

Ocean Lodge Independent School

8 Trinity Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex SS0 7PU

Inspection date

4 March 2021

Overall outcome

The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(g)

- At the standard inspection of January 2019, this standard was not met because the quality of teaching was too variable across subjects. Teachers' expectations of what pupils could achieve were too low and pupils were too reliant on staff to help them complete work. Staff did not receive enough training to help them improve the quality of teaching. Pupils' progress was not recorded systematically, and staff did not set or check homework routinely. Consequently, pupils did not make consistently good progress over time.
- Paragraphs 3(b), 3(c) and 3(d) were met at the previous progress monitoring inspection in October 2019. Leaders had put in place effective systems to check pupils' understanding. Staff had been trained to develop their practice. Teachers mostly planned work which was matched to pupils' prior learning. Teachers devised interesting activities and set homework to help pupils learn. Pupils were focused on their work and understood what they were taught. Pupils' work in their English, history and science books was of a good quality.
- However, the work pupils completed in mathematics was not sufficiently well sequenced and pupils' misconceptions were not addressed quickly enough. Pupils did not learn and remember key mathematical concepts as well as they should have. Pupils' progress in mathematics was not as strong as it needed to be. As a result, paragraphs 3, 3(a) and 3(d) were not met.
- Leaders undertook to:
 - get pupils to undertake a baseline assessment to produce an accurate profile of their skills and aptitudes
 - make sure that staff planned more effective learning activities based on what pupils already knew and what new knowledge they needed to acquire in order to make at least good progress
 - set weekly homework to consolidate what pupils had been learning in lessons
 - send all teachers to three different good or outstanding schools

- personalise schemes of work so they took pupils' needs into account more precisely
 - set up a tracking system to identify pupils' progress and identify gaps in their knowledge
 - provide external training for staff, focusing on improving differentiation and increasing challenge, assessment and feedback.
- Teachers set work that is tailored to pupils' levels of understanding. Pupils are enthused to make good use of their time. Mathematics has improved because it is now underpinned by curriculum plans which set out what pupils need to know. These show the order in which pupils need to learn different aspects of mathematics. Teachers check what pupils have learned. Teachers adapt what pupils will work on next based on how well pupils have understood the concepts they have been taught. Pupils enjoy mathematics and learn well.
 - This independent school standard is now met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

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

Paragraph 13

Paragraphs 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- The arrangements the school makes to keep pupils safe are not effective. Leaders do not understand their statutory responsibilities well. They are not in a position to keep pupils safe, because they do not know enough about how to do so.
- The school's safeguarding procedures are out of date. They do not pay due regard to the most recent guidance issued by the secretary of state. The safeguarding policy gives inaccurate information about who to pass concerns to.
- Safeguarding records are poorly kept and incomplete. Information is not shared appropriately with staff who need to know it. This means that staff do not know enough about pupils' circumstances to keep them safe.
- The proprietor's procedures for acting on safeguarding concerns are inefficient. They hinder information being passed on to external agencies in a timely fashion. Leaders do not follow through with concerns sufficiently to make sure pupils get the help they need when they need it. This puts pupils at risk of harm.
- Leaders do not always respond effectively to behaviour which puts pupils and staff at risk. Punitive sanctions are sometimes used, rather than securing the support that individual pupils need.
- The school does not take appropriate steps to learn lessons from when things go wrong. For example, first aid practice has not improved as a result of a review of a serious incident.
- The use of physical restraint is not reviewed carefully enough. Risk assessments for pupils are not amended in line with changes in pupils' circumstances and needs.
- These independent school standards were met at the previous monitoring inspection and are now not met.

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

Paragraphs 18(2), 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(i), 18(2)(c)(iii), 18(3), 19(2), 19(2)(a), 19(2)(a)(i), 19(2)(a)(i)(aa), 19(2)(a)(i)(bb), 19(2)(a)(i)(cc), 19(2)(a)(ii), 19(2)(b), 19(2)(c), 19(2)(d), 19(2)(d)(i), 19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3), 21(1), 21(2), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(b), 21(5), 21(5)(a), 21(5)(a)(i), 21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(b), 21(5)(c)

- Leaders do not have sufficient understanding of the vetting processes which need to be carried out on members of staff. A number of the necessary pre-employment checks on staff have not been recorded on the school's single central record. A number of the required checks on staff have not been carried out. Leaders do not record whether checks have been carried out on staff who work at the school while employed by other organisations.
- Leaders do not review their record of pre-employment checks well enough. There are insufficient processes to make sure that adults who work at the school are vetted for their suitability.
- These independent school standards were met at the previous monitoring inspection and are now not met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(c), 32(1)(k)

