

Manorway Independent School

The Old St Justus Church, Strood, Rochester, Chatham, Kent ME2 2HG

Inspection date

14 September 2023

Overall outcome

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

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 3, 3(c) 3(e)

- At the time of the last standard inspection, leaders had not ensured that teaching was supported by well-planned lessons, suitable activities, effective teaching methods, or efficient management of lesson time. Leaders had not ensured that all teachers had good subject knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught.
- Staff now have access to a comprehensive suite of training modules offered by a nationally recognised and reputable training provider. Records indicate that they have completed training in a wide range of subjects, including subject-specific training in mathematics and English. However, there are some notable gaps in staff knowledge and training. For example, at the time of the last inspection, inspectors found that those staff supporting pupils at an early stage of learning to read did not have sufficient expertise in the teaching of phonics. This is still the case because relevant training has not been provided to everyone who needs it.
- Leaders have introduced written curriculum plans and schemes of work which provide a secure basis for teaching. The plans provide teachers with a range of valuable information, including learning objectives, the content to be taught, and suggested activities. Teachers have been given time to review and adapt the content of curriculum plans and how it will be delivered according to each pupil's needs.
- A reading leader has been appointed. He has a detailed understanding of pupils' individual needs and of any gaps in their knowledge. The reading lead knows precisely how to support each pupil to ensure they learn well and to foster enjoyment of reading. He is knowledgeable and enthusiastic about reading and is clear about where further improvements are needed in how reading is taught across the school.
- At the previous inspection, inspectors found that staff did not have the expertise to teach phonics effectively. While this is still the case, leaders have introduced a number of recent developments which are helping to improve the situation. For instance, a new phonics programme, while still in the early stages of implementation, is providing some structure for the teaching of early reading skills, and a teacher has been appointed to

support individual pupils with their reading. These initiatives have secured some early signs of success for individual pupils.

- Since the previous inspection, the school's well-stocked library has been supplemented with additional reading materials, such as newspapers and magazines. These have been carefully selected to capture pupils' interest and encourage reading. Regular opportunities for pupils to read are now an established part of school life.
- This part of the independent school standards remains unmet.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7–7(b), 9, 9(b), 11, 12, 32(1)(c)

- At the time of the last inspection, arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils were not effective. These arrangements did not have sufficient regard to the guidance issued by the Secretary of State. Leaders were not ensuring that the school's behaviour policy was implemented effectively. The proprietor was not ensuring compliance with the relevant health and safety laws, or with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- There were errors in the school's safeguarding policy published on the school's website at the time the school's action plan was evaluated. The policy has subsequently been updated in line with the most recent statutory guidance. However, the policy remains unclear about the identity of the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and the deputy DSL, leading to the potential for confusion.
- At the time of the last inspection, leaders were often unable to access safeguarding records. They have introduced a new electronic system since then which aims to support collation, management and monitoring of safeguarding information. However, leaders still found it difficult to access key safeguarding records during this inspection. They have not been trained sufficiently well to ensure that they can do so confidently and efficiently.
- The recently appointed headteacher has established helpful links with the local authority to facilitate information-sharing between agencies and the school. Staff who spoke with the inspector during this inspection were knowledgeable about safeguarding procedures.
- All staff have completed training in behaviour management and in the use of positive handling. The school's behaviour mentor has played a key role in ensuring consistency of approach. He has helped to refocus behaviour management on the use of de-escalation strategies in order to reduce the need for physical intervention.
- Pupils are being supported to recognise their feelings and responses. Early indications are that this approach is beginning to reap benefits, although this aspect of the school's work is still in its infancy. Some pupils are starting to ask for help when needed and there has been a small decrease in the use of positive handling during recent months. The school was calm and orderly during this inspection.
- Leaders use regular reports and staff briefings to monitor and review any behaviour or safeguarding concerns. However, some variations in the quality of behaviour management identified at the time of the last standard inspection remain. The newly appointed headteacher intends to secure further improvements in behaviour management in the coming months.

