

# New Direction

New Direction, Ringer Villa Farm, Ringer Lane, Clowne, Chesterfield, Derbyshire, S43 4BX

**Inspection date**

14 January 2022

**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 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(2)(i), 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(g), 4*

- The previous inspection identified a lack of ambition in the school's curriculum. Leaders have reviewed the curriculum to ensure that it provides pathways for pupils' future steps. Pupils are able to study for accredited qualifications, including GCSEs. Current pupils in key stage 4 are preparing for examinations in GCSE English, mathematics and science.
- The curriculum is organised around four areas: equine, core (English, mathematics and science), therapy, and life skills, which incorporates personal, social and health education and relationships and sex education. Leaders have written detailed curriculum plans for each area of the school's curriculum. These plans consider pupils' needs and abilities.
- Leaders have introduced a new assessment system. This helps teachers to understand what pupils already know and can do. Teachers use the assessment information to plan learning to meet pupils' needs. Teachers consider how to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, for example through providing resources and guidance materials.
- Leaders have introduced a new framework for the planning and delivery of pupils' learning. Teachers understand these new expectations. Learning is well structured and content builds on pupils' prior learning.
- Leaders provide a termly report to parents about pupils' progress and achievements.

*Paragraph 2(2), 2(2)(e), 2(2)(e)(i), 2(2)(e)(ii), 2(2)(e)(iii)*

- The previous inspection identified weaknesses in the school's provision for careers advice and guidance. Leaders have reviewed this aspect of the school's work. They have researched good practice and written plans to help pupils to understand the range of options for their future pathways and careers. These plans are in the early stages of implementation. Pupils take part in on-site work experience, for example by working with the equine staff.
- The independent school standards that were checked in this part are met.

### Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

#### *Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)*

- The last inspection found significant weaknesses in the school's safeguarding arrangements. Following this, leaders took immediate action to bring about rapid improvements. Leaders sought external advice and undertook additional training. The designated safeguarding leader is knowledgeable and has implemented effective safeguarding practices.
- Leaders have established effective systems for monitoring and recording safeguarding concerns. Records are well maintained and detailed. Leaders monitor safeguarding concerns well. They seek advice and support when needed. They work well with external agencies. They ensure that the appropriate authorities are informed about safeguarding matters when appropriate. Leaders ensure that pupils get the help they need quickly, for example when pupils need counselling.
- Leaders have ensured that staff understand their duty to raise any concerns they might have about an adult's conduct. Staff know how to report concerns to the appropriate authorities.
- The previous inspection identified safeguarding concerns in the school's arrangements for staff recruitment. Leaders are trained in safer recruitment and ensure that effective practices are implemented.
- Safeguarding arrangements are in keeping with the most up-to-date guidance issued by the Secretary of State. The school's safeguarding policy is comprehensive and published on the school's website.

#### *Paragraph 9, 9(a), 9(b), 9(c)*

- Leaders have introduced a new policy to support and manage pupils' behaviour. Staff and pupils understand leaders' expectations of behaviour. Pupils who struggle to manage their behaviour are supported well.
- Leaders have introduced a new electronic system to record pupils' behaviour. Positive behaviour is rewarded. Incidents of poor behaviour are followed up. The system helps staff to monitor pupils' behaviour and intervene when concerns arise.

#### *Paragraphs 11, 12, 15*

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have implemented a new health and safety policy. Leaders monitor the site and identify when maintenance or repairs are required.
- The proprietor has ensured that the school complies with the Fire Safety Order 2005. Leaders check equipment and alarms. Pupils and staff take part in regular fire evacuation drills. A planned evacuation took place during the inspection. All pupils and staff responded quickly and appropriately.
- Leaders maintain an up-to-date admission and attendance register. The register contains all required information, in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

#### *Paragraph 16, 16(a), 16(b)*

- Leaders have completed and implemented appropriate risk assessments. These cover the full range of activities at the school.

