

Greenwich Steiner School

Woodlands, 90 Mycenae Road, Greenwich, London SE3 7SE

Inspection date:

8 June 2020

Overall outcome

The school is likely 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

All paragraphs

- The school's proposed curriculum for pupils in Years 10 and 11 (classes 9 and 10) covers the full range of experiences. Proposed schemes of work for each subject and year group provide clear evidence of the detail of this curriculum. They show how leaders' intentions are to be implemented and refer to national curriculum documents. For example, the scheme for mathematics identifies aims, content and structure. The content is to be taught through three 40-minute 'skills' lessons each week plus two 'main lesson topic blocks'. These lesson topic blocks aim to allow pupils to explore concepts and develop their understanding. The example provided by the school is 'the geometry of conic sections'. This is age appropriate and as challenging as the national curriculum.
- A similar structure is used for English and science. In science, the scheme of work covers physics, chemistry and biology. Schemes for French identify the study of French history as well as the language. Work on research skills links to science and social science, while history and geography are covered in the main topic blocks. Aesthetic, creative, technological and physical education are detailed carefully in the proposed programme. There is also detail about what is to be taught and approaches to learning.
- The curriculum is based on the school's particular ethos that emphasises what is referred to as 'a holistic and nurturing education'. During the video conference with leaders they spoke of the 'woven' curriculum and how subjects are linked through common threads. The proposed schemes of work show how this is to be put into practice. Leaders' aim to inspire 'children to develop a love of learning' is represented fully in the proposed curriculum for Years 10 and 11.
- Careers education and guidance is well documented. Documents show that Years 7, 8 and 9 are introduced to careers through specific lessons. For example, pupils carry out their own skills audit, and learn about gender inequality and time management.

Proposals for careers in Years 10 and 11 include employability skills, the labour market and work experience.

- Procedures to assess pupils' performance are clearly documented. Leaders intend to use the New Zealand Certificate of Steiner Education, Levels 1, 2 and 3. This is recognised as equivalent to other international and national qualifications and is accepted by British universities.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is secure. Additional pupils with an education, health and care plan will have, like existing pupils, a bespoke learning programme.
- The independent school standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change is implemented.

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

All paragraphs

- Leaders' proposed schemes of work include details of the personal, social, health and economic education programme. This reflects the aims of the school and ensures that pupils are encouraged to respect other people in line with the Equality Act 2010. The programme emphasises personal safety, sexual and emotional health, substance misuse and lifestyle choices.
- The modern history scheme of work refers unambiguously to political systems and theories, British values and institutions, and equal rights. Assemblies, visits and the social studies programme provide opportunities for pupils to gain an understanding of different religious and cultural traditions. These opportunities are boosted by extra-curricular activities. Leaders confirm that they are introducing the Duke of Edinburgh's scheme from September.
- The independent school standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change is implemented.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 7(a) and 7(b)

- Leaders' safeguarding policy is thorough. There are appropriate arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school. Arrangements have due regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- The safeguarding policy refers clearly to female genital mutilation, children missing in education, child sexual exploitation, and radicalisation and extremism. The designated safeguarding leads are identified and there is information about how to recognise signs of abuse.
- Training for staff is comprehensive and up to date. Through the designated lead and deputy lead for safeguarding, the school has good relationships with outside agencies and the local authority. A named governor is responsible for safeguarding and monitors how effectively the policy is implemented.

Paragraphs 11, 12, 14, 16, 16(a) and 16(b)

- There is a detailed health and safety policy that provides well-defined guidance for staff, parents and governors. Systems for checking health and safety around the school are robust. For example, leaders have checked that the water supply is free of Legionella and act swiftly to address risks.
- Leaders have carried out a health and safety audit and drawn up an action plan to address the identified risks. These have been tackled successfully. For example, the policy on contractors working in the school has been upgraded. Portable electrical equipment has been tested in line with legal requirements.
- An external company has carried out a fire-risk assessment and action has been taken to address the hazards identified. This has included ensuring that there are trained fire marshals and that hazard signage is appropriate.
- This material change inspection was conducted without visiting the school site because of COVID-19 (coronavirus). As a result, I am unable to provide the full level of assurance that the standards in Part 3 are likely to be met.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

