

Central Education Ltd

Yew Tree Farm, Nash Lane, Scaynes Hill, West Sussex RH17 7NJ

Inspection date

22 August 2023

Overall outcome

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

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7–7(b) and Part 8 32(1)(c)

- The school's proprietor has made sure that there is a suitable safeguarding policy in place and that this is published on the school's website. While fit for purpose, the current policy is in the process of being reviewed to ensure that it reflects the most recent statutory guidance due to come into force in September 2023.
- Safeguarding records show that the policy is applied effectively. Staff identify concerns and log these appropriately. Leaders make referrals to external agencies when required. Records show leaders working closely with parents and carers and social workers to support pupils.
- Although the policy is serving its intended purpose, some aspects of safeguarding record-keeping could be strengthened. Information about safeguarding concerns is sometimes kept in more than one place, so the chronology of events is not always clear without explanation from the designated safeguarding lead. Leaders understand this and have made plans to centralise all records from September onwards.

Paragraph 11, 12, 16

- The proprietor has ensured that there is a written health and safety policy that complies with the relevant guidance. Along with the headteacher, they have ensured that the new premises are safe, in accordance with this policy. Work to develop some other parts of the site to a suitable standard is ongoing. Some areas of the school are kept locked and will not be accessible to pupils until the necessary work has been completed.
- An external contractor has conducted a fire risk assessment of the proposed building. There were only minor recommendations following this, which leaders have addressed. There are policies and systems in place to ensure that the school continues to comply with fire safety regulations.

- There is an appropriate risk assessment policy. Completed risk assessments show that leaders take sensible action to minimise and manage risk. This includes risks associated with the premises, as well as for planned activities involving pupils.
- The requirements of the independent school standards (the standards) in this part are likely to be met if the school carries out the proposed material changes.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 23(1)–23(1)(c), 24(1)–24(1)(b), 24(2), 25–29(1)(b)

- Following an external health and safety audit, the proprietor has made sure that necessary improvements have been carried out to parts of the new school site. Work to develop some other parts of the site is ongoing, particularly in the outbuildings, which will be used to deliver vocational learning such as carpentry and metalworking. The premises are currently suitable for accommodating 18 pupils and associated staff.
- Classrooms have been refurbished to a reasonable standard. They are spacious, safe and clean. During the inspection, classroom furniture was in the process of being transferred from the previous premises.
- The school building is situated in extensive grounds, which provide space for pupils to play outdoors. This space has also been made safe, for example with pond areas being roped off. Leaders' plan is that woodland, wildlife and horticultural areas will provide opportunities for pupils to learn outdoors as part of the school's curriculum.
- There are suitable toilet facilities for pupils and staff. As the main school building was previously for residential use, toilets still contain shower and bathing facilities. These facilities have been assessed to make sure that any additional risk is managed safely. There is a suitable schedule in place to ensure the safety of drinking water.
- There are appropriate medical facilities to enable the care of pupils who are sick or injured. The newly refurbished medical room is adjacent to toilet facilities. Medicines are stored securely.
- There is appropriate lighting throughout the property, including external lighting around the building and car parking area.
- The school does not cater for pupils with complex needs.
- The requirements of the standards in this part are likely to be met if the school carries out the proposed material changes.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1)–34(1)(c)

- The headteacher and the proprietor have ensured that the independent school standards are likely to be met. They rightly recognise that they need more leadership capacity to ensure that this continues to be the case. They have very recently appointed two members of staff to the school's leadership team. Early evidence indicates that this is having a positive impact.

- Leaders are committed to the well-being of pupils and seek to make decisions in their best interests.
- The requirements of the standards in this part are likely to be met if the school carries out the proposed material changes.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The proprietor ensures that the school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 by publishing a suitable accessibility plan. This plan is reviewed regularly.

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	126149
DfE registration number	938/6249
Inspection number	10305937

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 special school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Central Education Ltd
Chair	Geoffrey Wyatt
Headteacher	Mark Gill
Annual fees (day pupils)	£36,000
Telephone number	01444 450 111
Website	www.centraleducation.org.uk
Email address	info@education-centre.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	1 to 3 November 2022

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16	Not applicable	Not applicable
Number of pupils on the school roll	16	30	18

Reason for inspector's recommendations

Improvements to the school site are only partially complete. Some practical classrooms, specifically those in outbuildings, have been sealed off until renovations are carried out. In its current state, the school premises can safely accommodate 18 pupils and associated staffing.

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	16	30
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	16	30
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	16	30
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	16	30

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	5	10
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	2
Number of staff in the welfare provision	1	1

Information about this school

- Central Education Ltd provides school places for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). All pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan relating to social, emotional and mental health needs. Many pupils have associated needs such as autism spectrum disorder.
- The school accepts pupils placed by several local authorities, with the majority coming from West Sussex.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- The proprietor has applied for two material changes. The first is to move the school's premises from 1–3 Barclay Court, Market Place, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH16 1DB to Yew Tree Farm, Nash Lane, Scaynes Hill, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH17 7NJ. The second material change proposed is to reduce the maximum number of pupils on roll from 41 to 30.
- The Department for Education requested that Ofsted conduct a material change and report against paragraphs 11, 12, 16 and 34 of the independent school standards as well as the standards in Part 5.
- This is the first material change inspection since the school's most recent independent school standard inspection, which took place in November 2022.
- The inspector checked the school's arrangements for safeguarding as part of the inspection. This included a review of the school's policy and recruitment procedures. He also considered whether these arrangements have been properly implemented.
- The inspector met with the school's proprietor as well as the headteacher.
- The inspector checked the suitability of the school's premises and discussed this with the school's headteacher.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents in relation to the material change request, including policy documents and paperwork relating to welfare, premises, and health and safety.

Inspection team

Chris Ellison, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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