

The Secret Garden School

Shustoke Hall, Moat House Lane, Shustoke B46 2RJ

Inspection date

4 May 2023

Overall outcome

The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school provision is implemented

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)

- The school's safeguarding and child protection policy reflects the most recent statutory guidance and is available on request.
- The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is a member of the school's senior leadership team. This leader and the proprietor have a wealth of experience and are knowledgeable about how to keep pupils safe.
- Leaders have a deep understanding of the vulnerabilities that pupils who attend the school have. They are careful to involve parents and carers in all they do to develop this. Leaders ensure that all adults working with pupils understand how to mitigate these risks. This includes a daily check-in with all staff each morning.
- Leaders have clear systems to record and report any concerns about pupils' safety and welfare. Leaders also have robust systems to deal with any allegations made against members of staff.
- Leaders have high expectations of all staff regarding their participation in safeguarding training. All staff undertake extensive and bespoke safeguarding training.

Paragraph 11

- Leaders have developed a comprehensive health and safety policy. The policy is reviewed regularly. Leaders provide extensive training to staff to ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills needed to implement the policy effectively. Leaders and the proprietor carry out regular and detailed checks to ensure that the policy is being implemented effectively.

Paragraph 12

- The fire risk assessment confirms that the school is compliant with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Leaders have acted on feedback and guidance from

external checks to ensure that the premises are compliant. There are appropriate measures in place for fire evacuation.

Paragraph 14

- Leaders think carefully about the individual needs of pupils when deciding on the level of supervision needed around the school site. Pupils are well cared for as they move around the school. Leaders have clearly demonstrated that they are able to support the proposed increase in the number of pupils at the school.

Paragraph 16

- Leaders have established a rigorous and robust approach to assessing risk that supports the safeguarding and welfare of all pupils. Detailed risk assessments clearly identify the specific risks associated with all activities that pupils and staff may engage in. The proprietor, working closely with the designated safeguarding lead, carefully reviews risk assessments and updates these as required.

- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

Paragraph 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(6)

- All safeguarding checks are recorded on the school's single central record. The proprietor intends to ensure that this is well maintained.
- The school has appropriate recruitment procedures in place. This includes obtaining two references and carrying out a medical check prior to appointment.
- Leaders do not use supply staff. They recognise the disruption this could cause to the pupils they provide for. However, they are clear about the checks to be undertaken, and the procedures to be followed, if supply staff are used.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(2), 25, 26, 27, 27(a), 27(b), 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(d), 28(2), 28(2)(a), 28(2)(b), 29(1), 29(1)(a) 29(1)(b)

- The school is based on the grounds of a large country manor house. There are several separate buildings on the site. These buildings provide ample space for the proposed increase in pupil numbers. Currently, there are several classrooms not in use, while current classrooms have capacity for more pupils if needed.
- The premises are maintained to a high standard. Rooms are suitable for teaching and learning. They have high ceilings and benefit from plenty of natural light. There is plenty of outdoor space for pupils to play safely.
- Throughout the buildings, there are good acoustics. The proprietor has made sure that pupils will always have access to drinking water.

- There is a small purpose-built medical room. The room has a fixed sink and is situated close to a toilet facility.
- Leaders have given due consideration to the accessibility of the buildings and the wider school site. They have made sure the site is accessible for all pupils.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely 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)

- Leaders have carefully considered the proposed increase in capacity. They are deeply committed to providing high-quality education for each pupil under their care. They have taken due care to make sure any increase in capacity does not have an adverse impact on the quality of education currently offered in the school.
- The school has the capacity to support the proposed change to numbers on roll.
- All of the independent school standards checked are likely to be met if the proposed material change is implemented.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- Leaders have ensured that the school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The accessibility policy sets out how the school intends to be fully accessible to all and how it would cater for a range of disabilities.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school is likely to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that are relevant to the material change.

School details

Unique reference number	148243
DfE registration number	937/6033
Inspection number	10286850

This inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards relevant to the material change that the school has applied to make.

Type of school	Other independent school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	Annette Gadd
Chair	Annette Gadd
Headteacher	Annette Gadd
Annual fees (day pupils)	£63,030 to £125,880
Telephone number	01675 488 825
Website	www.thesecretgarden.org.uk
Email address	agadd@thesecretgarden.org.uk
Dates of previous standard inspection	15 to 17 March 2022

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	6 to 19	6 to 19	6 to 19
Number of pupils on the school roll	33	76	76

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	33	76
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	33	76
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	33	76
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	33	76

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	11	15
Number of part-time teaching staff	4	10
Number of staff in the welfare provision	9	12

Information about this school

- The Secret Garden School is an independent day school located in the outskirts of Birmingham. It offers places to pupils who have social, emotional, and mental health difficulties. All pupils have an education, health, care plan. Many of the pupils have suffered significant disruption in their education before attending the Secret Garden.
- Places are commissioned by local authorities including Birmingham, Solihull, Warwickshire and Walsall.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision. Pupils do, however, engage in activities such as horse riding, rock climbing and golf at local venues.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the DfE to consider the school's request for a material change. The proprietor would like to increase the maximum permitted number of full-time pupils on the school roll from 40 to 76 pupils.
- The purpose of the inspection was to establish whether the school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the registration authority granted the requested material change.
- The inspector met with the proprietor, who is also the headteacher, and other leaders.
- The inspector scrutinised the information and policies provided by the school.
- The inspector met with the designated leader for safeguarding to review the school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils and staff. The inspector looked at the school's single central record of the checks that leaders carry out before staff are employed to work at the school. The inspector also spoke to pupils.
- The inspector reviewed additional documentation, including the school's health and safety policy, risk assessments and fire safety checks.
- The inspector toured the school site.

Inspection team

Alexander Laney, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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