

Inspection of Westfield House School

Westfield House, 191 Sutton Road, Terrington St Clement, Norfolk PE34 4EX

Inspection dates: 22 to 24 February 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

The school welcomes pupils who have not had a positive experience in their previous schools. They are helped to re-engage in learning and enjoy school again. Strong relations between staff and pupils underpin much of the school's work. Pupils say that 'the best thing about the school is that we get along with our teachers, and each other'. They enthuse about the special events organised for them, such as World Food Day celebrations and off-site visits.

Pupils feel safe, free from bullying and harassment. Good pastoral care and regular personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons ensure that they gain a good understanding of staying safe, healthy relationships, diversity and life in modern Britain. Academic lessons in the mornings and vocational learning and activities in the afternoons develop pupils' interest in learning and enriches their lives.

Reading is not promoted well enough. There is no clear approach to teaching early reading, including phonics. There are too few opportunities for older pupils to catch up on their reading. Pupils' spelling, grammar and use of punctuation is underdeveloped.

Most pupils behave themselves. Some younger pupils who have recently joined the school do not behave well enough. Adults do not apply the school's procedures for managing pupils' behaviour consistently well, and this stops some pupils from learning to behave well.

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

Leaders have constructed a broad curriculum suited to the special needs and interests of pupils. All pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Staff use the information from EHC plans to modify the curriculum and plan activities aimed at meeting the targets set for each pupil.

Pupils study core subjects, including computing, daily. Staff organise lessons so that pupils build on what they already know. Staff identify gaps in pupils' learning so these can be filled. For example, in mathematics, staff identify what pupils have learned previously and what has been missed. They then provide them with a sequenced programme of learning that builds pupils' confidence and understanding. Pupils receive regular support in lessons. Misconceptions are quickly corrected. Staff check the work pupils produce during lessons and regularly let pupils know how well they are doing.

Pupils' willingness to work hard leads to good learning in key stage 4. Most pupils in key stage 3 show interest in their work. However, a small minority of them are too reliant on support from teaching assistants who end up doing the work for pupils. At times, pupils' learning is slowed by low-level disruption in lessons.

Not all younger pupils who joined this year are fully settled in school. Leaders provide additional therapeutic support to help pupils overcome the difficulties they face and ensure pupils are ready to learn. The English curriculum is suitably organised so pupils can develop their writing skills. Leaders have chosen to include the teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar as a feature of each lesson. This is not enough to fill significant gaps in pupils' learning of these important skills.

The teaching of reading has not been prioritised. There is no clear, systematic approach to teaching younger pupils how to read fluently or develop a love of reading. Staff have identified that a significant proportion of older pupils do not read well enough.

Records show that minor, low-level disruption in some lessons is commonplace. Not all staff consistently use the school's procedures and policies. In terms of more challenging behaviour, all staff are suitably trained to help and support pupils. Suspensions are only used as a last resort.

A large proportion of pupils are regularly absent from school. Leaders work effectively with families to improve this. Procedures are in place to regularly check that these pupils remain safe when they are not in school.

Leaders provide well for pupils' personal development. Pupils also learn and experience a wide range of practical activities, such as sport, cooking, careers and vocational activities. Visiting the allotment is popular with pupils. The money they raise from selling the produce helps to fund an annual trip to Europe for Year 11 pupils.

The headteacher and team of senior leaders lead by example. They forge strong relations with pupils and promote care and respect. Leaders have suitable plans in place for continued school improvement. A new proprietor body adds significant capacity to improve the school further. They have invested in premises and staff. There are establish links with the local authority and an external partner to check the quality of improvements.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All pupils and their backgrounds are known well. There are a range of procedures in place to oversee pupils' welfare and ensure that all of them remain safe.

From a scrutiny of the school's records, these procedures are thorough but not as clear as they could be. Procedures for recording very minor concerns do not match what the school's policy states on its website. Serious concerns are recorded appropriately and followed up systematically.

