

The Greater Horseshoe School

Little Bovey Lane, Heathfield, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 6RH

Inspection date

9 May 2024

Overall outcome

The school meets the independent school standards relevant to the material change. The material change has already been implemented

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7 to 7 (b)

- The school prioritises pupils' safety and welfare. The proprietor has ensured there is a comprehensive and up-to-date safeguarding policy. This is published on the school's website. There are also useful policies to promote pupils' personal development and processes to ensure that pupils' needs are met. Staff follow policy and process consistently and with alacrity. They are well trained and work together effectively to ensure that pupils' needs are met consistently and appropriately. Pupils feel and are safe. The school is well placed to expand further should numbers increase.
- The safeguarding policy is implemented effectively. The policy has due regard to the latest statutory guidance. The school has an established open and caring culture. Staff benefit from regular and focused training. They work effectively with other agencies to ensure pupils' needs are identified and met. Collectively, the arrangements for safeguarding are well established and would cope well with the proposed increase in pupil numbers.

Paragraphs 11 and 12

- The school has established health and safety policies and procedures which reflect the expectations of the proprietor. The health and safety policy is published on the school's website. It is regularly reviewed, updated and improved. Staff work diligently and committedly to apply the expectations of the policy. Assessments to ensure the site and lessons are safe and risks are mitigated are strong. They are used to protect pupils from risk, including when off site.
- The proprietor has ensured that the school buildings comply fully with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Regular fire drills ensure that evacuation plans are tried and tested. Fire exits and extinguishers are clearly signposted and located appropriately throughout the school's different buildings. Fire equipment is regularly tested, often by specialist professionals, to ensure they remain suitable. There is appropriate space to cope with the increase in the proposed extra numbers.

Paragraph 14

- Due to the needs of pupils, staff-to-pupil ratios are high. Staff know the pupils they work with exceptionally well. They establish strong and positive relationships. Levels of supervision match the expectations set out in pupils' education, health and care plans (EHC plan). Pupils learn through bespoke packages according to their needs. This means they are constantly supervised when in lessons and during social times. The school has appropriate plans for upscaling this model should the material change be granted.

Paragraphs 16 to 16(b)

- The proprietor has ensured there is an up-to-date risk assessment policy for the school. There are established routines and expectations about the production and review of risk assessments relating to the site, lessons, activities, trips and visits. Staff utilise this to ensure they evaluate and mitigate potential hazards. Leaders ensure these are appropriate and challenge assessments when necessary. Consideration has been given to reviewing relevant risk assessments as the school grows.
- The proprietor has ensured that the independent school standards (the standards) considered during this inspection continue to be met.

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

Paragraphs 18(2) to 18(2)(e), 18(3) to 19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3) to 21(3)(b), 20(6) to 20(6)(c), 21(1) to (4), 21(5) to 21(6), 21(7)(a) to 21(7)(b)

- The proprietor has ensured that safer recruitment processes are robust. All required checks are carried out for new staff, volunteers and governors prior to them taking up post. All checks are recorded appropriately on the school's single central record. There are appropriate mechanisms for those in leadership and governance positions to ensure these checks are properly completed and kept on the record.
- The proprietor has ensured that this standard remains met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 22, 23(1)(a) to 23(2), 24(1) to 24(3), 25, 26, 27(a) to 27(b), 28(1) to 28(2)(b), 29(1) to 29(2), 31(a) to 31(c)

- The Greater Horseshoe School utilises three separate sites. Each site provides for different curriculum priorities and allows the school to ensure pupils are in a safe space to learn. Leaders have considered how they will accommodate more pupils at the school at the main site. There are already purpose-built outbuildings that allow for extra capacity and learning space.
- The site has plentiful outdoor learning spaces. These are very well resourced to meet the varying needs of pupils. Class spaces are light and acoustics appropriate. The range of learning spaces mean the site is well placed to take extra pupils. Leaders' plans for managing individual curricular mean they have considered fully the potential impact on current organisation. Some spaces are purpose built. For example, there is a food technology classroom where pupils can prepare and cook food. The buildings

are in sound condition and secure. There is appropriate outside lighting.

