

Arc School Old Arley

Ansley Lane, Old Arley, Nuneaton, Warwickshire CV7 8NU

Inspection date

2 February 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), 7(b), 32(1), 32(1)(c)

- The Department for Education (DfE) commissioned this progress monitoring inspection because of concerns raised about safeguarding.
- The school's safeguarding policy reflects current government guidelines and is published on the school's website.
- Leaders have ensured that the staff are appointed in line with their safer recruitment processes. All pre-employment checks are carried out prior to staff starting at the school.
- Leaders maintain a staff safeguarding training matrix. It records the comprehensive safeguarding training, including 'Prevent' duty, that all staff undertake. Records are meticulously kept, and identify when updates to training are required. This has ensured that all staff have the most up-to-date training across a wide range of safeguarding matters. Staff understand the safeguarding training and the importance of following all of the school's policies and procedures.
- Staff are confident to report any concerns they may have about any adults working with pupils. Leaders follow up these concerns quickly, and seek advice from external agencies where necessary. Leaders take swift and appropriate action when needed to address the concerns raised, including carrying out full investigations.
- Leaders have recently changed the way in which they record concerns about pupils. They have ensured that the records transferred contain all the information from the pupils' chronologies. Leaders log all concerns about pupils in detail and ensure that they are followed up. This includes referring pupils and families for additional support when needed. During daily debrief meetings, staff share and discuss any concerns about pupils. This enables staff to have a detailed understanding of, and plan for, any safeguarding issues which may impact on pupils.
- These standards were previously met, and continue to be met.

Paragraphs 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- During the last inspection, it was found that leaders had not made sure that the risks to pupils were minimised in certain activities. This included risk assessments for off-site visits not taking into account specific risks associated with the activity taking place. In addition to this, where risks had been identified, staff were not following the risk assessments.
- Leaders have taken highly effective action to remedy the weaknesses found in risk management at the last inspection. The proprietor has implemented regular audits of the school's risk assessment policies and procedures to ensure that they are fit for purpose. Staff have received comprehensive training on how to carry out and follow risk assessments. They now have a secure understanding of risk management and consistently follow the school's policy and processes.
- There are detailed risk assessments in place for all school activities, including off-site visits. These include seating plans for pupils when travelling on the minibus. Additional training on leading off-site visits has ensured that staff have the skills and knowledge to identify any potential risks when leading activities with pupils out of school, and how to mitigate them. No activities can take place off site without a senior leader reviewing and signing off the risk assessment.
- These standards were previously unmet, and are now met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)

- During the last inspection, it was found that the proprietor had not ensured that the independent standards were met in full. The proprietor was also not challenging leaders over the information it received well enough.
- Leaders have successfully implemented the action plan submitted to the DfE in November 2022. Suitably skilled and experienced leaders have been recruited to the headteacher and deputy headteacher positions and have recently taken up their posts. The proprietor provided additional leadership support during the transition period in the autumn term. The proprietor now effectively challenges leaders to check that their actions are improving the school. Leaders and the proprietor demonstrate a secure understanding of the independent school standards and have ensured that they are now consistently met.
- The proprietor has utilised leadership expertise from other schools within the Kedleston Group to support the development of middle leaders. For example, a specialist behaviour leader is mentoring the school's behaviour lead to further improve behaviour management. This includes providing additional training to enable staff to recognise and manage the varied behavioural needs of pupils with autism spectrum disorder and those with social, emotional and mental health difficulties. However, this work is at an early stage. As a result, the weaknesses identified in behaviour management at the last inspection remain.
- The proprietor has provided an experienced primary headteacher from a school within the Kedleston Group to support the development of reading. Leaders have a detailed action plan in place to improve the teaching of reading. However, this plan is at an early stage of implementation and the full impact of it is yet to be seen. Very recently, staff have received training in the new phonics programme. This is enabling them to teach phonics more effectively. However, the phonics programme is not yet embedded and

staff require further support and training to ensure that the teaching of phonics is consistently of a high quality.

- These standards were previously unmet, and 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

- 16, 16(a) and 16(b)
- 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)

School details

Unique reference number	125790
DfE registration number	937/6092
Inspection number	10275850

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 special school
Age range of pupils	7 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	63
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Kedleston Group Ltd
Chair	Lee Reed
Headteacher	Mr Mark Ward
Annual fees (day pupils)	£53,808
Telephone number	01676 543200
Website	www.arcschoololdarley.co.uk
Email address	arcoldarley@kedlestongroup.com
Dates of previous standard inspection	12 to 14 July 2022

Information about this school

- The school was registered by the DfE on 3 October 1989. The school's last full standard inspection was 12 to 14 July 2022.
- A new headteacher took up post in January 2023.
- The school caters for pupils who are at risk of exclusion or have been excluded from another school.

- The school caters for pupils with autism spectrum disorder or social, emotional and mental health difficulties.
- All pupils who attend the school have special educational needs and/or disabilities
- Leaders do not currently make use of any alternative provision.

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 school received a standard inspection in July 2022 in which some of the independent school standards were found to be unmet. This was the first progress monitoring inspection and was conducted without notice.
- The DfE required the school to prepare a statutory action plan. Ofsted evaluated the action plan on 29 November 2022 and found it to be acceptable. The DfE accepted this plan.
- The inspector met with the Regional Director, headteacher, designated safeguarding lead, the Kedleston Group safeguarding lead and the reading leader. She also met with other staff formally and informally and leaders from other schools within the Kedleston Group.
- The inspector visited lessons across key stages 2, 3 and 4. This included a visit to a phonics session. The inspector spoke to pupils informally and observed their behaviour in lessons and at breaktime.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of safeguarding information, including the school's safeguarding policy, spoke to staff about safeguarding and looked at how leaders make employment checks on staff. The lead inspector spoke to the safeguarding leaders about the reporting and recording of any safeguarding incidents, including any allegations made against staff and how they are dealt with.
- The inspector reviewed the risk assessment policy and scrutinised how risk assessments are carried out. She also spoke to staff about their training on carrying out risk assessments.

Inspection team

Ann Pritchard, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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