

St Edward's School

Melchet Court, Sherfield English, Romsey, Hampshire SO51 6ZR

Inspection date

23 November 2023

Overall outcome

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

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7–7(b), 11, 12, 14, 16 –16(b), 32(1), 32(1)(c)

- The school's safeguarding arrangements are effective. There is a detailed and appropriate safeguarding policy, which is published on the school's website and contains the current statutory guidance.
- Staff receive regular safeguarding training and benefit from daily morning briefings. They are vigilant and understand very clearly the additional vulnerabilities that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) can have. All new staff complete a comprehensive safeguarding training as part of their induction. This includes specific training about the 'Prevent' duty and online safety.
- Leaders, governors and the proprietor body are knowledgeable about their responsibilities with respect to protecting and promoting the welfare, health and safety of pupils and staff. Safeguarding procedures and records show that leaders work effectively with parents, carers and external agencies to ensure pupils' safety.
- Leaders give due regard to health and safety arrangements in the school. Health and safety procedures in school are underpinned by an appropriate written policy that complies with the necessary laws and guidance. A range of specialist companies are used to ensure that compliance is consistently maintained.
- Leaders check the school site as a matter of routine, with identified issues addressed in a timely way. Consequently, school premises are well maintained and safe for pupils and staff. The new block which opened in 2022, The Declan Building, meets health and safety requirements. It is spacious and will easily accommodate the proposed increase in pupil numbers.
- Together with the leadership team, the site manager ensures that the school premises and procedures continue to comply with fire safety regulations. The proprietor body commissions an annual external audit of fire safety arrangements to ensure that the school complies with all requirements. Regular fire drills take place to ensure that everyone knows the evacuation procedures in the event of a fire.

- The school is well staffed and there is a high level of supervision and support for pupils. Leaders have thought carefully about how pupils currently attending the school will be affected by the proposed increase in numbers. They intend to increase pupil numbers gradually over the next two years.
- Leaders are thorough in completing necessary risk assessments. They follow well-considered policies and procedures to ensure that these are consistent.
- The standards in part 3 are likely to be met if the proposed material change is approved.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

Paragraph 18(2)(a)–18(2)(e), 18(3), 20(6)–20(6)(c), 21(1)–21(7)(b)

- Leaders are knowledgeable about the purpose of pre-employment checks. They follow robust recruitment procedures when appointing new staff. Records are well maintained and stored securely.
- The single central record contains the necessary statutory information.
- The school does not use the services of supply staff.
- The school is likely to meet the requirements in this part of the standards if the material change is agreed.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

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

- The standards of accommodation and facilities in the main school and The Declan Building are of high quality. There are many well-resourced classrooms, breakout areas and therapy rooms. The school also has several specialist classrooms for the teaching of subjects such as design technology, art and music. All rooms are light, bright, spacious and comfortable. The furnishings are appropriate to the purpose of the rooms. Careful thought has been given to pupils' individual behaviour, emotional and sensory needs.
- Appropriate toilet facilities are provided in all areas in the main school and the Declan Building, with hot and cold running water. Hot water is at an appropriate temperature. Pupils have access to shower and changing rooms in the separate sports facilities, which include a swimming pool, indoor play area and a well-equipped gym.
- Pupils have access to drinking water throughout the day.
- There is a dedicated medical room in the main school building. It provides suitable space and facilities for the care of any pupil who becomes ill during the day. Controlled medicines are stored securely, with appropriate arrangements in place for administering them safely.
- The school's expansive and well-maintained site provides plenty of space for pupils to play, learn and socialise. The grounds are also used to support the school's specialist life skills curriculum. These include large playing fields, an apple orchard, a farm and horticultural areas.
- Lighting and acoustics are all fit for purpose.

- The school is likely to meet this part of the independent school standards if the material change request is granted.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1)–34(1)(c)

- The proprietor body has a proven track record of success in educating pupils with SEND. The proposed increase in the school's capacity has been carefully planned, with consideration of pupils' needs at the forefront of decision-making.
- Leaders are highly knowledgeable about teaching pupils with SEND. They are ambitious for pupils and have a deep understanding of their needs. Leaders' care for pupils, and their commitment to providing high-quality education is clear and compelling.
- Governors bring a wide range of skills and expertise to their roles. They conduct regular audits to review the school's work. Governors use this information to check about all aspects of the school's work and ensure that the independent school standards are met securely.
- The school is likely to meet the requirements in this part of the independent school standards if the material change is agreed.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The proprietor body is committed to ensuring that all pupils have access to a high-quality education. The school's accessibility plan reflects leaders' consideration of pupils' needs and the reasonable adaptations made to accommodate these.

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 | 116584 |
| DfE registration number | 850/6032 |
| Inspection number | 10318328 |

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/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 school |
| Proprietor | Clifton Catholic Diocesan Trust |
| Chair | Michael Tennant |
| Headteacher | Graham Maher |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £85,896 |
| Telephone number | 01794 885 252 |
| Website | www.melchetcourt.com |
| Email address | admin@melchetcourt.com |
| Dates of previous standard inspection | 23 to 25 November 2022 |

Pupils

| | School's current position | School's proposal | Inspector's recommendation |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Age range of pupils | 9 to 18 | 9 to 18 | 9 to 18 |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 72 | 100 | 100 |

Pupils

| | School's current position | School's proposal |
|------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Gender of pupils | Boys | Boys |

| | | |
|--|----|-----|
| Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age | 72 | 100 |
| Number of part-time pupils | 0 | 0 |
| Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities | 72 | 100 |
| Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan | 72 | 100 |
| Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan | 72 | 100 |

Staff

| | School's current position | School's proposal |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff | 20 | 25 |
| Number of part-time teaching staff | 1 | 1 |
| Number of staff in the welfare provision | 39 | 44 |

Information about this school

- St Edward's School is an independent special school which caters for boys with a range of SEND, including autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and social emotional and mental health needs. All pupils have an education, health and care plan and many have suffered significant trauma.
- The school has a distinct Catholic ethos and is owned by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Clifton. It is based in a large Grade 2 listed building in rural Hampshire and spread over 189 acres.
- Pupils are referred to the school by their local authority, which funds their place. Most pupils have missed a significant amount of time in school previously.
- The school's last standard inspection took place in November 2022, when its overall effectiveness was judged to be good.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education because the proprietor body had applied to make changes to the school's registration. The proprietor body wishes to increase the admission numbers from 72 to 100. This was the first material change inspection for this application.
- The school operates from a single site with extensive grounds. A new purpose built extension, The Declan Building, was opened in October 2022.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents prior to the inspection, including information provided on the school's website.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, a representative of the proprietor body, the chair of governors and one other governor. She also met with the designated safeguarding leader, the site manager, the director of development and senior leaders. The inspector toured the school premises with the headteacher and the site manager.
- The inspector checked policies, records and documentation relating to the specific independent school standards in scope for this inspection, including the single central record and the safeguarding policy.

Inspection team

Shazia Akram, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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