- The safeguarding policy made available to parents is out of date.
- The school's website does not contain details of the arrangements for educating pupils remotely.
- These independent school standards were met at the previous monitoring inspection and are now not met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- This standard was not met at the time of the standard inspection in January 2019 because systems for monitoring pupils' progress were not embedded, teachers were not provided with training that helped them improve their practice, and improvement plans were not linked closely enough to increasing pupils' progress.
- At the time of the previous progress monitoring inspection, this independent school standard remained unmet. Leaders had developed effective systems for monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Leaders and the proprietor had developed a better understanding of the school's effectiveness. However, leaders had not ensured that all the independent school standards were met, and the governing body was at an early stage of development and so was not able to provide effective governance. The school improvement partner brought in to provide additional resources and expertise was new and had had limited impact.
- Leaders undertook to:
 - make all staff aware of the current inspection criteria in relation to teaching
 - ensure that the school improvement plan was clearly linked to improving pupils' progress

- make sure that training for staff and governors took account of statutory responsibilities, school improvement needs and individual areas for improvement identified during performance management
 - review and ensure implementation of all school policies
 - ensure that all staff had up-to-date job descriptions
 - make sure all independent school standards were met and routinely review them
 - arrange for the school improvement partner to train members of the governing body on their roles and responsibilities
 - arrange for the school improvement partner to review all key policies and provide professional advice.
- Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards relating to the quality of education provided are now met.
 - The work of the governing body has been slowed by the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus). For example, governors have not undertaken the training they need. They have not developed the skills they need to hold school leaders to account. The governing body has not evolved enough to provide effective governance.
 - Leaders no longer work with a school improvement partner.
 - Other school standards are now not met. Leaders do not have effective systems to keep pupils safe. They do not provide required information in an appropriate way.
 - This independent school standard continues to be unmet.

The school's application to make a material change

- The school has made a material change request to the Department for Education (DfE) to permanently increase the upper age range to 18 years. This request was considered as part of this progress monitoring inspection.
- The school does not have curriculum plans in place for post-16 provision. Leaders do not have provision to cater for the range of aptitudes of pupils who might attend the school. Not enough consideration is given to the personal, social, health and economic education older pupils are likely to need. There are no schemes of work to guide what teachers should teach. There are no frameworks against which teachers could check how well pupils have learned.
- The school does not have the plans and supporting documents it would need if the upper age range was increased.
- As well as the other standards which were not met as part of the progress monitoring inspection, the school is not likely to meet the standards contained in part 1 of the independent school standards if the material change request is approved.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet 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, as set out in the annex of this report. 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.

School details

Unique reference number	137562
DfE registration number	882/6010
Inspection number	10180711

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	Independent school
School status	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	7 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	5
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	3
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Mrs Sue Potton
Headteacher	Mrs Michelle Booth
Annual fees (day pupils)	£40,000
Telephone number	01702 332 181
Website	www.oceanlodgeschool.com
Email address	info@potton-homes.co.uk
Dates of previous standard inspection	29–31 January 2019

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	7 to 16 (temporarily increased to 18)	7 to 18 (permanently)	7 to 16 (no change)

Number of pupils on the school roll	5	Not applicable	Not applicable
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Reason for inspector's recommendations

The school is not likely to meet the independent school standards for the quality of education for post-16 students.

The school does not now meet several of the independent school standards which it did meet at the time of its previous standard inspection.

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Not applicable
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	3	Not applicable
Number of part-time pupils	0	Not applicable
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	5	Not applicable
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	5	Not applicable
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	5	Not applicable

Information about this school

- Ocean Lodge Independent School is owned by Potton Homes Ltd and is an independent special day school. It was last inspected in October 2019 to check on the progress it had made since the most recent standard inspection in January 2019.
- The proprietor is responsible for governance at the school. The proprietor is supported by a new governing body.

- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed.
- The school is currently registered to provide education for 13 pupils aged seven to 16 years. It has temporary approval from the DfE to educate pupils up to the age of 18 until July 2021.
- Local authorities fund pupils' placements at the school.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- Inspectors were aware during this inspection that serious allegations of a child protection nature were being investigated by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate allegations of this kind, actions taken by the school in response to the allegation(s) were considered alongside the other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.

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 not to comply with at its previous inspection.
- The inspection also considered the suitability of the school for a material change to permanently adjust the age range of pupils for which the school is registered.
- The DfE rejected the school's first action plan in July 2019.
- The first monitoring inspection of the school took place in October 2019. Two of the independent school standards remained not met. The school's action plan to address these areas of non-compliance was evaluated on 22 January 2020. It was deemed to be not acceptable.
- This is the school's second progress monitoring inspection since the standard inspection in January 2019. It was the school's first material change inspection to consider the school's proposed increase in age range. The DfE commissioned Ofsted to conduct this inspection at no notice.
- Inspectors spoke with leaders of the school, members of staff and a representative of the proprietor. The proprietor was not available during the inspection. Inspectors also spoke with representatives of Southend-on-Sea local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school's safeguarding policy, safeguarding files and the single central record of pre-employment checks. They reviewed risk assessments, the first aid policy and curriculum planning documents. Inspectors visited lessons throughout the day and spoke with all pupils attending school on the day of the inspection.