- Leaders had taken suitable measures to appoint a health and safety officer since the last inspection. That person has recently left their post, with the new headteacher assuming this role in the interim. The health and safety policy has been updated and is now fit for purpose. However, the policy is not implemented effectively, and leaders do not always make health and safety issues a sufficiently high priority. For instance, during the inspection, the school's outdoor area was heavily littered with rubbish.
- Suitable fire safety procedures were in place at the time of the inspection. For example, fire exits were clearly signposted and fire extinguishers were in place. The independent school standard relating to compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 is now met. However, there are anomalies in the fire safety policy which need to be addressed. For example, the policy makes no reference to measures taken to ensure the provision and maintenance of fire equipment.
- This part of the independent school standards continues to be unmet.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1)–34(1)(c)

- Leaders have not addressed the unmet standards identified at the last inspection. While there are signs of progress, the pace of development has been too slow. Leaders acknowledge that there is still more to do to ensure that all the independent school standards are met.
- Monitoring and accountability procedures are not robust enough. The former headteacher, as sole director of the school, has not ensured that all the independent school standards are met. She states that she has now stepped down as director, but is still registered as such. A new chair of governors has recently been appointed. The new headteacher has identified the need to ensure that he is familiar with the independent school standards.
- At the time of this inspection, the former headteacher was working alongside the newly appointed headteacher to support a transition in leadership. The new headteacher has already begun to prioritise improvements in the school. He is ambitious for the school and its pupils and is looking forward to playing his part in its future.
- Links with the local authority have been strengthened since the last inspection. The recently appointed headteacher also intends to establish links with other relevant local authorities.
- This part of the independent school standards remains unmet.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- At the time of the most recent standard inspection, the school's accessibility plan did not comply with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. Leaders have reviewed and updated the plan, which now complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and is fit for purpose. A hard copy of the plan is available in the school office while the school's website is being updated.

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	142411
DfE registration number	887/6009
Inspection number	10299930

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	Independent school
School status	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	8 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	15
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Manorway Academy
Chair	Juliana Mafo
Headteacher	Alan Salter (at the time of the inspection) Candy McGough (reported as interim head at the time of report publication)
Annual fees (day pupils)	£15,600 to £39,000
Telephone number	01634 713 344
Website	www.manorwayindependentschool.com
Email address	office@manorwayacademy.com
Dates of previous standard inspection	15 to 17 November 2022

Information about this school

- The school caters predominantly for pupils with an education, health and care plan and with social, emotional and mental health needs. Some pupils may also have additional diagnoses, such as autism spectrum disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. All pupils have struggled in their previous educational settings, and many have been out of education for extended periods of time or have had interrupted schooling.

- A new headteacher took up his post on 4 September 2023 and was in post when this inspection took place. He has subsequently left his post. At the time of publication, the school reports that there is an interim headteacher in place, as named above.
- The school's proprietor is Manorway Academy. The sole director was the school's headteacher until 4 September 2023.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The last standard inspection took place in November 2022.

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.
- This was the first progress monitoring inspection since the school was judged inadequate with unmet independent school standards at its last standard inspection in November 2022. This inspection was conducted without notice.
- The Department for Education (DfE) required the school to produce a statutory action plan following the last standard inspection. The plan was evaluated by Ofsted in May 2023 and accepted by the DfE on 20 June 2023.
- The inspector met with the former headteacher, who is also the proprietor representative, and the recently appointed headteacher. She also met with a range of other leaders.
- The inspector toured the school site. She spoke with pupils and staff in the classrooms, during the lunch break, and at other times during the school day. The inspector also had a telephone conversation with a parent.
- The inspector considered a range of policies and documentation linked to safeguarding and the requirements of the independent school standards.

Inspection team

Julie Sackett, 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 1. Quality of education provided

- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school-
 - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
 - 3(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that-
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 9 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that-
 - 9(b) the policy is implemented effectively; and
- 11 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.
- 12 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005[12].

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; and
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Parent View

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted
© Crown copyright 2023