

My Choice School Arundel

2 Yeomans Nursery, Warningcamp, Arundel, West Sussex, West Sussex BN18 9QY

Inspection dates

28 September 2020

Overall outcome

The school is not likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school provision is implemented

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7

- Leaders make sure that staff have thorough and regular training about how to keep pupils safe. In particular, newly appointed staff are prepared well so they gain knowledge about safeguarding matters prior to starting at the school.
- Leaders take into account the latest government information about keeping pupils safe, when drawing up policies and procedures. A suitable safeguarding policy is published on the school's website and is compliant with current guidelines.
- Safeguarding records are kept meticulously. Leaders discuss and check safeguarding procedures regularly.

Paragraph 11

- Leaders have developed a comprehensive health and safety policy that is adapted to the school's context and pupils' needs. Leaders record their health and safety checks diligently.

Paragraph 12

- Leaders make sure that they comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. They commission an independent fire advisory body to carry out a fire risk assessment on an annual basis. Records of fire equipment checks and fire evacuation reports are in good order. The school will undertake a fire risk assessment of the new extension to the building once it has been completed and before it is used by pupils and staff.

Paragraph 14

- Currently, there is a teacher and a teaching assistant supervising each class. There is an average of five pupils in each class. When numbers of pupils are increased, leaders propose to add extra classes rather than increase class sizes. Leaders propose that the ratio of staff to pupils will stay the same as the school roll increases.

Paragraph 16, (16a) and 16(b)

- Leaders have produced an effective risk assessment policy. Documents show that staff have thought carefully about the potential hazards that pupils and staff may encounter. The actions taken to mitigate against such risks are recorded clearly.
- The additional space needed for the proposed increase in pupil numbers is an extension to a current building. Leaders consider that the current building risk assessments will be broadened to include the new extension.
- Records show that staff consider carefully the risks associated with pupils' individual needs. Leaders plan in detail how new pupils will integrate successfully into the school community.
- All the requirements that were checked are likely to continue to be met if the Department for Education (DfE) decides to approve implementation of the material change.

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

Paragraph 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21

- Leaders carry out all the required checks prior to employing staff. Staff files are kept in meticulous order showing evidence of all the checks that have been made.
- These checks are recorded suitably in an electronic register, and it is monitored regularly by the head of education.
- The school does not use supply staff.
- All the requirements that were checked are likely to continue to be met if the DfE decides to approve implementation of the material change.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 and 31

- The school is situated in a rural setting and consists of three buildings arranged around a large grassed central area. One of the school's present buildings is being extended to accommodate additional pupils should the material change be approved. The extension is a mirror image of the existing building and likely to be appropriate. However, it was not possible to judge whether the finished building will be suitable because, at the time of the visit, the building was not yet completed.
- All existing buildings are kept in good repair, are lit well and have suitable sound proofing.
- Toilet facilities will be sufficient in number to accommodate the extra pupils. Current facilities are clean and provide hot and cold running water.
- A suitable medical room is available for the short-term care of sick or injured pupils. The room has washing facilities and is near a toilet.
- Suitable drinking water is provided for pupils.
- Because the building work on additional accommodation is not yet completed, the requirements are unlikely to be met at this time.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34

- The proprietorial body ensures that the leaders of the school have the skills and knowledge to meet the needs of pupils well.
- Leadership capacity has been strengthened recently. A new deputy headteacher supports the headteacher and there are plans to appoint another senior leader. The head of education, who oversees the work of this school, has sharpened procedures to check how well independent school standards are met.
- The proprietorial representative with responsibility for governance has regular meetings with the head of education to check on the progress the school is making. The system of proprietorial checks contributes well to ensuring that the independent school standards are met consistently over time.
- Leaders have considered well how a further ten pupils may affect procedures to keep pupils safe. They plan to enrol the extra pupils over an extended period of time as a gradual process. Staff capacity will be increased accordingly.
- All the requirements are likely to continue to be met if the DfE decides to approve implementation of the material change. However, for the purposes of this material change inspection, Part 8 is unlikely to be met at this time, because Part 5 is unlikely to be met due to the new accommodation not being ready at the time of the inspection.

School details

Unique reference number	135111
DfE registration number	938/6272
Inspection number	10146408

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 special school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	My Choice Children's Homes Ltd
Chair	Alex Hyland
Headteacher	Ms Jennifer Durlston-Powell
Annual fees (day pupils)	£45,000
Telephone number	01903 898 060
Website	www.my-choice-homes.com
Email address	a.murphy@my-choice-homes.com
Date of previous standard inspection	19–21 November 2019

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16	not applicable	not applicable
Number of pupils on the school roll	13	30	30

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	not applicable

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	13	30
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	13	30
Of which, number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan	12	30
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	12	30

Staff

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

Information about this school

- The proprietor is My Choice Children's homes Ltd, which also runs children's homes across West Sussex, East Sussex and Surrey. My Choice School Arundel is one of two schools belonging to the organisation. The head of education oversees education provision across My Choice schools.
- This school is for pupils who have social, emotional and mental health needs which lead to them being unable to access or sustain placements in other schools. Most have had significant disruption to, and gaps in, their previous schooling. Most are children looked after and have an education, health and care plan. Many have attachment and anxiety disorders.

- A deputy headteacher was appointed in January 2020. There have been two new staff appointments in September 2020.
- Pupils attend alternative provision at 'Fusion tutoring', which combines martial arts with functional skills. A small number of pupils also attend courses at Brinsbury College and Chichester College.
- The school last had a full standard inspection in November 2019, when the school was judged to require improvement.

Information about this inspection

- This material change inspection was carried out at the request of the DfE because the school had applied to increase the number of pupils on roll from up to 20 to up to 30.
- Meetings were held with the head of education and the deputy headteacher. A telephone discussion was held with a member of the proprietorial body.
- The inspector toured the premises.
- The inspector looked at a range of policies and documents connected with health and safety, safeguarding pupils and governance.
- The school's website was viewed.

Inspection team

Sue Child, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school is unlikely to meet the following independent school standards

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 25 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured.
- 26 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the acoustic conditions and sound insulation of each room or other space are suitable, having regard to the nature of the activities which normally take place therein.
- 27 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 27(a) the lighting in each room or other internal space is suitable, having regard to the nature of the activities which normally take place therein; and
 - 27(b) external lighting is provided in order to ensure that people can safely enter and leave the school premises.

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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