

Orchard School

South Leverton, Retford, Nottinghamshire DN22 0DJ

Inspection date

24 January 2023

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, 7(a)–(b), 32(1), 32(1)(c)

- Leaders act swiftly in response to any concerns about pupils' welfare. They maintain detailed safeguarding records.
- Leaders work closely with agencies external to the school, when appropriate, so that pupils receive the right support at the right time.
- Staff understand the need to be vigilant. They know to report any concerns about pupils' welfare, no matter how small. They know how to escalate their concerns, if necessary.
- Staff know the signs to look for that may indicate a concern about pupils' welfare.
- Staff receive regular safeguarding training and updates. Frequent staff meetings provide opportunities for leaders to share any important safeguarding information.
- Pupils learn how to be safe. For example, they learn about healthy relationships and consent.
- Leaders adapt the school's personal, social and health education programme appropriately in order to respond to any new concern that may pose a risk to pupils' well-being.
- Pupils say that they feel safe. They know they can share any concerns they may have with any member of staff. They are very confident that staff will help them.
- The school's safeguarding policy, which reflects the latest guidance, is available on the school's website.
- The school meets the independent school standard and the requirements that were checked in these parts.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a)–(b)

- At the time of the standard inspection, inspectors found some failings in part 5 of the independent school standards ('the standards'), relating to the school's premises. Leaders resolved these issues at the time of the inspection. However, these failings demonstrated that the proprietor had not ensured that the school consistently met all the standards.
- The proprietor has reviewed leadership responsibilities in order to ensure that leaders understand and fulfil their responsibilities in relation to the standards.
- The proprietor has revised the systems that are in place to check that the school meets the standards, particularly in relation to the premises. Leaders regularly check the premises, while teachers complete weekly checks of their classrooms. Leaders ensure that any identified concerns are resolved in a timely manner. This system of checks has enabled leaders to ensure that the school consistently meets the standards.
- The school now meets the requirements that were checked in this part.
- At the standard inspection, inspectors found that the approach to teaching pupils who are at an early stage of reading lacked sufficient structure and resources. No consistent phonics scheme was in place.
- Inspectors also found that teachers did not consider well enough pupils' previous learning when teaching new knowledge. This included in the early years, where the curriculum did not ensure that children learned the most important knowledge to prepare them for Year 1 and subsequent years.
- There is now a consistent phonics scheme in place across the early years and key stage 1. Teachers and senior leaders have received training in how to teach this scheme. Leaders have purchased books that match the sounds that pupils know.
- Those pupils in the early years and key stage 1 who fall behind in learning to read receive additional support to help them catch up.
- Leaders have considered the support that older pupils who are at an early stage of learning to read may require to help them become confident readers.
- Across different year groups, key stages and subjects, teachers now meet together to discuss curriculum planning. These discussions help teachers plan learning that builds on what pupils learned previously and already know. Such discussions have ensured that teachers with whole-school subject leadership responsibilities, and those who teach older pupils, can influence the curriculum that pupils in key stages 1 and 2 study. Teachers recognise the benefit of these discussions.
- Teachers in the early years and Year 1 discuss the topics children in the Reception Year have studied, and the knowledge they have gained as a result. In reading and mathematics, children in the early years now study a curriculum that links to what pupils study in Year 1 and beyond. This has ensured that, in these subjects, there is now continuity in what teachers teach across the early years and Year 1.
- Leaders know that there is work to be done to ensure that the curriculum in the early years focuses sharply on teaching the knowledge that children need to know in preparation for Year 1, across the full range of subjects. This work is ongoing.

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 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.

School details

Unique reference number	122933
DfE registration number	891/6015
Inspection number	10260520

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 school
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	2 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	96
Number of part-time pupils	7
Proprietor	Mr R and Mrs S Fox and Mr P Atkinson
Headteacher	Mrs S Fox
Annual fees (day pupils)	£4,875 to £8,925
Telephone number	01427 880 395
Website	www.theorchardschool.co.uk
Email address	sfox@theorchardschool.co.uk
Dates of previous standard inspection	26 to 28 April 2022

Information about this school

- The Orchard School is an independent all-through school. It is much smaller than an average-sized all-through school.
- Orchard School Nursery comes under the school's registration, but operates from another site at 21 Holly Road, Retford, Nottinghamshire DN22 6BE. This nursery was inspected on 7 September 2017 and was judged to be good.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.
- The date of the previous standard inspection was 26 to 28 April 2022. The school was judged to require improvement.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools, the Department for Education (DfE).
- This was the school's first progress monitoring inspection. In line with the commission, the inspection took place without notice.
- The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the requirements of the independent school standard related to leadership and management that were judged as unmet at the previous standard inspection, which took place on 26 to 28 April 2022.
- The DfE required the school to submit an action plan. Ofsted evaluated this plan on 26 September 2022 and deemed it to be acceptable.
- The DfE accepted the school's action plan on 14 October 2022.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, who is also one of the proprietors. The inspector also met with other leaders and staff, including support staff.
- The inspector visited lessons. He spoke with pupils during these visits.
- The inspector toured the school site.
- The inspector considered documentation relating to the curriculum, safeguarding, health and safety, and the premises.

Inspection team

Simon Hollingsworth, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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