

# Westfield House School

Westfield House, 191 Sutton Road, Terrington St Clement, Norfolk PE34 4EX

**Inspection date**

24 May 2023

**Overall outcome**

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

## Main inspection findings

### Part 1. Quality of education provided

#### *Paragraph 2(1), 2(2)(b), 3, 3(a)*

- At the time of the progress monitoring inspection in September 2022, and previously at the standard inspection in February 2022, this independent school standard (this standard) was not met. There was not a clear, systematic approach in place to teach younger pupils how to read fluently or develop a love of reading. Pupils were not reading texts that enabled them to practise the phonic knowledge they were learning. Pupils more widely were not reading books that interested them. The work to design a curriculum for the teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar was incomplete.
- The proprietor body submitted an action plan in February 2023 aimed at rectifying these issues. This action plan was evaluated by Ofsted and deemed acceptable if modifications were made. The modifications needed related to the level of detail in the plan to improve the teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar. The action plan proposed that leaders would purchase additional books to increase pupils' enjoyment of reading. Leaders would use a commercial scheme to ensure that books are well matched to pupils' reading ability and to enable leaders to track pupils' reading more closely. The plan stated that leaders were to introduce a specific, catch-up phonics programme to teach pupils how to read. The proprietor body proposed that increased time would be spent on the teaching of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Leaders would check and review how well this work is being done.
- Leaders have implemented the action plan successfully. They have improved the culture of reading. The phonics catch-up programme is planned and delivered effectively. Staff are well trained in teaching phonics. For example, staff across the curriculum use phonics to support reading and spelling. Pupils now read books that match the sounds they know. Pupils in the early stages of reading get the support they need. Consequently, they build up their fluency and automaticity. As a result, pupils are better able to access the curriculum. They move through and beyond the phonics programme.

More widely, pupils read books that are appropriate to their level of knowledge. This contributes towards pupils developing positive views of reading.

- Leaders have revised and improved the curriculum for English, including for spelling, punctuation and grammar. For example, curriculum plans now specify what and when pupils will learn about different aspects of grammar. Leaders assess closely where there are gaps in pupils' knowledge in English, including in vocabulary. They adapt the curriculum in response. Pupils build on secure prior knowledge. Teachers revisit previous learning over time. This means that pupils develop increasingly detailed knowledge as they move through the curriculum, such as about subject-specific vocabulary and spelling. In a few instances, such as how pupils learn about sentence-level grammar, this is not taught as precisely and consistently. Where this is the case, pupils do not build up their understanding as well as they might.
- Leaders have monitored and reviewed the implementation of the action plan. Following this, they have amended aspects of it. For instance, spelling, punctuation and grammar are taught more through texts and tasks, as well as discretely. This has supported pupils' engagement and learning well.
- Staff support pupils' learning needs closely. Leaders carefully break down the targets and other information in pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans. This equips staff to use effective strategies to help pupils learn. For example, leaders and staff use target-setting and rewards successfully to create a calm and purposeful learning environment. The bespoke planning for individual needs links well to the overall curriculum. This helps pupils develop their reading and writing skills.
- This standard is now met.

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

#### *Paragraph 6, 7, 7(a), 7(b)*

- At the previous inspection, safeguarding was judged to be effective. This remains the case. The proprietor body's safeguarding policy is appropriate and up to date. It covers the most recent statutory guidance. The policy is available on the school's website.
- Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They know how to spot and log concerns. Leaders know the risks that the pupils face and are vigilant regarding these. For example, they act swiftly to address any risks caused by pupils' absence. Case records show that referrals to external agencies are made promptly when required. When incidents occur, leaders review these thoroughly and adapt the curriculum in response. Leaders liaise well with partners regarding vulnerable pupils. For instance, they communicate regularly with virtual school headteachers and managers of children's homes. Appropriate checks are in place for new and current staff.
- Pupils get a lot of well-considered support for their mental health and well-being. They learn in a calm atmosphere. Pupils are mostly positive about the school and their experience. They enjoy supportive relationships with staff. This leads to pupils feeling and being safe.
- This standard was met at the previous inspection. It remains met.

