

Inspection of Wings School Notts

Main Street, Kirklington, Newark, Nottinghamshire NG22 8NB

Inspection dates: 7 to 9 December 2021

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils do not receive a good enough education at this school. For many pupils, the subjects they study are not well planned. Pupils who have fallen behind in reading are not supported effectively.

Pupils benefit from a range of enriching activities as part of the curriculum. They enjoy off-site activities such as kayaking and mountain biking. Pupils also enjoy playing in the school's extensive grounds.

Pupils say that they have positive relationships with staff, particularly with their key workers. They say that bullying is rare but when it does happen, staff sort things out effectively. Pupils feel confident to speak to staff about any problems. However, staff do not always recognise potential safeguarding concerns.

Many pupils have experienced difficulties at their previous schools. Some have struggled to attend school in the past. Most pupils improve their attendance considerably once they start at Wings.

Pupils are guided well to take their next steps. They benefit from effective careers advice and guidance which helps them to consider the range of options available to them once they leave school. Staff help pupils to apply for college placements and take them to visit potential providers. Pupils feel well supported.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have not established a clear and coherent vision for the curriculum. Pupils study a range of appropriate academic subjects but planning for these subjects is not well thought out. The proprietor has not ensured that subject leaders are trained or supported well to develop effective curriculum plans. Subject plans do not identify the most important knowledge that pupils should know and by when. Leaders have not considered how pupils will build their knowledge over time. In some subjects, pupils experience a series of disconnected lessons. In other subjects, plans are more effective. Some teachers follow external examination specifications. These subjects are planned more systematically.

Leaders do not have a coherent plan in place to teach reading. They have not identified what pupils need to know. They have not thought about how pupils will systematically develop their reading knowledge. Leaders have recently identified that some pupils have gaps in their phonics knowledge. They have not put support in place to ensure that these pupils catch up. Leaders plan to introduce daily phonics sessions from January 2022. However, they have not ensured that staff have the knowledge they need to teach phonics effectively.

Leaders expect pupils to read regularly, for example through daily DEAR (drop everything and read) sessions. Staff do not have consistent expectations of how DEAR should work. Staff do not ensure that pupils read books that are suitable for

their reading ability. Some pupils enjoy reading and do so with confidence. However, some need help to join in the daily reading sessions.

The curriculums for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and relationships and sex education are poorly planned. Pupils learn about a range of suitable topics. However, plans do not help pupils to build on their knowledge or develop their understanding in an age-appropriate way.

Some pupils take part in activities that help them to contribute to society. For example, a small group of pupils volunteered to tidy a local cemetery. Pupils learn about different lifestyles. PSHE lessons help pupils to understand different types of discrimination. Most pupils understand diversity and accept difference. However, the PSHE curriculum is not planned well. Pupils do not build on their knowledge over time. They take part in workshops to help them understand what makes a healthy relationship and recognise risks. Pupils who spoke to inspectors were clear about the importance of respect and consent.

The school's aim is to support pupils to manage their behaviour while following an academic curriculum. It does not achieve this aim successfully. Staff identify pupils' individual needs. However, they do not use agreed strategies to support pupils' needs effectively. For example, pupils whose 'strategy plans' state they should not be in noisy classrooms, experience some lessons in disorganised and noisy environments.

Staff do not always ensure that pupils behave as well as they should. Some staff told inspectors that they did not always feel well supported to manage pupils' behaviour.

Those responsible for governance are not aware of all of the school's weaknesses. When weaknesses are identified, the proprietor is too slow to rectify these concerns, or take effective action to address them. For example, the proprietor has been aware of the weaknesses in the reading curriculum for some time but has not ensured that an appropriate curriculum is in place. The proprietor has not ensured that staff have the training they need to teach reading well. Most staff feel that their workload is reasonable.

The proprietor has identified some risks that need managing. For example, a risk assessment of the site has identified specific risks and states what actions need to be taken to reduce these risks. However, the stated actions have not been completed and the risks remain. Inspectors noted some risks that leaders had not identified.

The proprietor has not ensured that all of the independent school standards are met. The school's health and safety policy is not implemented well. Leaders' routine checks have not identified all of the hazards in relation to the site. Some of the unmet standards pose a risk to pupils' safety and well-being.

The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders have not put effective systems in place to ensure that all potential safeguarding concerns for individual pupils are identified, tracked and monitored. Some concerns are not recorded, responded to or followed up. Leaders therefore do not know whether they have taken sufficient action to keep pupils safe.

Leaders do not always inform local authorities quickly enough when they remove a pupil from the school's roll. Leaders do not routinely forward pupils' safeguarding records to their new schools. This leaves pupils who leave the school at potential risk of harm. It means that those responsible for pupils' safety and well-being do not have all of the information they need to safeguard pupils.

