

# Argyll House

201 Holt Road, Cromer NR27 9JN

**Inspection date**

28 April 2022

**Overall outcome**

**The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection**

## Main inspection findings

### Part 1. Quality of education provided

*Paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(2), 2(2)(a), 2(2)(b), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(e), 2(2)(e)(i), 2(2)(e)(ii), 2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i)*

- At the time of the previous inspection in March 2020, there was not a written curriculum policy in place. The content of some subjects was weak, and teachers did not adapt learning well enough. Too little was put in place to help pupils make good progress
- Leaders identified the ways they would tackle the unmet standards in their action plan which was submitted to the Department for Education. School leaders planned to review the school's curriculum, ensuring that it reflected an individualised approach matched to pupils' needs.
- Since the inspection in March 2020, there has been a change in school leadership and staffing. Newly appointed staff have worked to strengthen the school's curriculum. There are clear plans in place for all the subjects taught in the school. These curriculum plans account for the range of abilities of pupils so that work is well matched to their needs. Pupils have access to a wider range of accredited qualifications. A curriculum policy is published on the school website.
- Leaders reviewed the effective use of assessment. They have introduced new approaches to check pupils' knowledge and skills in English and mathematics when they start at the school. Staff use the information gathered to develop a personalised curriculum to address any gaps in pupils' understanding.
- Teachers provide effective opportunities for pupils to discuss current topical issues of the day. There is a strong focus on developing pupils' debating skills through interactions with adults. Staff use a structured programme to build pupils' understanding of social issues.
- Every pupil is provided with a career plan. This has been commissioned through an external careers adviser. It provides pupils with the information they need to consider a range of possible work opportunities. Leaders carefully consider different programmes of work that will help to prepare pupils for the next stage of their education.

- Leaders have ensured that the paragraphs considered in this independent school standard are now met.

*Paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g), 3(h)*

- This standard was not met at the previous inspection, because staff did not have high enough expectations of what pupils should achieve. Staff did not consider what pupils already know when planning learning. Teachers did not take sufficient account of pupils' interests and learning experiences were planned in an ad hoc way.
- Since the previous inspection, new staff have been appointed. Teachers now have specialist subject expertise to teach the curriculum. They have higher expectations of pupils' academic achievement. Consequently, teachers are ensuring that lessons and activities help to promote pupils' learning more effectively.
- Staff question pupils well. They check pupils' understanding and address any misunderstandings quickly. Pupils' academic and personal achievements are regularly recorded. Leaders make effective use of this information to plan tasks and activities. Those pupils who attend regularly are more positive about the work they are asked to complete. The work seen at the time of the inspection demonstrates pupils' increased pride in the presentation of their work.
- Staff manage pupils' behaviour in lessons effectively. Staff are patient, calm and positive. They know pupils well, motivating and engaging pupils in their learning.
- The proprietor has invested greatly in learning resources and improving the school environment. Additional books have been purchased for the school's reading library. Classrooms are well furnished and computer stations provide an additional place where pupils enjoy working.
- Some pupils do not attend school regularly. School leaders provide regular work for these pupils. Leaders make use of classroom space off site when pupils are reluctant or too anxious to attend the school site. Leaders are finding many ways to improve pupils' attendance
- Leaders have ensured that the paragraphs included in this independent standard are now met.

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

*Paragraph 5, 5(b), 5(b)(i), 5(b)(ii), 5(b)(iii), 5(b)(iv), 5(b)(v), 5(b)(vi), 5(b)(vii)*

- This standard was not met at the previous inspection because pupils did not receive opportunities to widen their experiences or promote their social and emotional well-being. Pupils were not well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders have ensured that there is a structured programme for the personal, social and health education curriculum. Pupils have opportunities to learn about democracy, mutual respect for others and other fundamental British values. Display boards naming the values demonstrate the work pupils have covered in this topic. They reflect pupils' knowledge of public institutions.
- Pupils discuss relevant topics which increase a wider understanding of those who may be different from themselves. They learn about different faiths and cultures through the planned religious education curriculum, as well as visiting different places of worship.

- Some of this work is in the early stages due to the delays caused by COVID-19. Pupils who do not attend the school regularly have not been able to access all the opportunities planned and provided.
- Leaders have ensured that the paragraphs included in this independent standard are now met.