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

### *Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b)*

- This standard was not met at either the previous standard inspection or the subsequent progress monitoring inspection. The inspection report at the standard inspection stated that there were unmet standards relating to the quality of education, behaviour and leadership. The proprietorial body had not ensured that leaders had the secure knowledge needed to ensure that all the standards were met consistently. The progress monitoring inspection showed that while some standards were now met, others remained unmet. Leaders' action-planning was not specific enough, for example around the criteria they would use to select phonics resources. There were no timelines to improve the curriculum for spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- In its most recent action plan, the proprietor body gave more detail about how leaders would select phonics resources. The plan proposed how leaders would develop their monitoring process to support members of staff to deliver the curriculum successfully. The plan described how further external expertise would be brought in to enhance leaders' understanding of how to rectify the unmet standards. Timescales for action and accountability for actions were clear. The plan, if modified, was deemed likely to be effective if implemented.
- The proprietor body and leaders recognise that standards have been low. This has been reflected in three warning notices from the Department for Education (DfE). The proprietor body has increased and improved the level of challenge and support for leaders' actions. For example, it has brought in an external consultant to review the English curriculum. The proprietor body has invested in the resources needed to rectify the weaknesses in the reading curriculum and culture. This has led to improvements resulting in the standard for the quality of education now being met.
- The proprietor body ensures leaders get the support they need in order to know and meet the standards. They ensure that leaders monitor their compliance with the independent school standards regularly and closely.
- The proprietor body monitors the leadership capacity to improve the school, given that the headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) share their time with another local school.
- Norfolk local authority is positive about the actions leaders are taking to improve the provision.
- This standard is 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**

#### **Part 1. Quality of education provided**

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if–
  - 2(2)(b) pupils acquire speaking, listening, literacy and numeracy skills.
- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school–
  - 3(a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught.

#### **Part 8. Quality of leadership and management in 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	138138
DfE registration number	926/6002
Inspection number	10282976

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	10 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	42
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	0
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Unique Care Homes Support Limited
Chair	Nicola Murray
Headteacher	Jo Murray
Annual fees (day pupils)	£38,950 to £44,304
Telephone number	01553 827848
Website	<a href="https://education.keyschildren.co.uk/school/westfield-house/">https://education.keyschildren.co.uk/school/westfield-house/</a>
Email address	jo.murray@keys-group.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	22 to 24 February 2022

## Information about this school

- Westfield House School was acquired by the Keys Group in February 2020.
- The school specialises in providing education for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. All pupils have an EHC plan. Many pupils have been suspended from their previous schools or have missed school for long periods of time.

- Local authorities, mostly Norfolk and Cambridgeshire, place pupils at the school. Currently, 19 pupils are looked after by local authorities.
- The school is registered with the DfE to admit 42 pupils. An application for a material change has been submitted to the DfE increase the number of pupils.
- The headteacher has been sharing her time for this academic year with another local school. This is Begdale House School, Begdale Road, Elm, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire PE14 0AZ. Begdale House School is part of the same proprietor group. She is the named headteacher for both schools. The proprietor body is reviewing this as part of its material change application. The same arrangement applies to the SENCo.
- The school sends some pupils one day a week to the Open Road alternative provision in King's Lynn, where pupils learn motor maintenance and construction skills.
- The school's inspection history is as follows:
  - When the school was first inspected in July 2016, it was judged to require improvement. Two of the independent school standards were not met.
  - Following the standard inspection, the DfE issued the school with a warning notice and required an action plan to be submitted. The action plan submitted by the proprietor in 2017 was deemed not acceptable.
  - At the progress monitoring inspection in October 2017, the school did not meet three of the independent school standards.
  - The school submitted an action plan to the DfE to address the areas for improvement identified in the inspection. This was evaluated by Ofsted in 2018 and deemed acceptable, with modifications.
  - The DfE commissioned Ofsted to consider, as part of the standard inspection in April 2018, the school's progress in meeting the independent school standards that were unmet at the previous inspection in July 2016. At this standard inspection, the school was judged to have met all the independent school standards.
  - An emergency inspection was carried out at no notice in June 2021 due to concerns raised by the DfE about the effectiveness of the oversight of the school by the proprietor body. The school did not meet all of the independent school standards checked at this inspection.
  - Following the emergency inspection, the DfE issued the school with a warning notice and required an action plan to be submitted. The action plan submitted by the proprietor in October 2021 was deemed not acceptable.
  - In February 2022, inspectors carried out an inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. Inspectors judged the school as requiring improvement and failing to meet the independent school standards.
  - In May 2022, the DfE issued the school with a warning notice and required an action plan to be submitted. The action plan submitted by the proprietor in August 2022 was deemed not acceptable.
  - At the progress monitoring inspection in September 2022, the school met some of the standards that had not been met at the standard inspection. However, some other standards remained unmet.

- In December 2022, the DfE issued the school with a warning notice and required an action plan to be submitted. The action plan submitted by the proprietor in February 2022 was deemed acceptable.

## 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 inspector met with the headteacher, senior and subject leaders, teachers, pupils, the chief executive officer of the proprietor body, the regional director of the proprietor body and the chair of the governing body.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents, including policies and procedures regarding the curriculum and safeguarding, and evaluated the school's single central record of pre-recruitment vetting checks.
- As part of the evaluation of the unmet standards, the inspector visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and listened to pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- The inspector spoke by phone to a representative from Norfolk local authority.

## Inspection team

Charlie Fordham, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector



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