

The Rowan School

Tunnel Street, Coseley, Dudley, West Midlands WV14 9DE

Inspection date

13 June 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

Paragraphs 2(1)(b)(i), 2(2)(h) and 3(a)

- All pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan (EHC plan). Teachers break down the EHC targets into smaller, more specific steps that feed into each pupil's individual support plan (ISP). ISPs are working documents that teachers use to inform how they plan learning opportunities for pupils. ISP targets are developed within and across a range of lessons, especially targets relating to developing pupils' social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. For example, paired work in mathematics and teamwork in physical education lessons are used to develop pupils' ability to take turns and work together.
- Teachers and teaching assistants skilfully support pupils to listen well, engage in their learning and complete set tasks. As a result, in most instances, pupils display positive attitudes to their learning and complete work that they are proud of. Pupils are keen to share their work with visitors to the school. They progress well through the curriculum. Many pupils have failed in their previous schools and are now achieving well.
- Parents are pleased with the academic progress that their children are making. They are particularly thrilled that their children are getting better at reading, writing and mathematics.
- The proprietor body has ensured that these independent school standards (the standards) are met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b) and 32(1)(c)

- The school's safeguarding policy takes account of recent government guidance. The school does not have a website, so a paper or electronic copy of the policy is made available to parents and carers on request.
- Safeguarding leaders have completed suitable training in relation to their role. They receive regular safeguarding updates from the local authority and the proprietor body. This helps them to keep up to date with relevant guidance and changes relating to

safeguarding. Leaders are aware of the main safeguarding risks in the local area and have responded to this through staff training and changes to the curriculum.

- All staff are well trained regarding safeguarding. Training involves updates linked to government guidance, and there has been a focus on specific aspects, including child-on-child abuse. Staff have a clear understanding of safeguarding procedures. They know what to do if a pupil makes a disclosure, if they have a concern about a pupil and if they have a concern about a member of staff. Staff are vigilant in making referrals.
- All pupils can name a trusted adult who they would go to if they are worried or concerned about something. Pupils say the staff 'get them' and know them well. They trust the staff to help them, which they say makes them feel safe and calm.
- Parents speak positively about the level of care and support that school leaders and staff provide for their children. Parents value this.
- The proprietor body has ensured that these standards are met.

Paragraphs 9, 9(a), 9(b), 9(c), 13, 14, 16, 16(a) and 16(b)

- The school's behaviour policy outlines clear expectations of pupils' behaviour. Leaders have established a positive approach to behaviour management, which is applied consistently by all staff. This is underpinned by positive relationships between staff and pupils, and among pupils. Staff know pupils well. As a result, they notice any changes in pupils' behaviour and de-escalate potential issues. Leaders and staff display a proactive approach to behaviour management. There is a shared understanding that 'prevention is better than cure'.
- Behaviour records are well maintained. Leaders use these to identify any trends or patterns of negative behaviour for individual pupils. This helps leaders to identify and address the reason for the negative behaviour to try and prevent it from happening again.
- On an annual basis, all staff are trained to use restrictive physical intervention (RPI). There is a focus on de-escalation and physical intervention is used as a last resort. Incidents of RPI are recorded well to analyse any patterns of behaviour. Parents are informed on the same day if a physical intervention is used. There is a debrief session for staff and pupils following the use of RPI to reflect on the event in case there are any learning points for both pupils and staff. This academic year, the number of RPI incidents has reduced significantly compared to the previous academic year. Suspensions are used as a last resort and there are systems in place to support pupils' reintegration. There have been no exclusions since the last inspection.
- Overall, pupils describe behaviour in their class and on the playground as positive. They say that there are issues, but staff deal with them quickly. Pupils appreciate and understand the range of rewards for positive behaviour and good work. They can earn 'green cards' and 'golden tickets' and are encouraged to write 'kindness tokens'. These are celebrated in a fortnightly assembly. Pupils understand the consequences that exist within the school for negative behaviour. Consequences are proportionate and graduated.
- Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the improvements in their children's behaviour at school and home. Many say that since their child has attended this school, it has made a positive difference to their family lives.

- Pupils are closely supervised throughout the day due to high levels of staffing. Teachers and teaching assistants supervise and play with pupils at breaktimes, which supports continuity and behaviour management.
- The school's risk assessment policy clearly sets out the measures to minimise risk in a range of contexts. Risk assessments linked to the school building, off-site education and individual pupils were checked during the inspection. They are clear, easy to follow and fit for purpose. The risk assessments attempt to keep pupils as safe as possible.
- The schools' first-aid policy clearly sets out the measures to deal with any injuries or accidents and the administration of medication. There are sufficient staff trained in paediatric first aid. Pupils describe the timely help they get if they need first aid. This was seen in practice during the inspection. Clear processes are in place to administer medication in school. Pupils with asthma have access to their inhalers in school and when they are educated off site.
- The proprietor body has ensured that these standards are met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- The principal and assistant principal lead the school well. They have put into place a range of policies and systems to ensure that the standards are met securely and consistently over time. School leaders have ensured that safeguarding pupils' welfare is everyone's priority.
- The proprietor body has established multi-layered checking systems that enable them to support, challenge and hold school leaders to account. This provides them with a level of assurance that the standards are continually being met to a high standard.
- The proprietor body is keen for all schools within the group to retain their own individuality. They are rightly proud of the well-being strategy that supports staff and leaders in the school.
- The school advisory panel is an independent group of professionals that acts as a critical friend to the school. This is an extra layer of scrutiny within the leadership and management structure. The panel celebrates good practice, challenges where improvements can be made and 'pokes around' the workings of the school. The panel is also an advocate for the school so that the school gets a good deal from the proprietor body.
- The proprietor body has ensured that these standards are 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. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

School details

Unique reference number	144374
DfE registration number	332/6008
Inspection number	10291881

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	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	36
Number of part-time pupils	1
Proprietor	The Rowan School Ltd
Chair	Tracey Storey
Principal	Snita Verma
Annual fees (day pupils)	£44,625 to £61,750
Telephone number	01902 679877
Website	None
Email address	sverma@therowanschool.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	1 to 3 March 2022

Information about this school

- The Rowan School is an independent day school for pupils who have SEMH needs. Some pupils have additional needs relating to communication and interaction. All pupils have an EHC plan.
- The school is located in a residential area near Coseley town centre.
- The school caters for boys and girls from five to 11 years of age. The school offers places for up to 36 pupils.
- The school does not have a religious denomination.

- The school's last full standard inspection was in March 2022.
- The proprietor has changed since the last inspection. This change occurred in June 2022.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This emergency inspection was conducted at the request of the Department for Education as a result of a complaint relating to safeguarding and pupils' welfare. This inspection was carried out with no notice.
- The inspector held meetings with the principal, who is also the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), the assistant principal and the deputy DSL.
- The inspector spoke with two representatives of the proprietor body and the chair of the school advisory panel. These meetings were held remotely.
- The inspector conducted two learning walks with the principal to observe how pupils' individual learning needs are met and catered for.
- The inspector spoke with three groups of pupils about their experiences in school. He observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and at less structured times, including lunchtime.
- The inspector contacted a representative of the local authority to gather relevant information.
- The inspector examined a range of policies and documents relating to behaviour, first aid and health and safety. Documents relating to safeguarding were also checked, including the checks that leaders make, prior to employment, on staff's suitability to work with children.
- The inspector spoke with a group of staff to gather their views about the school.
- The inspector spoke with parents at the end of the school day. In addition, he spoke with taxi drivers and escorts who transport pupils to and from school.

Inspection team

Wayne Simner, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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