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

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

- This standard was not met at the previous inspection because pupils did not feel safe at school. The training provided to staff did not appropriately reflect the specific needs of pupils, especially when planning some activities. Not all staff received suitable safeguarding training.
- Safeguarding is now of the highest priority. Leaders have trained staff well. Roles and responsibilities are clear. Leaders have established and maintained effective links with external agencies such as the police and the local authority. Child protection records are well organised and maintained.
- The school's child protection and safeguarding policy has been updated. It now includes the changes noted in the most recent version of 'Keeping children safe in education'. A copy of the policy is on the school website and available for parents and carers.
- Leaders have ensured that the paragraphs included in this independent standard are now met.

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

- This standard was not met at the previous inspection because the school's behaviour policy was not implemented effectively. Staff struggled to manage challenging behaviour. Consequently, learning was regularly disrupted by poor behaviour.
- Leaders update pupils' individual profiles regularly. They identify the triggers where pupils find it difficult to self-regulate their behaviour. Leaders disseminate the updates across the staff team so that staff have a better understanding of individual pupils' needs. The behaviour policy is implemented consistently. This has led to a reduction in the use of physical restraint. The school is typically calm and orderly.
- Leaders have ensured that the paragraphs included in this independent standard are now met.

#### *Paragraph 10*

- This standard was not met at the previous inspection because staff did not know how to deal with concerns about bullying. Pupils felt at risk of being bullied by others.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders have reviewed the anti-bullying strategy. The policy now includes a charter to encourage pupils to share any concerns about bullying. School logs indicate few concerns about bullying. Pupils demonstrate respectful and positive relationships with staff.
- This independent standard is now met.

### *Paragraph 11*

- The standard was not met at the previous inspection. This was because staff were not complying with all the health and safety laws. Site checks were not routinely carried out to ensure that the environment was safe.
- The proprietor has carried out an audit of the arrangements for health and safety checks. The health and safety policy now includes all checks that are required to be carried out routinely. Staff are alert to any concerns and understand how these are reported to senior leaders.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are now met.

### *Paragraph 12*

- This standard was not met at the previous inspection because the proprietor had not updated fire risk documentation. Fire safety checks were too infrequent or not recorded.
- School records now show that checks are carried out systematically and logged effectively. The checks are carried out in line with leaders' health and safety policy. Specialist providers are employed to routinely check fire safety equipment.
- Leaders have ensured that this independent school standard is now met.

### *Paragraph 14*

- The standard was not met previously because pupils were not appropriately supervised. Pupils did not feel safe at school.
- There have been new staff appointed to work at the school. Leaders have ensured there is an acceptable ratio of staff to pupils. Leaders ensure that staff understand how to supervise pupils appropriately, whether in or out of school. Individual risk assessments are thorough. They provide the information staff require to know what to do when they are faced with challenging behaviour.
- This standard is now met.

### *Paragraph 15*

- This standard was not met at the previous inspection because the admissions and attendance registers were not maintained appropriately.
- The admissions register now includes all expected information. Pupils' attendance is logged appropriately in the attendance registers. Attendance is low. School leaders are putting in place actions to encourage pupils to attend more frequently. The proprietor ensures that registers are checked periodically, and arrangements are in place to meet the statutory requirements for admissions and attendance.
- Leaders have ensured that this independent school standard is now met.

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

- This standard was not met at the previous inspection because the risk assessments for individual pupils were not well considered in planning activities. This meant pupils were unsafe because staff were not aware of pupils' needs and the actions to take to address risks.
- Leaders have reviewed the risk assessment policy. Individual pupil risk assessments are comprehensive and shared with all staff. They are routinely updated and centrally stored.

- Leaders have ensured that this independent standard is now met.

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

*Paragraphs 18(2), 18(2)(a), 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(i), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(2)(c)(iii), 18(2)(c)(iv), 18(2)(d), 18(2)(e), 18(3), 20(6), 20(6)(a), 20(6)(a)(i), 20(6)(a)(ii), 20(6)(b), 20(6)(b)(i), 20(6)(b)(ii), 20(6)(b)(iii), 20(6)(c), 21(1), 21(2), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(i), 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(a)(iv), 21(3)(a)(v), 21(3)(a)(vi), 21(3)(a)(vii), 21(3)(a)(viii), 21(3)(b), 21(4), 21(6)*

- These standards were met at the previous inspection in March 2020 but were reviewed as part of this inspection.
- Leaders ensure that all the required checks are carried out for staff and governors. This information is well organised and maintained on the school's central single record.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard has remained met.

