

Wolfdale School

Cropston Road, Anstey, Leicester, Leicestershire LE7 7BP

Inspection date

9 December 2020

Overall outcome

The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)

- The previous inspection found that the school's safeguarding policy referred to out-of-date statutory guidance. Therefore, staff, parents and carers did not have the latest information regarding keeping children safe. In addition, not all staff had received relevant safeguarding training.
- The arrangements for safeguarding pupils are effective. The school's safeguarding policy, which is on the school's website, is up to date. It takes into account current government requirements. Staff receive regular safeguarding training and updates. They know and understand their responsibilities. They know what to do if they have any concerns about the safety, well-being and welfare of any pupil.
- The proprietors and senior leaders ensure that safer recruitment practices are in place. All pre-employment checks are undertaken before an adult starts working with pupils. These checks are recorded on the school's single central register.
- Pupils say they feel safe. They are confident to speak to an adult if they have any worries or concerns, knowing that they will be listened to. Pupils say that they are taught to be safe in different situations. They are taught to recognise and respond to risks, for example when playing games online.

Paragraph 11

- The previous inspection found that the school's health and safety policy was out of date and not fit for purpose. It was unclear when the last health and safety audit had taken place.
- Following the last inspection, the proprietors commissioned a health and safety audit, which was conducted by an external provider. Leaders have written an up-to-date health and safety policy and a detailed health and safety action plan that addresses potential risks.
- Leaders have appointed a health and safety officer and staff have received relevant training. The policy is being implemented effectively.

■ *Paragraph 12*

- The previous inspection found that the fire risk assessment policy was out of date and fire evacuation practices were not taking place frequently enough. Procedures for signing pupils off site were not robust enough, meaning that fire marshals would not be able to account for all pupils in the event of a fire evacuation.
- Since the last inspection, leaders have commissioned an independent fire risk assessment, developed a fire policy, trained staff and conducted regular evacuation drills. Leaders' ongoing monitoring and evaluation ensure that weaknesses are identified and are promptly addressed.
- Leaders have developed a robust approach to maintaining accurate attendance registers. They have also established procedures for signing pupils and staff in and out when they arrive at or leave the school site. This enables fire marshals to account for all pupils in the event of a fire evacuation.
- Leaders have ensured that the requirements in paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b), 11 and 12 have now been met.
- The standards in part 3 are now met in full.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(c), 32(3)(d)

- The previous inspection found that the proprietors had not ensured that the school's safeguarding and child protection policy had regard to the most recent guidance from the Secretary of State. The proprietors had not ensured that the school's health and safety policy was appropriate and up to date.
- The safeguarding policy is available on the school website. It is available for parents to download. A paper copy is available should this be requested. The policy meets current statutory guidelines.
- The health and safety policy was updated in March 2020. It was developed alongside the health and safety action plan. The policy is available on the school's website.
- Leaders have ensured that the requirements in paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(c) and 32(3)(d) have now been met.
- The standards in part 6 are now met in full.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33, 33(f), 33(g), 33(h), 33(i), 33(i)(i), 33(i)(ii), 33(j)(i)

- The previous inspection found issues related to the school's complaints policy. Inspectors noted that the proprietors had not ensured that the complaints policy had been drawn up and implemented to deal with complaints from parents and pupils effectively. For example, the policy did not include the provision of a panel, consisting of three people, one of whom is independent of the management of the school. The procedure did not enable parents to be accompanied to a panel hearing if they wish.
- Leaders have developed the school's complaints policy to meet the relevant guidance in relation to complaints procedures. The updated policy is available on the school's website.

- Leaders have ensured that the requirements in paragraph 33, 33(f), 33(g), 33(h), 33(i), 33(i)(i), 33(i)(ii) and 33(j)(i) have now been met.
- The standards in part 7 are now met in full.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)

- The previous inspection found that the proprietors had not ensured that they and other leaders were demonstrating good knowledge and skills to ensure that the independent school standards were consistently met. Inspectors noted that the well-being of pupils was not actively promoted because key policies referred to out-of-date statutory guidance and that the fire safety procedures were not robust.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have commissioned the services of an external school improvement partner to help them understand their responsibilities more fully. This includes reviewing the school's provision and developing a school development plan that builds on the action plan submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) following the most recent inspection.
- The proprietors and senior leaders continue to develop and refine management processes. These processes check policies and practices against the independent school standards.
- Leaders are committed to promoting the well-being of pupils.
- The proprietors and leaders demonstrate good knowledge and skills to ensure that the independent school standards are consistently met.
- Leaders have ensured that the requirements in paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c) have now been met.
- The standards in part 8 are now met in full.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

The school now meets 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.
- 11 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.
- 12 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Part 6. Provision of information

- 32(1) The standard about the provision of information by the school is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 32(1)(c) particulars of the arrangements for meeting the standard contained in paragraph 7 are published on the school's internet website or, where no such website exists, are provided to parents on request.
- 32(3)(d) particulars of arrangements for meeting the standards contained in paragraphs 9, 10, 11 and 13.

■ Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

- 33 The standard about how complaints are handled is met if the proprietor ensures that a complaints procedure is drawn up and effectively implemented which deals with the handling of complaints from parents of pupils and which-
 - 33(f) where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e), makes provision for a hearing before a panel appointed by or on behalf of the proprietor and consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint;
 - 33(g) ensures that, where there is a panel hearing of a complaint, one panel member is independent of the management/running of the school;
 - 33(h) allows parent to attend and accompanied at a panel hearing if they wish;

- 33(i) provides for the panel to make findings and recommendations and stipulates that a copy of those findings and recommendations is–
- 33(i)(i) provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about; and
- 33(i)(ii) available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and headteacher;
- 33(j) provides for a written record to be kept of all complaints that are made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e) and–
- 33(j)(i) whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing.

Part 8. Quality of leadership and management

- 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.

School details

Unique reference number	142659
DfE registration number	855/6036
Inspection number	10171897

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

Type of school	Other independent special school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	7 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	35
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Gemma Thompson and Antony Blanchard
Headteacher	Sachin Dogra
Annual fees (day pupils)	£42,500–£64,000
Telephone number	01162 355600
Website	www.wolfdaleschool.leics.sch.uk
Email address	office@wolfdaleschool.leics.sch.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	12–14 September 2017

Information about this school

- Wolfdale School is an independent school situated in the village of Anstey, Leicestershire. The school has a second site at Victoria Road, Leicester, LE4 5EX.
- The school offers education to pupils with autism spectrum disorder and additional forms of learning and communication difficulties. All pupils have education, health and care plans and are funded through various local authorities.
- Wolfdale School aims to provide pupils with 'bespoke educational packages that maximise achievement and prepare children and young people for adult life'.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

- Following the material change inspection in September 2019, leaders submitted an action plan indicating how it would tackle the unmet standards. The plan was deemed acceptable by Ofsted in January 2020.

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 monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- The inspection was commissioned by the DfE during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic of 2020. The inspection evidence was gathered to check whether the school meets specific independent school standards.
- Following the last material change inspection in September 2019, the DfE required the school to prepare an action plan. Ofsted evaluated the plan in January 2020. The DfE judged the plan to be acceptable.
- The inspection was carried out with 30 minutes' notice given to the school.
- The inspector met with one of the proprietors, the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. He spoke with several member of staff and a group of pupils.
- A wide range of documents were examined. These included the school's health and safety and fire audits. He also reviewed a range of policies and safeguarding documents.

Inspection team

Chris Davies, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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