online.

### What does the school need to do to improve?

#### (Information for the school and proprietor)

- The proprietor has not ensured that the ISS are met. Systems are not strong enough to monitor the actions to ensure that the school complies with the standards. Trustees should ensure that they carry out their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met and pupils kept safe.
- The arrangements to keep pupils safe are weak. Leaders have not assessed risks and taken action to mitigate for them adequately. Statutory checks on the suitability of staff to work with children have not been carried out. This has compromised pupils' safety and welfare. To keep pupils as safe as possible, trustees and leaders need to ensure that:
  - the risk assessment policy is updated to reflect the specific circumstances of the school
  - staff are suitably trained so that they can revise risk assessments to accurately identify risks for pupils and detail measures to minimise the likelihood of harm
  - staff are deployed effectively to supervise pupils around the school site
  - risk assessments contain more detail about the measures needed to reduce risks, staff responsibilities and any training required
  - all staff understand and apply what is in the risk assessment policy
  - trustees assure themselves that the risk assessment policy is implemented effectively
  - staff and proprietors have the necessary vetting checks and are detailed in the school's single central record.
- The school's approach to teaching early reading is not effective enough. Plans to improve pupils' phonics knowledge have not been implemented fully and older pupils do not read a wide enough range of texts. Leaders should make sure that

staff teach reading well, and that younger pupils who have fallen behind catch up more quickly.

- Teachers do not build on what pupils know and can do in subjects like science, history and geography. In some subjects, teachers do not use their assessments of what pupils know well enough to plan work that meets pupils' needs closely. Leaders need to develop their assessments of what pupils know and can do so that pupils' learning builds effectively over time.
- Staff have not ensured that the systems to monitor pupils' attendance have been suitably robust. Consequently, too many pupils do not attend school regularly enough. Leaders have begun work to tackle this but it is early days. They must strengthen the procedures to improve rates of attendance significantly.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

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The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

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## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	146654
<b>DfE registration number</b>	865/6052
<b>Local authority</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10100089
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent school
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	21
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Lumiar Stowford
<b>Chair</b>	Guy Wilson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Claire Walker (Head of education)
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£7,000
<b>Telephone number</b>	07935 137279
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.lumiar.co.uk">www.lumiar.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:stowford@lumiar.co.uk">stowford@lumiar.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- This is the first standard inspection since the school was registered by the Department for Education as a school in February 2019.
- The proprietor changed from Lumiar Pilot Project Limited to Lumiar Stowford, a charitable incorporated organisation, in September 2019. This change had not been notified to the registration authority prior to this inspection. Therefore, the necessary checks on the suitability of the chairperson had not been carried out by the Secretary of State. The three trustees of Lumiar Stowford make up the proprietorial board that oversees the work of the school.

- The previous head of education left her post earlier this year and was replaced by the current head of education. This change had not been notified to the registration authority.
- Currently, there are no pupils in the early years.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

## **Information about this inspection**

We carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school has failed to meet the independent school standards. These are the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- We met with the head of education, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and with trustees. We met with the chair of the board of trustees.
- We focused on early reading, mathematics, physical education and PSHE. We also looked at history, geography and science during the inspection. We discussed curriculum planning with leaders, reviewed pupils' work, spoke with pupils and teachers about pupils' learning and visited a number of lessons.
- We reviewed a range of safeguarding information, including the checks leaders make on the suitability of staff. We spoke with staff about the school's safeguarding policy and procedures.
- We reviewed a range of documentation provided by the school. We looked at the curriculum policy and plans, policies and documents relating to health and safety, and information which the school plans to provide to parents.
- We met with parents at the start of the school day. We considered 15 responses to Parent View and 11 free-text responses.
- We spoke with groups of pupils about bullying, behaviour, the school's curriculum and safeguarding. We observed lunchtime procedures and a farm school session. We also considered the 10 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- We met with staff to discuss their views and took into account the two responses to the staff survey.

## **Inspection team**

Claire Mirams, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Martin Bragg

Ofsted Inspector

## **Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements**

### **The school failed to 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(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
  - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 14 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that pupils are properly supervised through the appropriate deployment of school staff.
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
  - 16(a) the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and
  - 16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

#### **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;
  - 18(2)(c) the proprietor carries out appropriate checks to confirm in respect of each such person-
    - 18(2)(c)(iii) the person's right to work in the United Kingdom.
- 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 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.

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