

New Direction

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

Inspection dates

6 December 2022

Overall outcome

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

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7 to 7(b), 32(1), 32(1)(c)

- Leaders and staff have created a positive safeguarding culture. They have received appropriate safeguarding training. They are aware of such issues as the 'Prevent' duty and the potential dangers for pupils when they are online. Leaders often discuss safeguarding issues with staff at the weekly staff meeting.
- Leaders keep appropriate safeguarding records. They know which outside agencies to contact should the need arise.
- The school's safeguarding policy is available on the school's website.
- The school meets the independent school standard and the requirement in these parts.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 25

- The previous progress monitoring inspection identified concerns around damaged carpets presenting a trip hazard and some aspects of the site needing further repair. The underside of one portable classroom was exposed.
- Leaders have rectified the hazards and completed the necessary repairs.
- The proprietor has made other improvements to the site, including installing new doors, access ramps and heaters and completing restorations to the kitchen and the library.
- The school now meets the independent school standard that was checked in this part.

Part 6. Provision of information

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

- The previous progress monitoring inspection identified that the proprietor could not provide an annual account of income received and expenditure incurred in relation to pupils funded by the local authority.

- The proprietor has ensured that this information is now available through an annual report. This report shows that the funds received are appropriately allocated.
- The school now meets the requirements that were checked in this part.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1) to 34(1)(b)

- The proprietor has ensured that leaders demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their roles. Leaders have continued to work alongside an educational consultant. This has helped them continue to improve the school. Leaders are outward facing and welcome opportunities to train and to develop their knowledge still further.
- There is a clear system in place for leaders to check that the school consistently meets the independent school standards.
- Leaders have ensured that the standards judged to be unmet at the previous progress monitoring inspection are now met.
- The school now meets the requirements that were checked in this part.

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 progress monitoring inspection on 14 January 2022. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

The school now meets the following independent school standards

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) 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.

School details

Unique reference number	134395
DfE registration number	830/6027
Inspection number	10265559

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	21
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	2
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Yvonne Evans
Headteacher	Yvonne Evans
Annual fees (day pupils)	£55,575
Telephone number	01246 810456
Website	www.new-direction.org.uk
Email address	admin@new-direction.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	13–15 July 2021

Information about this school

- The school is registered to provide full-time education for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. Many pupils have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. The vast majority of pupils have an education, health and care plan (EHC) plan.
- 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 two post-16 students on the school's roll. The school is registered for a maximum of 12 pupils. There are currently 21 pupils on roll.

- The school's headteacher is also the proprietor.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provision.
- The date of the previous standard inspection was 13 to 15 July 2021. The school was judged to be inadequate.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools, the Department for Education (DfE). The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards that it was judged to not comply with at its previous progress monitoring inspection.
- In line with the commission from the DfE, the inspection took place without notice.
- This was the school's second progress monitoring inspection. The first progress monitoring inspection took place on 14 January 2022.
- The school submitted an action plan to the DfE in May 2022. This plan was deemed to be acceptable.
- The inspector met with the proprietor and the deputy headteacher.
- The inspector had a tour of the school site.

The school's proposed change to the age range of pupils and the maximum number of pupils.

The school has applied to the DfE to make a 'material change' to its registration. The material changes are to admit post-16 students and to increase the number on roll from 12 to 20. At the DfE's request, the inspector checked whether the school meets 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 meets the independent school standards relevant to the material change. The material change has already been implemented.**

Paragraph 2, 2(1)(a) to 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2), 2(2)(b), 2(2)(e) to 2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(g) to 2(2)(i)

- The proprietor has ensured that there is an appropriate curriculum policy and schemes of work in place. Students in the sixth form study suitable qualifications. These include functional and GCSE qualifications and A levels in, for example, history. The schemes of work consider the aptitudes and needs of all pupils. This includes those with an EHC plan. Pupils receive impartial careers advice and guidance. There are opportunities for work experience and apprenticeships in the local community and at the on-site, working equine yard.

Paragraphs 3 to 3(j), 4

- Staff are suitably qualified and experienced. They demonstrate good subject knowledge. They plan lessons well. Staff understand pupils' aptitudes, needs and prior attainment. They evaluate pupils' performance in a variety of subjects.

Paragraphs 2(2), 2(2)(d) to 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(A)(1), 2A(1)(b), 2A(1)(d) to 2A(1)(g), 2A(2), 5 to 5(d)(iii)

- The school has a suitable personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum in place. The curriculum reflects the school's aims and ethos. It pays particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Equality Act. Pupils, including those above the compulsory age of education, learn about the difference between right and wrong and about fundamental British values. They learn about difference. The PSHE

curriculum encourages pupils to contribute positively to the lives of those living and working locally. There are links with the local church and councillor, for example. Pupils study an appropriate relationships and sex education curriculum. There are units around family and parenting, respectful relationships, sexual health, contraception and consent.

Paragraph 7 to 7(b)

- The school's policies and procedures for keeping pupils safe comply with the latest national guidance. Leaders and staff work well to keep pupils safe.

Paragraphs 11 to 12

- The proprietor has ensured that there is an appropriate health and safety policy in place. Staff undertake frequent monitoring of the building and surrounding areas. There is a maintenance schedule and procedures for staff to report any health and safety concerns.
- The proprietor has ensured compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. There is a fire risk assessment in place. Staff make frequent checks on fire extinguishers and smoke detectors. Records are kept of evacuation practices.

Paragraph 14

- Pupils are properly supervised through the appropriate deployment of school staff. Staffing numbers depend on pupils' additional needs and their individual risk assessments. This includes for pupils who are above the age for compulsory schooling.

Paragraph 16 to 16(b)

- There is an appropriate risk assessment policy in place. It outlines how staff will assess and manage risks in a range of different situations.
- There are appropriate risk assessments in place for individual pupils. Off-site visit risk assessments contain specific information regarding the individual pupils attending. Staff take appropriate action when risks are identified.

Paragraphs 18 to 18(2)(e), 18(3), 21(1) to 21(3)(b)

- Leaders are aware of all the necessary checks that need to be undertaken before a member of staff can begin working at the school.
- The single central record contains the necessary statutory information.

Paragraphs 23(1) to 24(1)(b), 25 to 29(1)(b)

- The premises are appropriate and are maintained to the necessary standard, including in relation to acoustics and lighting. There are suitable toilet and shower facilities. The facilities for the short-term care of sick and injured pupils are appropriate. Drinking water is available from a tap that is marked as such. There is a large and suitable outside area for pupils to exercise and socialise during break and lunchtimes.

Paragraph 34 to 34(1)(c)

- The proprietor has ensured that leaders have a secure understanding of the independent school standards. Leaders have ensured that the school meets those standards that were checked as part of the material change inspection.
- Leaders have ensured that their procedures for keeping pupils safe are effective.

Information about the material change inspection

- The inspector had a tour of the site and visited lessons. He met with pupils and a student from the sixth form.
- The inspector held discussions with the proprietor and a school leader. He spoke with some other staff.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents and records relating to safeguarding, risk assessments and the curriculum. He scrutinised the school's single central register of recruitment checks.

Inspection team

Peter Stonier, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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