

Eton Dorney Independent Therapeutic School

Lake End Road, Dorney, Berkshire, SL4 6QS

Inspection dates

19 January 2021

Overall outcome

The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change is implemented

Main inspection findings

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

Paragraph 5–5(d)(iii)

- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is given a high priority by leaders and staff. A recent review of the personal, social and health education (PSHE) scheme of work has brought new focus on this aspect of the school's work. As a result, leaders and staff have embarked on changes to the content and delivery of PSHE in order to make it more relevant to the school's pupils.
- Pupils learn about British values through the taught curriculum and through additional timetabled sessions such as reflection periods and 'newsround' sessions for older pupils. Pupils are taught about equalities as part of their day-to-day curriculum. Subjects such as racism are tackled head on, as is bullying if this becomes a problem.
- Current restrictions due to COVID-19 (coronavirus) have temporarily halted aspects such as visits outside of school to support pupils' cultural development. However, pupils are still able to learn about tolerance, respect and understanding of the different cultures, faiths and beliefs of others, including those of their peers and of staff at the school.
- Leaders have recently updated the behaviour policy, focusing more on restorative justice and facilitated by a 'recovery ladder' approach. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own behaviour and to understand the impact this may have on others. Since the new policy was introduced, the school has seen significant falls in the number of behaviour incidents and physical interventions by staff.
- Leaders have carefully considered the impact of increasing pupil numbers, especially when the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are taken into account. They have ensured that all standards in this part are likely to continue to be met if the material change is approved.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7–7(b), 32(1) and 32(1)(c)

- The proprietor has ensured that the arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils are strong. Leaders understand their responsibilities to safeguard

pupils. They take appropriate actions when they become aware of problems or potential risks to the well-being of pupils or of staff.

- Procedures to recruit new staff include the appropriate pre-employment checks. Staff safeguarding training is up to date and takes into account additional risks to pupils' well-being posed by COVID-19. The school's safeguarding policy, which is published on the school's website, is compliant with current guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Paragraphs 9 and 10

- Suitable behaviour and anti-bullying policies are in place. Staff are subject to ongoing training to ensure that they understand the complex needs of pupils at the school. Leaders have carefully considered the impact of any additional pupils on current pupils should the material change be approved.
- Staff-to-pupil ratios will remain high. Additional therapy and pastoral staff will be recruited, assuming the material change is approved.

Paragraphs 11–16(b)

- Leaders have ensured that the school's premises are safe for pupils and staff. Levels of supervision for pupils are high. A well-equipped first aid room is available should it be required. Key staff have attended suitable first aid training.
- Specialist staff are responsible for the welfare, health and safety aspects of the school's provision. Fire risk assessments are in place and carried out by suitable qualified external consultants. Alarms and equipment such as fire extinguishers are maintained and serviced regularly. Attendance and admissions registers are administered appropriately. A written risk assessment policy is available. Risk assessments are in place for different aspects of the school's premises and to cover a range of activities that pupils and staff undertake.
- Leaders have ensured that all of these standards are likely to continue to be met if the material change is approved.

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

Paragraphs 18(2)–18(3), 19(2)–19(3), 20(6)–20(6)(c) and 21(1)–21(7)(b)

- School leaders understand the full range of checks that need to be made on adults involved with the school. The proprietor's human resources team is available to support school leaders with aspects of the recruitment and employment of staff.
- Recruitment procedures are sound. Senior staff who are involved with recruitment of teaching and support staff have attended appropriate safer recruitment training. The school does not use supply agency staff.
- Despite restrictions due to COVID-19, leaders have ensured that the full range of checks on newly employed staff have been carried out diligently. Details of these checks are contained in the school's single central register. Some minor amendments were required to this register during the inspection to make it fully compliant with current requirements.
- The correct checks have been made on all members of the proprietorial body.

