

Magdalen Court School

Victoria Park Road, Exeter, Devon EX2 4NU

Inspection date

5 March 2020

Overall outcome

The school is unlikely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school provision is implemented

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2)(a)–2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(i) and 3(b)

- The school's curriculum is suitably wide-ranging and covers all of the required disciplines set out in the independent school standards (ISS). Teaching staff create a nurturing and safe environment for pupils. Consequently, teaching fosters pupils' interest and desire to achieve. Pupils benefit from the school's in-depth personal, social and health education programme. Assemblies and tutorials develop pupils' understanding of British values. Curriculum plans include the opportunity for pupils to build on their knowledge over time and to seek appropriate qualifications. Pupils benefit from effective careers advice and guidance. The curriculum is not compromised. Leaders' aspirations and the careers programme are equally high for all pupils.
- The standards in these paragraphs are likely to be met.

Paragraph 2(1)–2(1)(b)(i), 2(2), 2(2)(g), 2(2)(h), 3(a), 3(c) and 3(d)

- This material change inspection considered the school's proposal to change to special school status. Two-thirds of current pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders' systems to ensure the transfer of information from previous schools are underdeveloped. Leaders have not ensured that teachers are fully aware of the objectives set out in pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans. Leaders and teachers do not have a strong enough understanding of the needs, aptitudes and prior attainment of these pupils. Consequently, teachers' plans and approaches do not meet the needs of pupils with SEND well enough. Procedures to ensure that advice from specialists, such as occupational therapists, is followed are weak. Pupils' academic development is hampered as a result.
- The standards in these paragraphs are likely to be unmet.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a)–(b), 9, 9(a)–9(c), 11, 14, 16, 16(a) and 16(b)

- Leaders, including the headteacher and proprietor, have a keen awareness of the need to safeguard pupils and promote their welfare. They have good knowledge of current safeguarding requirements, as well as health and safety legislation. Their records show detailed and regular checks. Trustees are swift to act when potential hazards are identified on the school site.
- The safeguarding and associated health and safety policies are published on the school's website. These are up to date and comply with the latest statutory requirements, such as in 'Keeping children safe in education'.
- Leaders have recently updated the school's behaviour and positive-handling policies, following a recent incident which led to a parental complaint. Leaders have since strengthened the school's induction policies for pupils and staff. Consequently, leaders now have a better understanding of pupils' behaviours and anxieties when they join the school. More information and improved training have resulted in staff who are well placed to manage pupils' behaviour appropriately and with due sensitivity.
- Leaders make sure that there are high levels of staff supervision. Daily pre- and after-school briefings ensure that staff are deployed effectively.
- Comprehensive risk assessments are in place for the premises and activities pupils take part in. The educational visits leader keeps a close overview of any risk assessments and reviews teachers' plans prior to any visits.
- The standards in these paragraphs are likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1)(c)

- Leaders actively promote the well-being of pupils through appropriate safeguarding arrangements and a strong programme for pupils' personal, social and health education.
- The standard in this paragraph is likely to be met.

Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)

- Leaders have not ensured that all the ISS are likely to be have been met. They have not yet ensured that the systems are in place and suitably robust to meet the specific needs of pupils with EHC plans.
- The standard in these paragraphs is likely to be unmet.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school is unlikely 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, as set out in the annex of this report.

School details

Unique reference number	113623
DfE registration number	878/6045
Inspection number	10146311

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	Other independent school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	John Jenner Senior
Chair	John Jenner Junior
Headteacher	Sarah Wrightson
Annual fees (day pupils)	£6,000–12,000
Telephone number	01392 494919
Website	www.magdalencourtschool.co.uk
Email address	head@magdalencourtschool.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	2–4 July 2019

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	5 to 18	5 to 18	5 to 18
Number of pupils on the school roll	54	180	250

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	49	100
Number of part-time pupils	2	10
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	36	
Of which, number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan	36	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	34	10

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	6	15
Number of part-time teaching staff	5	15
Number of staff in the welfare provision	8	40

Information about this school

- Magdalen Court School is a co-educational, non-selective day school registered for 250 pupils aged between five and 18 years of age.
- Currently, two-thirds of the pupils on the school's roll have an EHC plan. Most pupils are placed through local authorities.

- The school's previous standard inspection was in July 2019. At this time, it was found to require improvement to be good.

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 consider whether the school could add pupils with SEND to its registration status.
- The registration authority for independent schools also asked the inspector to consider wider leadership and management issues following a complaint.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher, the leader for SEND and the behaviour lead to discuss the proposed changes. She reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including policies and procedures, pupils' EHC plans, individual support plans, risk assessments and other records maintained by school staff. The inspector also met with two school improvement partners and a trustee.
- The inspector also reviewed material available on the school's website.

Inspection team

Tracy Hannon, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school is unlikely to meet the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if–
 - 2(1)(b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work–
 - 2(1)(b)(i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an EHC plan; and
 - 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph 2(1)(a), the matters are–
 - 2(2)(g) where the school has pupils above compulsory school age, a programme of activities which is appropriate to their needs;
 - 2(2)(h) that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress;
- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school–
 - 3(a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;
 - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
 - 3(d) shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons;

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.

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