Staff are suitably trained to be vigilant. Daily debriefs enable staff to discuss emerging issues and follow up concerns raised. All of the necessary checks are made when appointing adults to work with children.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Reading, including phonics, is not taught systematically enough to enable pupils in key stage 2 to read with confidence and fluency. There are no coherent procedures in place to help older pupils who do not read well to read regularly and develop a love of reading. Leaders should plan and implement a clear, coherent approach to teaching reading throughout the school. They should take action to raise the profile of reading so that all pupils read often, and for pleasure.
- A minority of younger pupils do not learn well enough. The curriculum is not planned to ensure that gaps in basic skills, especially in writing, are filled. Low-level disruption is not always managed effectively. Leaders should strengthen the key stage 2 curriculum so that pupils develop a thorough grounding in spelling, grammar and punctuation. Leaders should provide staff with further training in managing behaviour consistently.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

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	138138
DfE registration number	926/6002
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10212833
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	10 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	42
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Keys Group
Chair	Mrs Nicola Kelly
Headteacher	Jo Murray
Annual fees (day pupils)	£38,950 to £44,304
Telephone number	01553 827 848
Website	www.keys-group.co.uk
Email address	jo.murray@keys-group.co.uk
Dates of previous standard inspection	24 to 26 April 2018

Information about this school

- Westfield House School was acquired by the Keys Group in February 2020.
- The school is registered with the Department for Education (DfE) to admit 42 pupils.
- The school specialises in providing education for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. All of them have an EHC plan. Many have been suspended from their previous schools or have missed long periods of schooling.
- Pupils are placed by local authorities, including Norfolk local authority. Seventeen pupils are currently looked after by local authorities.
- Almost all pupils are White British. Very few are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above average.
- The school uses alternative provision at Open Road, King's Lynn for one day a week for pupils to learn motor maintenance and construction skills.
- The headteacher was appointed in 2016.
- School inspection history:
 - When the school was first inspected in July 2016, it was judged to require improvement. Two of the independent school standards were not met.
 - Following the standard inspection, the DfE issued the school with a warning notice and required an action plan to be submitted. The action plan submitted by the proprietor in 2017 was deemed not acceptable.
 - At the progress monitoring inspection in October 2017, the school did not meet three of the independent school standards.
 - The school submitted an action plan to the DfE to address the areas for improvement identified in the inspection. This was evaluated by Ofsted in 2018 and deemed acceptable with modifications.
 - The DfE commissioned Ofsted to consider, as part of the standard inspection in April 2018, the school's progress in meeting the independent school standards that were unmet at the previous inspection in July 2016. At this standard inspection, the school was judged to have met all of the independent school standards.
 - An emergency inspection was carried out at no notice in June 2021 due to concerns raised by the DfE about the effectiveness of the oversight of the school by the proprietor body. The school did not meet all of the independent school standards checked at this inspection.
 - Following the emergency inspection, the DfE issued the school with a warning notice and required an action plan to be submitted. The action plan submitted by the proprietor in October 2021 was deemed not acceptable.

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.

Material change

The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change is implemented. Leaders intend to place most of the additional pupils into Year 7. The current Year 7 class will be split to form two parallel classes of the same age.

- At this standard inspection, the DfE commissioned Ofsted to consider the progress made in meeting the independent school standards that were unmet at the previous inspection in June 2021. The DfE also asked Ofsted to consider, as part of this inspection, a material change to the school to increase the number of pupils from 42 to 50 requested by the proprietor body.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, teachers, a group of pupils and two members of the proprietor body. In this meeting, the chair of the governing body attended via a telephone link.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including policies and procedures, behaviour and attendance records, self-evaluation and improvement planning, and information relating to safeguarding.
- An inspector met with the designated leader for safeguarding to discuss the school's safeguarding arrangements. The school's single central record of employment checks was scrutinised.
- They carried out deep dives into the following subjects: English, mathematics, science and PSHE. These included meetings with subject leaders, teachers and pupils, visiting lessons and scrutinising pupils' work.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and free-texts responses sent by parents. They considered 16 responses to Ofsted's survey of the views of staff. The school chose not to conduct Ofsted's survey of pupils' views.

Inspection team

John Mitcheson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Declan McCarthy

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(2)(b) pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills.
- 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; and
 - 3(h) utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly.

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; and
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently.

The school does not meet the following independent school standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain un-met at this inspection

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school–
 - 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; and

- 3(h) utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 9 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that–
 - 9(b) the policy is implemented effectively.

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