- School leaders have ensured that all relevant standards in Part 4 are likely to continue to be met if the material change is approved.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1)–24(1)(b) and 25–29(1)(b)

- In order to accommodate additional pupils, the proprietor has renovated the first floor of the school building which was previously residential accommodation. This has provided five additional classrooms, two therapy rooms, and other communal spaces.
- The school's premises are maintained well and are suitable for their purpose. Facilities such as staff and pupil toilets and washing facilities are modern and equipped well.
- The premises are clean and bright. Lighting and acoustics are suitable in teaching and communal spaces. External lighting ensures that staff and pupils can enter and exit the buildings safely. Drinking water is available and suitably labelled.
- Adequate outdoor space is available for pupils to play. Most of the school's physical education curriculum is normally provided off site, but present restrictions mean that staff are successfully utilising the school's pleasant grounds for this purpose.
- Leaders have ensured that all relevant standards in Part 5 are likely to continue to be met if the material change is approved.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1)–34(1)(c)

- Leaders have carefully considered the impact that additional pupils will have on the quality of provision should the material change be approved. Suitable additional accommodation is ready to use. The proprietor is actively seeking and recruiting additional qualified staff to cater for a gradual increase in pupil numbers should the proposal be approved.
- Leaders and managers are experienced and dedicated. A new headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed since September 2020. Both are experienced in working with pupils with complex SEND.
- The proprietor recently reviewed arrangements for governance at the school. A new model has been introduced which will introduce a greater degree of independent, external scrutiny, in order to inform the proprietor of the effectiveness of the school.
- Current leaders and the proprietorial body have demonstrated that they can actively and successfully promote the well-being of pupils. Together, they are effective in ensuring that the school meets the independent school standards over time.
- The standards in Part 8 are likely to continue to be met should the material change be approved.

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	145298
DfE registration number	825/6048
Inspection number	10167830

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 special school
Proprietor	Calcot Services for Children Limited
Chair	Rachel Redgwell
Headteacher	Melissa Farnham
Annual fees (day pupils)	£48,750 to £74,000
Telephone number	01628 667475
Website	www.etondorneyspecialschool.co.uk
Email address	etondorneyschool@csfc.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	6–8 November 2018

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	8 to 18	Not applicable	Not applicable
Number of pupils on the school roll	31	Up to 50	Up to 50

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	Up to 34	Up to 50
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Up to 34	Up to 50
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Up to 34	Up to 50
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Up to 34	Up to 50

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	5	8
Number of part-time teaching staff	2	3

Information about this school

- The school was registered by the Department for Education (DfE) in December 2017. The school accepted its first pupils in March 2018.
- The school's first standard inspection took place in November 2018 when its effectiveness was judged to be good and all the independent school standards were found to be met. The school was also subject to a material change inspection because of a request to increase pupil numbers to 34 in September 2019.

- The current headteacher was appointed in October 2020. Until recently, governance arrangements were through a local governing body. These arrangements ceased in November 2020 and governance is now provided by a range of the proprietor's officers and independent, external consultants appointed by the proprietor.
- The school is set in a sixteenth-century grade two listed building. It is situated on the edge of the village of Dorney, close to Windsor in Berkshire.
- Pupils at the school have social, emotional and mental health needs. Some pupils also have autism spectrum disorder. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The proprietor is Calcot Services for Children Limited, which also runs a number of children's homes across Berkshire, South Oxfordshire and Hampshire. Eton Dorney is the only school belonging to the proprietor.
- The majority of pupils who attend the school are looked after by local authorities.
- The school does not presently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was commissioned by the DfE during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- This inspection was commissioned because the school had applied to make a material change to its registration, namely to increase the number of pupils from 34 to 50. This was the first material change inspection in respect to this particular change.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the school's pastoral manager. The inspector also met online with two of the proprietor's officers, including the managing director, as well as the proprietor's human resource manager.
- The inspector toured appropriate parts of the school's premises and accommodation, including new classrooms, therapy rooms, and communal areas created to cater for the proposed increase in pupil numbers.
- The inspector checked a range of policies and documents, including the school's single central register. He also reviewed the school's website and other records regarding the welfare, health and safety of pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Clive Close, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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