- Every pupil has a personalised risk assessment that identifies specific risks. Pupils' risk assessments are regularly reviewed and adapted accordingly.
- Appropriate risk assessments for other site users are in place. These are implemented well.
- The school meets the independent school standards that were checked in this part.

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

*Paragraphs 18(2), 18(2)(b), 19(2), 19(2)(a), 19(2)(a)(i), 19(2)(a)(i)(aa), 19(2)(1)(i)(dd), 19(2)(c), 19(2)(d), 19(2)(d)(i), 21(1), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(a)(iv), 21(3)(b), 21(5), 21(5)(a), 21(5)(a)(i), 21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(c)*

- Leaders understand the need to check staff's suitability to work with children. All relevant checks have been completed.
- The school's single central record meets requirements.
- The school meets the independent school standards in this part.

#### Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

*Paragraph 23(1), 23(1)(c)*

- The last inspection identified that suitable changing accommodation and showers were not made available to pupils aged 11 or over who receive physical education. Leaders have made arrangements for pupils to use the facilities at a local leisure centre when they take part in physical education. The school is currently undergoing refurbishments. Plans are in place to provide changing and shower facilities on site, once these refurbishments are complete.

*Paragraph 28(1), 28(1)(d)*

- Leaders have installed a new hot water system. This system provides hot water, of a suitable temperature, to washing facilities.

*Paragraph 25*

- Leaders have improved the quality of the site, including the internal classroom spaces and external teaching areas. Some aspects of the site remain in need of further repair. For example, two classrooms have damaged carpets which present a trip hazard, and the underside of one portable classroom is exposed. Leaders have identified the need to resolve these issues but have not yet done so.
- The school does not meet the independent school standards in this part.

#### Part 6. Provision of information

*Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(b), 32(1)(d), 32(i)(k), 32(3), 32(3)(g)*

- The school's website provides a link to access the school's previous inspection reports.

*Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(h), 32(1)(i)*

- Leaders were not able to provide an annual account of income received and expenditure incurred in relation to pupils funded by the local authority. Plans are in place to collate and provide this information.

- The school does not meet the independent school standards that were checked in this part.

## Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have sought advice and undertaken additional training to help them to understand how to meet the independent school standards. They have worked with an external consultant who has helped them to tackle weaknesses and improve the quality of education. Leaders continue to be proactive in developing their understanding of effective practice.
- Leaders have brought about considerable improvements to the school. The majority of weaknesses have been addressed. However, some standards are not yet met. Plans are in place to meet the remaining unmet standards, but these plans have not yet been implemented.
- The previous inspection found weaknesses in the school's safeguarding arrangements. These shortcomings have been rectified. Leaders' aim to promote pupils' welfare is realised.
- Leaders have introduced new systems to help them to monitor the quality of the school's work. They continue to seek external validation to support their evaluation and to hold themselves to account.
- The school does not meet the independent school standards in this part.

## 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.

### The school now meets the following independent school standards

#### Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if–
  - 2(1)(a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively; and
  - 2(1)(b) the written policy, plans and schemes of work–
    - 2(1)(b)(i) take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an education, health and care plan.
- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are–
  - 2(2)(e) for pupils receiving secondary education, access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that–
    - 2(2)(e)(i) is presented in an impartial manner;
    - 2(2)(e)(ii) enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options; and
    - 2(2)(e)(iii) helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential; and
  - 2(2)(i) effective preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society.
- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the 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(b) fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves;
  - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;

- 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;
- 3(g) demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress.
- 4 The standard in this paragraph is met where the proprietor ensures that a framework for pupil performance to be evaluated, by reference to the school's own aims as provided to parents or national norms, or to both, is in place.