All paragraphs

- Leaders maintain a detailed record of the vetting checks they make on all staff. This includes support staff, visiting therapists and volunteers such as governors, parents and carers. The record covers all pre-employment checks, including details of the references for staff.
- The headteacher and proprietor state that it is likely additional teaching staff will be appointed to add capacity if the material change is granted.
- The independent school standards in this part are likely to be met if the material change is implemented.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

All paragraphs

- As part of the inspection, detailed building plans were scrutinised and a video tour of the school site was carried out. This showed that the rooms proposed for classes 9 and 10 are of a suitable size for up to 10 pupils. In addition, changing and shower facilities are available for pupils aged 11 years or over. There is a first-aid room that includes water, and a toilet is close by. Lighting and heating are suitable and drinking water is available in classrooms and marked as such.
- The headteacher stated that in the longer term, the school was looking for new premises that would increase the capacity of the accommodation.
- As with Part 3 of the independent school standards, I am unable to provide the full level of assurance that the standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

All paragraphs

- Leaders have ensured that the standards checked during this inspection are likely to be met if the material change is granted.
- There is a full range of appropriately detailed policies that are available to parents on request and through the school's website. The proprietor and leaders have a firm understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities and carry out suitable vetting checks on staff.
- The curriculum is broad, providing the full range of experiences for pupils. Detailed schemes of work show how these are to be implemented, including subject timetables and weekly topics. Arrangements to assess pupils' performance are secure, including checking that assessments are accurate. For example, the school's assessment practice is moderated by the New Zealand body responsible for awarding the Certificate of Steiner Education.
- The accommodation has suitable space to accommodate the increase in the number of pupils from 180 to 200. This includes sufficient washing and toilet facilities.

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	132066
DfE registration number	203/6299
Inspection number	10143802

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	Greenwich Steiner School Initiative
Chair	Bastien Hibon
Headteacher	Adrian Dow
Annual fees (day pupils)	£7,500 to £8,100
Telephone number	020 8858 4404
Website	https://www.greenwichsteinerschool.org.uk
Email address	admin@greenwichsteinerschool.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	27–29 November 2018

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	3 to 14	3 to 16	3 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	180	200	200

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	130	150
Number of part-time pupils	50	50
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	12	N/A
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	1	N/A
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	1	N/A

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	21	22
Number of part-time teaching staff	22	22
Number of staff in the welfare provision	N/A	N/A

Information about this school

- Greenwich Steiner School is an independent co-educational day school registered for pupils aged between three and 14 years.
- There are five kindergarten classes, three on the main school site and two at the nearby St George's Church.
- The kindergarten classes include children aged from rising three to six plus. Those up to age five follow the early years foundation stage curriculum, with agreed exemptions from the Department for Education (DfE). The early years provision is exempt from teaching phonics, technology and some aspects of mathematics.

- Admission to the school is non-selective. There are 180 pupils on the roll, of whom 61 children, aged between three and five years old, are in the kindergarten. Currently, there are five classes in the lower school and two classes in the middle school.
- The headteacher took up post in September 2016. He is supported by a senior leadership team. The governing body is the proprietorial body of the school.
- The school follows the Steiner Waldorf curriculum. The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The previous standard inspection in November 2018, judged that the school required improvement.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the DfE during the COVID-19 pandemic and conducted remotely. This was due to restrictions placed on non-essential travel.
- The school has applied to the DfE to make a material change to its registration, increasing the maximum number of pupils on roll from 180 to 200. I checked whether the school would be likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the DfE approves the material change.
- I scrutinised a wide range of documents provided by the school including policies on: safeguarding, health and safety, plans of the building, staff training records and vetting procedures. Details of the proposed curriculum were analysed.
- I held a video conference with the headteacher, senior leaders and the proprietor to discuss the material change request and the proposed arrangements.

Inspection team

Brian Oppenheim, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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