- The school's plans for growth are considered and reasonable. Leaders understand the needs of pupils well. They have considered the impact of growth on current pupils. The opportunity to utilise the three sites to support growth is well considered. Pupils benefit from learning in small groups and are spaced away from other groups.
- As a former primary site, the school benefits from plentiful toilets for pupils and for staff. On the main site, there are bespoke toilets for boys and separate toilets for girls. Each has its own sink with appropriately hot water for washing hands, without there being a scalding risk. Drinking-water is readily available and appropriately labelled.
- The proprietor has ensured that this standard will remain met if the material change is fully implemented.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34

- The school is exceptionally skilled at meeting the needs of pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH) and autism. Leaders are skilled and knowledgeable. They are passionate about changing the life experiences for the pupils that attend their school. Staff share leaders' vision. Effective self-evaluation ensures that plans for expansion are sensible and with the best interest of current and potential pupils in mind. Leaders work closely with local authority commissioners to meet local need. As such, this has led to leaders' request to increase the maximum number of pupils at the school.
- Leaders' plans consider the standards fully. Leaders have already demonstrated the positive impact of their provision on pupils. Their plans are appropriate to ensure that growth does not impact negatively on this provision and that the standards remain 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 are relevant to the material change.

School details

| | |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Unique reference number | 146167 |
| DfE registration number | 878/6074 |
| Inspection number | 10343611 |

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 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 | Acorn Care and Education Ltd |
| Chair | Mike Deacy |
| Headteacher | Lukasz Miecznikowski |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £65,600 to £72,131 |
| Telephone number | 07592504811 |
| Website | www.thegreaterhorseshoeschool.co.uk |
| Email address | lukazsm@enhancedlearningservices.co.uk |
| Date of previous standard inspection | 7 to 17 March 2023 |

Pupils

| | School's current position | School's proposal | Inspector's recommendation |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Age range of pupils | 8 to 18 | 8 to 18 | 8 to 18 |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 53 | 55 | 55 |

Pupils

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

| | | |
|--|----|----|
| Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age | 53 | 55 |
| Number of part-time pupils | 0 | 0 |
| Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities | 53 | 55 |
| Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan | 53 | 55 |
| Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan | 53 | 55 |

Staff

| | School's current position | School's proposal |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff | 54 | 56 |
| Number of part-time teaching staff | 4 | 4 |
| Number of staff in the welfare provision | 3 | 3 |

Information about this school

- The school operates on three sites. The main school site is The Greater Horseshoe School, Little Bovey Lane, Heathfield, Newton Abbot, Devon, TQ12 6RH. There is a second site at Chipley Mill Farm, Bickington, Newton Abbot, Devon, TQ12 6JW. Here, pupils follow courses in horticulture and animal care. The third site is known as 'Musers', Unit 1, Charles 1st Business Park, Old Newton Road, Heathfield, TQ12 6UT. At Musers, pupils follow courses in music and music technology.
- The Greater Horseshoe School is a specialist provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including pupils with SEMH and autism. All pupils have EHC plans. All placements are funded by Devon local authority.
- Pupil numbers continue to increase at the school. At the time of this inspection, there were more pupils than the school is currently registered to take and contributed to the request to make a material change.

- The school uses one registered alternative provision: Combe Pafford School.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education to evaluate the school's application for a material change. The proprietor wishes to increase the maximum number of pupils on roll from 50 to 55.
- This was the school's first material change inspection.
- The inspector held discussions with leaders, including the headteacher, deputy headteachers, assistant headteacher and family support worker.
- The inspector toured the main site and visited some lessons. He reviewed the school's website, scrutinised curriculum planning and considered a range of school policies and procedures. He also reviewed plans for the development of the site and how this will be used to implement the proposed growth of the school.

Inspection team

Matthew Barnes, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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