### **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.
- 9 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that–
  - 9(a) a written behaviour policy that, amongst other matters, sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupil misbehaviour;
  - 9(b) the policy is implemented effectively; and
  - 9(c) a record is kept of the sanctions imposed upon pupils for serious misbehaviour.
- 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.
- 15 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.
- 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;

- 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)(dd) that, where that person is one for whom, by reason of that person living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining such a certificate is not sufficient to establish the person’s suitability to work in a school, it or another employment business has obtained such further checks as appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State; and
  - 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);  
in respect of any person whom the employment business supplies to 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(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)(i) S’s identity was checked;
  - 21(3)(a)(ii) a check was made to establish whether S is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act;
  - 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)(a)(iv) checks were made to ensure, where appropriate, that S had the relevant qualifications;
  - 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,
  - together with the date the written notification that each such check was made, or certificate obtained, was received;
  - 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 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools**

- 23(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), the standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
  - 23(1)(c) suitable changing accommodation and showers are provided for pupils aged 11 years or over at the start of the school year who receive physical education.
- 28(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
  - 28(1)(d) the temperature of hot water at the point of use does not pose a scalding risk to users.

#### **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)(b) the information specified in sub-paragraph 32(3) is made available to parents of pupils and parents of prospective pupils and, on request, to the Chief Inspector, the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate;
  - 32(1)(d) following an inspection under section 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act, a copy of the report of the inspection (if it has been sent to the proprietor) is published and maintained on the school’s internet website, and provided to the parents of each registered pupil, by any date specified by the body who conducted the inspection.
- 32(3) The information specified in this sub-paragraph is–
  - 32(3)(g) a copy of the report of any inspection carried out under sections 108 or 109 of the 2008 Act or section 87(1) of the 1989 Act.



## **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.

## School details

|                         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Unique reference number | 134395   |
| DfE registration number | 830/6027 |
| Inspection number       | 10219472 |

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                    | 11 to 16   |
| Gender of pupils                       | Mixed  |
| Gender of pupils in the sixth form     | Mixed  |
| Number of pupils on the school roll    | 16   |
| Of which, number on roll in sixth form | 4  |
| Number of part-time pupils             | 0  |
| Proprietor                             | Yvonne Evans   |
| Headteacher                            | Ms Yvonne Evans  |
| Annual fees (day pupils)               | £38,025  |
| Telephone number                       | 01246 810456   |
| Website                                | <a href="http://www.new-direction.org.uk">www.new-direction.org.uk</a>     |
| Email address                          | <a href="mailto:admin@new-direction.org.uk">admin@new-direction.org.uk</a> |
| Date of previous standard inspection   | 13–15 July 2021  |

## Information about this school

- The school is operating beyond its registration agreement. The school is registered to admit pupils between the ages of 11 and 16. There are currently post-16 pupils on the school's roll. The school is registered for a maximum of 12 pupils. There are currently 14 pupils on roll.
- The school is registered to provide full-time education for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.

- The school uses Sparky Ink Ltd as an alternative provision. This provision is not registered.
- The school's headteacher is also the proprietor.
- The school is situated within a working equine yard.

## 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 took place without notice. This was in line with the commission from the registration authority, the Department for Education. The inspection was the school's first monitoring inspection.
- Inspectors met with the proprietor and senior leaders. They spoke with other staff.
- Inspectors toured the site and visited lessons. An inspector met with pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents and records relating to safeguarding, risk assessments and the curriculum. The lead inspector scrutinised the school's single central record of recruitment checks.

## Inspection team

Deborah Mosley, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Peter Stonier

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 unmet at this inspection*

#### **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.

#### **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)(h) where a pupil wholly or partly funded by a local authority (except where funding is solely for free of charge early years provision in accordance with the duty contained in section 7 of the Childcare Act 2006[16]) is registered at the school, an annual account of income received and expenditure incurred by the school in respect of that pupil is provided to the local authority and, on request, to the Secretary of State;
  - 32(1)(i) where a pupil with an EHC plan wholly or partly funded by a local authority or other body through public funds is registered at the school, such information as may reasonably be required for the purpose of the annual review of the EHC plan is provided to the responsible local authority.

#### **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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