Leaders take prompt and appropriate action when serious child protection concerns are raised. They involve external agencies accordingly. Staff have received up-to-date safeguarding training.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The proprietor does not have sufficient oversight of the school's work. The proprietor has not ensured that the independent school standards are met in full. The proprietor should ensure that systems are in place to monitor the quality of leaders' work and to hold leaders to account effectively. The proprietor should ensure that leaders are supported to act when weaknesses are identified. The proprietor should ensure that the independent school standards are met consistently, and check that this continues to remain the case.
- Systems to monitor and manage safeguarding concerns are not effective. Serious child-protection concerns are well managed, but systems are not in place to ensure that all lower-level concerns are recorded, monitored and responded to. This limits leaders' ability to understand all of the factors that may affect pupils' safety and well-being, know when they need to escalate concerns and mitigate the risks for individual pupils. Leaders should ensure that all concerns are recorded, responded to and monitored. They should ensure that records contain the necessary detail, outlining all concerns and actions taken in response. Leaders should ensure that systems are in place to forward safeguarding records to pupils' new schools when they leave Wings. Leaders should ensure that the local authority is informed in a timely manner when pupils are removed from the school's roll.
- The school's approach to reading is poorly planned. Staff have not had the training they need to teach reading effectively. Pupils who have fallen behind in reading are not getting the help they need to catch up quickly. Leaders should ensure that there is a strategic, coherent approach to teaching reading. They

should ensure that all staff are trained to teach reading, including how to teach phonics effectively. They should ensure that pupils' reading books consistently match their reading knowledge.

- Leaders have not ensured that the curriculum is well planned in all subjects. Leaders should ensure that plans for all subjects identify the key knowledge that pupils should know and by when. Plans should enable pupils to build on prior knowledge and provide opportunities for pupils to revise subject content so that they know and remember more over time. Plans should take account of the age range of all pupils for which the school is registered.
- Some staff do not have the skills or knowledge they need to be effective in their roles. The proprietor should ensure that all staff are trained to fulfil their roles effectively. They should ensure that all staff are supported and challenged to bring about the necessary improvements to their areas of responsibility.

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The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	136039
DfE registration number	891/6036
Local authority	Nottinghamshire County Council
Inspection number	10213556
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	9 to 17
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	35
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Kedleston Group Ltd
Chair	Paul Brosnan
Principal	Jacob Shelton
Annual fees (day pupils)	£55,000
Telephone number	01636 817430
Website	www.kedlestongroup.com/wings-notts
Email address	wingsnotts@kedlestongroup.com
Date of previous inspection	20 to 22 March 2019

Information about this school

- Wings School Notts is situated in the village of Kirklington, North Nottinghamshire. It provides full-time education for pupils aged between nine and 17 years. Pupils have experienced trauma and have social, emotional, behavioural and mental health difficulties. Many pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The large majority of pupils are looked after by their local authorities. There are currently 35 pupils on the school's roll. There are currently no pupils below the age of 12 on the school's roll. There are currently no post-16 students on roll.
- The principal took up his post in August 2021. He was previously the school's designated safeguarding leader. The headteacher took up her post in November 2021. She did not previously work at the school.
- The school sometimes uses REAL Education as an alternative provider.
- The previous standard inspection took place in March 2019.

Information about this inspection

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

The school has failed to meet the independent school standards. These are the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met representatives of the proprietor, the principal, the headteacher and other leaders.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, science, PSHE, and home cooking and life skills. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, reviewed curriculum plans, looked at pupils' work, visited lessons and spoke with staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector met with the designated leader of safeguarding. Inspectors spoke to staff and pupils about their understanding of safeguarding matters. The lead inspector reviewed the school's safeguarding policy and other related policies. The lead inspector scrutinised the school's single central record of checks of staff's suitability to work with children, and the school's safeguarding records.
- The lead inspector toured the school site to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards.

The school's proposed change to the age range of pupils

The school has applied to the Department for Education (DfE) to make a 'material change' to its registration. At the DfE's request, we checked whether the school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the DfE decides to approve the change. This part of the inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002.

- The outcome of this part of the inspection is: **the school is unlikely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school provision is implemented.**
- Leaders do not have the knowledge and skills they need to ensure that the independent school standards are consistently met. Proprietorial oversight of the school's work is insufficient to recognise the school's weaknesses.
- The proprietor has not ensured that appropriate curriculum plans are in place for the age range of pupils for which the school is currently registered. Leaders do not demonstrate the capacity to develop appropriate plans for younger pupils. Plans for the reading curriculum are particularly weak. Leaders do not have the necessary knowledge to plan an effective reading curriculum.
- Staff do not have the knowledge they need to teach reading well. Leaders' plans to train staff in teaching phonics are not suitable.
- Safeguarding arrangements are not effective. Leaders do not ensure that all potential concerns are recorded and followed up. Leaders do not consider the potential for the escalation of concerns, for example in relation to harmful sexual behaviour. Not all staff recognise indicators of safeguarding concerns.
- The site is not maintained to a standard that promotes pupils' health, safety and well-being. Leaders do not implement site risk assessments effectively. Leaders' routine checks do not identify shortcomings. Some of these shortcomings pose a risk to pupils' safety.

Inspection team

Deborah Mosley, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Mandy Wilding

Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school failed to meet 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 EHC plan.
- 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(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(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught.

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.
- 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 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.
- 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 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; and
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

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