Inspection team

Andrew Hemmings, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Kim Pigram

Her Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain un-met at this inspection

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.

Standards that were met at the previous inspection, but are now judged to not be met at this inspection

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.
- 13 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that first aid is administered in a timely and competent manner by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written first aid policy.
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 16(a) the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and
 - 16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

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

- 18(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if–
 - 18(2)(b) no such person carries out work, or intends to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act, or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction;
 - 18(2)(c) the proprietor carries out appropriate checks to confirm in respect of each such person–

- 18(2)(c)(i) the person's identity; and
- 18(2)(c)(iii) the person's right to work in the United Kingdom.
- 18(3) The checks referred to in sub-paragraphs (2)(c) and (except where sub-paragraph (4) applies) (2)(e) must be completed before a person's appointment.
- 19(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if–
 - 19(2)(a) a person offered for supply by an employment business to the school only begins to work at the school if the proprietor has received–
 - 19(2)(a)(i) written notification from the employment business in relation to that person–
 - 19(2)(a)(i)(aa) that the checks referred to in paragraph 21(3)(a)(i) to (iv), (vii) and (b) have been made to the extent relevant to that person;
 - 19(2)(a)(i)(bb) that, where relevant to that person, an enhanced criminal record check has been made and that it or another employment business has obtained an enhanced criminal record certificate in response to such a check; and
 - 19(2)(a)(i)(cc) if the employment business has obtained such a certificate before the person is due to begin work at the school, whether it disclosed any matter or information; and
 - 19(2)(a)(ii) a copy of any enhanced criminal record certificate obtained by an employment business before the person is due to begin work at the school;
 - 19(2)(b) a person offered for supply by an employment business only begins work at the school if the proprietor considers that the person is suitable for the work for which the person is supplied;
 - 19(2)(c) before a person offered for supply by an employment business begins work at the school the person's identity is checked by the proprietor of the school (irrespective of any such check carried out by the employment business before the person was offered for supply);
 - 19(2)(d) the proprietor, in the contract or other arrangements which the proprietor makes with any employment business, requires the employment business to provide–
 - 19(2)(d)(i) the notification referred to in paragraph (a)(i); and
 - 19(2)(d)(ii) a copy of any enhanced criminal record certificate which the employment business obtains.
- 19(3) Except in the case of a person to whom sub-paragraph (4) applies, the certificate referred to in sub-paragraph (2)(a)(i)(bb) must have been obtained not more than 3 months before the date on which the person is due to begin work at the school.
- 21(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor keeps a register which shows such of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (3) to (7) as is applicable to the school in question.
- 21(2) The register referred to in sub-paragraph (1) may be kept in electronic form, provided that the information so recorded is capable of being reproduced in legible form.
- 21(3) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is–

- 21(3)(a) in relation to each member of staff ("S") appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether–
- 21(3)(a)(iii) a check was made to establish whether S is subject to any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction;
- 21(3)(b) in relation to each member of staff ("S"), whether a check was made to establish whether S is subject to a prohibition order or an interim prohibition order, including the date on which such check was completed.
- 21(5) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is, in relation to supply staff–
 - 21(5)(a) whether written notification has been received from the employment business that–
 - 21(5)(a)(i) checks corresponding to those referred to in sub-paragraph (3)(a)(i) to (iv), (vi) and (vii) have been made to the extent relevant to any such person; and
 - 21(5)(a)(ii) an enhanced criminal record check has been made and that it or another employment business has obtained an enhanced criminal record certificate in response to such a check,
 - 21(5)(b) whether a check has been made in accordance with paragraph 19(2)(e) together with the date the check was completed; and
 - 21(5)(c) where written notification has been received from the employment business in accordance with a contract or other arrangements referred to in paragraph 19(2)(d) that it has obtained an enhanced criminal record certificate, whether the employment business supplied a copy of the certificate to the school.

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(1)(k) particulars of the arrangements for meeting the requirement to provide remote education in paragraph 2 of the Coronavirus Act 2020 Provision of Remote Education (England) Temporary Continuity Direction given on 30th September 2020 by the Secretary of State for Education are published and maintained on the school's website or, where no such website exists, are provided to parents.

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)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

The school now meets the following requirements of the independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that 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(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.

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