

# The Lion Works School

543 Wallisdown Road, Poole, Dorset BH12 5AD

**Inspection date**

17 November 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

#### *Paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i)*

- At the previous inspection in March 2022, leaders did not do enough to adapt the provision to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- All pupils have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan). Staff use these to create bespoke positive learning plans linked to the relevant schemes of work. These help adults respond to pupils' precise needs. Staff share these plans with parents. Staff keep these plans under regular review to make sure that pupils get the most effective support.
- Leaders are ambitious. They have designed curriculum pathways to meet the varying needs of pupils. Teachers adapt the content to ensure that pupils can progress onto the appropriate GCSEs and BTEC National Diplomas.
- The standards in this paragraph continue to be met.

#### *Paragraph 2A(1), 2A(1)(f), 2A(1)(g)*

- At the previous inspection, leaders had not consulted with parents on changes to the school's personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum, including relationships and sex education. The policy and curriculum were not available on the school website.
- In the previous academic year, leaders consulted parents on the content of the PSHE curriculum. The policy is readily available to parents from the school website. It makes clear what pupils will study. The scheme of work is carefully planned by teachers. It includes age-appropriate content. Pupils understand the importance of consent and showing respect for others, including those with protected characteristics. The policy informs parents how to request that their child is withdrawn from sex education.
- The standards in this paragraph are now met.

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

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

- At the previous inspection, arrangements to safeguard pupils and promote their welfare were not effective. The proprietor did not have processes in place to deal with

allegations against staff. Staff's concerns were not taken seriously. Leaders did not share information about vulnerable pupils with local safeguarding partners.

- The proprietor and new leaders have made rapid improvements to the safeguarding arrangements. They have ensured that systems to keep pupils safe are now effective. All staff receive regular and relevant training, including understanding local risks to pupils. Staff know how to report concerns using the school's electronic system. Leaders are quick to act on concerns raised. They work closely with external agencies to ensure that pupils who are at risk of harm receive the right support.
- Leaders' record-keeping is detailed. All concerns and follow-up actions are well documented. This helps build a clear chronology for each pupil. For example, leaders have put new systems in place so that staff communicate any concerns they have straight away. Each week, staff revisit important safeguarding messages. They understand the procedures for handling allegations against staff and leaders.
- The staff responsible for safeguarding work closely with the local authority safeguarding adviser. Systems are in place to review current practice and strengthen the arrangements for keeping children safe where needed. This new approach is already paying dividends. However, some of these systems and processes are very recent. They need more time to fully embed.
- The proprietor has not ensured that the school's latest safeguarding policy is on the website as required. The current policy is in draft form. It has not yet been updated with relevant local guidance and contacts.
- Some of the standards in this paragraph are not met.

#### *Paragraphs 9 and 10*

- Leaders have written a new behaviour policy. The policy includes appropriate rewards and sanctions. For example, pupils can earn points in exchange for tangible rewards. Staff have been trained in the school's approach to managing behaviour. Staff implement the policy effectively.
- All pupils have positive learning plans. These outline warning signs and strategies to defuse any challenging behaviour. Leaders keep thorough records of any sanctions imposed for misbehaviour. Pupils report that staff apply the policy fairly.
- Leaders have implemented an effective anti-bullying strategy. They keep a record of all incidents of bullying, including homophobic and derogatory language. Bullying is rare. When incidents happen, pupils confirm that adults sort it out straight away. Pupils say that nothing goes unnoticed. They have full confidence in the way leaders help to keep them safe.
- The standards in these paragraphs continue to be 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)(iii), 18(3), 19(2), 19(2)(a), 19(2)(a)(i)(aa), 19(2)(b), 19(2)(c), 21(1), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(a)(vii), 21(3)(b), 21(5), 21(5)(a), 21(5)(a)(i), 21(5)(a)(ii)*

- The previous inspection identified that the proprietor did not ensure that statutory checks were carried out on all adults working with pupils.

- The proprietor has a better understanding of the statutory guidance. It has ensured that checks are carried out on all staff prior to employment. These are recorded on the single central record.
- The standards in these paragraphs are now met.

## Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

### *Paragraph 24(1), 24(1)(b)*

- The previous inspection found that the medical room did not meet the requirements for the provision of accommodation for the short-term care of sick and injured pupils.
- Leaders have taken swift action to address these failings. They have ensured that there are now suitable facilities for the provision of first aid and short-term medical care of pupils. The medical room includes a washing facility and a toilet.
- The standards in this paragraph are now met.

## Part 6. Provision of information

### *Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(a), 32(1)(b), 32(1)(i), 32(2), 32(2)(b)(i), 32(3), 32(3)(a), 32(3)(b)*

- At the time of the standard inspection, leaders were unable to provide information to local authorities in relation to pupils' EHC plans. There were missing policies on the school's website, including information on how to contact the proprietor body.
- Leaders routinely review the information on all pupils' EHC plans. They work well with local authorities and provide statutory documentation when requested.
- Leaders have written policies on admissions, behaviour and exclusions. These are available from the school's website. However, details of how parents can contact a member of the proprietor body are not easily accessible.
- The standards in this paragraph are not met.

## Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

### *Paragraph 33– 33(k)*

- The complaints policy is on the school's website. Leaders understand the need to keep accurate records of complaints. Documentation reviewed during the inspection show that leaders implement this policy effectively.
- The standards in this paragraph continue to be 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, the proprietor had not taken sufficient action to ensure that all of the independent school standards were met consistently.
- The proprietor has strengthened the arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school. The new headteacher and deputy headteacher have strong knowledge and experience in supporting pupils with autism spectrum disorder. They have strengthened the provision for pupils with EHC plans. A stronger safeguarding culture exists. Pupils feel safe. They know that leaders and staff place a significant emphasis on their well-being. Nonetheless, the proprietor has not ensured that school

leaders are trained well enough to understand the requirements of the independent school standards.

- The chair of the proprietor body is forming a local governing board. Part of this work is to oversee compliance with the independent school standards. However, many of these appointments are only recent. A full board meeting has yet to take place. Therefore, it is too early to see the impact of this new development.
- Overall, the standards in this part are not met.

## **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. 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	148031
DfE registration number	839/6013
Inspection number	10258100

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 special school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	21
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	0
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Classroom Education Services Ltd
Chair	Bruno Davis
Headteacher	Gill Lyon
Annual fees (day pupils)	£44,000
Telephone number	01202113707
Website	<a href="http://www.thelionworksschool.org">www.thelionworksschool.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:hello@thelionworksschool.org">hello@thelionworksschool.org</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	15 to 18 March 2022

## Information about this school

- The proprietor of this school is Classroom Education Services.
- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher took up post in April 2022 and a deputy headteacher in August 2022. Several teaching staff are new to the school.
- This is a specialist provision for pupils with autism spectrum disorder. All pupils on roll have EHC plans. Almost all placements are funded by one of three local authorities: Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, Dorset and Hampshire.

- The school is registered to cater for pupils aged 11 to 18. There are currently no pupils on roll in the sixth form.
- The school uses no alternative provisions.

## 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 Department for Education requested that the inspector consider whether particular independent school standards contained within parts 1, 3 and 7 are met.
- This inspection was conducted with no notice. The inspector arrived at the start of the school day.
- The inspector talked to the chair of the proprietor board, school leaders and staff.
- The inspector also talked to a representative from Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole safeguarding team and Dorset commissioning team for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The inspector reviewed a range of school documents, including school policies, safeguarding records, the single central record, the school action plan and behaviour logs. The inspector visited lessons and talked to pupils.

## Inspection team

Dale Burr, lead inspector

His 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 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
  - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

#### **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)(a) the information specified in sub-paragraph (2) is provided to parents of pupils and parents of prospective pupils and, on request, to the Chief Inspector[14], the Secretary of State or an independent inspectorate[15].
- 32(2) The information specified in this sub-paragraph is-
  - 32(2)(b)(i) where the proprietor is an individual, the proprietor's full name, address for correspondence during both term-time and holidays and a telephone number or numbers on which the proprietor may be contacted.

#### **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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