

# Eton Dorney Independent Therapeutic School

34 Lake End Road, Dorney, Berkshire SL4 6QS

## Inspection dates

19 April 2023

### Overall outcome

**The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection**

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

*Paragraphs 7–7(b), 32(1) and 32(1)(c)*

- At the school's last standard inspection, safeguarding was judged to be effective and all relevant independent school standards (the standards) relating to the welfare, health and safety of pupils were found to be met.
- The safeguarding policy is published on the school's website and complies with current guidelines. Arrangements to safeguard pupils remain effective. These standards continue to be met.

#### Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

*Paragraph 33, 33(f)–33(k)*

- At the last standard inspection, it was found that some leaders did not fully understand the requirements of the standards in part 7.
- Leaders have completed the actions proposed in the action plan approved by the Department for Education (DfE) in February 2023. This includes reviewing the school's complaints policy.
- The current policy meets the requirements of part 7 and is understood by school leaders and the school's directors. The policy is published on the school's website. The policy is being implemented by leaders, including those in positions of governance, appropriately.
- The relevant standards found to be unmet in part 7 at the last standard inspection are now met.

#### Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

*Paragraph 34(1)–34(1)(b)*

- Some aspects of the quality of leadership and management identified at the last standard inspection led to part 8 being judged to be unmet. The directors and some school leaders did not have the knowledge and skills to fulfil their areas of responsibility effectively. They had not ensured that all of the standards were met or that the quality of education was consistently strong. Inspectors also recommended that the proprietor needed to build leadership capacity.

- Leaders have implemented the actions identified in the school's action plan drawn up at the request of the DfE. A considerable amount of work has been undertaken to improve the qualitative aspects requiring improvement linked to the leadership of the curriculum and the quality of education the school provides. This includes additional training for teaching and support staff and for subject leaders.
- A complete review of the curriculum has been undertaken. Subject action plans are in place. However, at the time of this monitoring inspection it was not possible to fully judge the impact of this work. Additionally, although current leaders have worked hard to improve all aspects of the school, some key leaders, including the headteacher, will leave the school in the near future.
- The proprietor recognises the potentially negative impact of the impending turnover in senior staff on leadership capacity and has started the process of recruitment to leadership positions. This includes work to ensure that the continuity and quality of leadership of all aspects of welfare, health and safety at the school are strong. A new headteacher has been appointed. Interviews for the deputy headteacher vacancy are about to take place.
- The proprietor's action plan identified that a new education governing board would be introduced. The proprietor subsequently further reviewed the model of governance. A new educational committee has been in place since January 2023. New terms of reference are in place. A new format for meetings of the committee has been implemented. Members of the committee have undertaken training aimed at improving governance. More is planned.
- Despite positive action being taken to address unmet standards and the qualitative weaknesses identified at the last standard inspection, capacity in leadership and management of the school remains vulnerable due to high turnover in the work force. Furthermore, new governance arrangements for the school are still at an early stage. Part 8 continues to be unmet.

## **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, as set out in the annex of this report. 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	145298
DfE registration number	825/6048
Inspection number	10277770

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	8 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	36
Number of part-time pupils	None
Proprietor	Calcot Services for Children (Education) Ltd
Chair	Harvinder Singh
Headteacher	Alexandra Walsh
Annual fees (day pupils)	£49,050 to £90,639
Telephone number	01628 667475
Website	<a href="http://www.etondorneyspecialschool.co.uk">www.etondorneyspecialschool.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:etondorneyschool@csfc.co.uk">etondorneyschool@csfc.co.uk</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	5 to 7 July 2022

## Information about this school

- This is a special school which caters for pupils with autism spectrum disorder and social, emotional and mental health needs. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- There are currently no pupils using the school's post-16 provision.
- The school's most recent standard inspection was in July 2022, when it was judged to require improvement and unmet independent school standards were identified.
- The proprietor company also runs a number of children's home across Berkshire, South Oxfordshire and Hampshire. Eton Dorney is one of three schools owned by the proprietor.

- Governance is provided by the school's joint directors and an educational committee which has been formed since the last standard inspection.
- The school does not currently use 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 inspection was conducted without notice. The headteacher was not present on the day of the inspection.
- This was the first progress monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement with unmet independent school standards at its last standard inspection in July 2022. As a result, the proprietor was required to produce a statutory action plan by the DfE on 20 October 2022. The action plan was assessed by Ofsted on 15 December 2022 and found to be acceptable by the DfE on 6 February 2023.
- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, deputy headteacher, the school's business manager and the key stage 4 lead. He also met with both directors of the proprietor company.
- The inspector met formally with a group of pupils to discuss their views of the school.
- The inspector had a tour of the school site, including visiting classrooms and other communal areas. During the tour he briefly met with pupils and staff.
- The inspector considered a range of policies, action plans and other documentation linked to the independent school standards. Minutes of meetings relating to governance were reviewed. The inspector also reviewed the school's single central record and met with one of the school's safeguarding leads, accompanied by other key leaders.

## Inspection team

Clive Close, 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 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.

### **The school now meets the following requirements of the independent school standards**

- 33 The standard about the manner in which complaints are handled is met if the proprietor ensures that a complaints procedure is drawn up and effectively implemented which deals with the handling of complaints from parents of pupils and which–
  - 33(f) where the parent is not satisfied with the response to the complaint made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e), makes provision for a hearing before a panel appointed by or on behalf of the proprietor and consisting of at least three people who were not directly involved in the matters detailed in the complaint
  - 33(g) ensures that, where there is a panel hearing of a complaint, one panel member is independent of the management and running of the school
  - 33 (h) allows for a parent to attend and be accompanied at a panel hearing if they wish
  - 33(i) provides for the panel to make findings and recommendations and stipulates that a copy of those findings and recommendations is–
    - 33(i)(i) provided to the complainant and, where relevant, the person complained about; and
    - 33(i)(ii) available for inspection on the school premises by the proprietor and the head teacher
  - 33(j) provides for a written record to be kept of all complaints that are made in accordance with sub-paragraph (e) and–
    - 33(j)(i) whether they are resolved following a formal procedure, or proceed to a panel hearing; and
    - 33(j)(ii) action taken by the school as a result of those complaints (regardless of whether they are upheld); and

- 33(k) provides that correspondence, statements and records relating to individual complaints are to be kept confidential except where the Secretary of State or a body conducting an inspection under section 109 of the 2008 Act requests access to them.



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