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

*Paragraph 25*

- This standard was not met at the previous inspection because the premises were not well maintained or suitable to reflect a high level of care for pupils.
- The school environment is clean and well maintained. There is a systematic approach to recording and reporting any broken fixtures or fittings. Senior leaders ensure that repairs are carried out in a timely way to keep the building in good working order and safe for pupils and staff.
- Leaders have ensured that this independent standard is now met.

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

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

- At the time of the previous inspection in March 2020, leaders had not ensured that all the independent standards were met. Governance of the school was inadequate because pupils did not receive an appropriate education and were not kept safe at school. Governors had accepted leaders' assertions about the school without seeking advice.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been changes in the senior leadership and staff working at the school. The new headteacher has ensured that suitable curriculum plans and schemes of work are in place. The roles of staff have been clarified. Teachers have a stronger understanding of pupils' starting points and use the information well to help them match plans to meet pupils' individual learning needs.
- Governors have improved their oversight of the monitoring of the quality of education. They have undertaken training to improve their level of challenge. The support of an external consultant has improved their understanding of the requirements of the independent school standards. Regular meetings of the management committee provide a better understanding of what is working well and what needs further improvement.
- Welfare, health and safety standards meet statutory requirements. Safeguarding arrangements are effective, and pupils are kept safe at school. The premises and accommodation are well maintained. All health and safety checks are completed routinely.

- The issues identified at the March 2020 inspection have been addressed but leaders know that there is still more work needed to improve the attendance of pupils at the school.
- Leaders have taken effective action to ensure that the paragraphs included in this independent school standard are now met.

## Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets 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. 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 EHC plan.
- 2(2) For the purposes of paragraph (2)(1)(a), the matters are-
  - 2(2)(a) full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996), which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education;
  - 2(2)(b) that pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills;
  - 2(2)(d) personal, social, health and economic education which-
    - 2(2)(d)(i) reflects the school's aim and ethos; and
    - 2(2)(d)(ii) encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act[9];
  - 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;

- 2(2)(h) that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress; 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(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;
  - 3(f) utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range;
  - 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;
  - 3(h) utilises effective strategies for managing behaviour and encouraging pupils to act responsibly.

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

- 5 The standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met if the proprietor-
  - 5(b) ensures that principles are actively promoted which-
    - 5(b)(i) enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence;
    - 5(b)(ii) enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England;
    - 5(b)(iii) encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely;



- 5(b)(iv) enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England;
- 5(b)(v) further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures;
- 5(b)(vi) encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act; and
- 5(b)(vii) encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England.

### **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(b) the policy is implemented effectively; and
  - 9(c) a record is kept of the sanctions imposed upon pupils for serious misbehaviour.
- 10 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that bullying at the school is prevented in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy.
- 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[12].
- 14 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that pupils are properly supervised through the appropriate deployment of school staff.
- 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[13].
- 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.

## **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.

## School details

Unique reference number	146626
DfE registration number	926/6021
Inspection number	10220200

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 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	6
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	0
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	The Ryes College Ltd
Chair	Kate Yarbo
Headteacher	Mr Cameron Phillips
Annual fees (day pupils)	£45,284.50
Telephone number	01263514944
Website	<a href="http://www.theryescollege.org.uk">www.theryescollege.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@theryescollege.org.uk">office@theryescollege.org.uk</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	10 to 12 March 2020

## Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher was appointed in October 2020 and a deputy headteacher in April 2022.
- The school makes use of an alternative provider to provide some vocational courses.

- All pupils have an education, health and care plan. Pupils who attend the school have different needs, including attachment disorders, social and emotional development needs and learning and behavioural needs.
- When Ofsted conducted the school's previous standard inspection in March 2020, the overall effectiveness of the school was judged inadequate and 14 of the independent school standards were not met.

## 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.
- This was the school's first progress monitoring inspection since the school was judged to be inadequate in March 2020. The inspection was conducted without notice.
- Following the previous inspection, the school was required to prepare an action plan. This was evaluated by Ofsted on 20 October 2020 and met requirements.
- The inspector observed teaching in the school. The inspector also scrutinised pupils' work.
- The inspector held discussions with school leaders and the chair of the proprietor body.
- The inspector looked at a range of documentation, including safeguarding records, school policies and procedures and risk assessments.

## Inspection team

Steve Mellors, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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