

Refocus

6 Knox Road, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire NN8 1HW

Inspection date

7 November 2024

Overall outcome

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

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7 to 7(b), 32(1), 32(1)(c)

- There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first. The school has ensured that the welfare and safety of pupils are high priorities.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at the school. They say that there are lots of staff they can talk to if they have any worries or concerns. Pupils particularly appreciate their key workers, who listen to them and act on what they hear to keep them safe.
- Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe during 'life skills' lessons. They are helped to understand about local safeguarding issues that may impact on them. External agencies give presentations that teach pupils how to stay safe in their communities.
- Staff know pupils well. They take the time to understand pupils' additional needs and personal circumstances that can make them more vulnerable. Staff are quick to pick up on any small changes to pupils' behaviour that might indicate a concern.
- Daily briefings ensure that all staff are kept well informed about any concerns about pupils' welfare. Staff use the start of the day to check on pupils' well-being.
- Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They know that keeping pupils safe is everyone's responsibility. They know how to record and pass on any concerns they may have.
- Staff communicate regularly with parents and carers. This regular dialogue ensures that no concerns are overlooked. The school works with parents well to support the whole family, to prevent any concerns escalating.
- Leaders monitor attendance closely. They contact parents when pupils are absent. Staff undertake home visits to check on pupils' welfare when necessary.
- Leaders work with a range of agencies external to the school, to share information about concerns and to ensure that pupils get the right support at the right time.

- The school's safeguarding policy is available on the school website. It reflects the latest national guidance.

Paragraphs 11, 12

- Clear and comprehensive health and safety and fire safety policies are in place. The school ensures that these policies are followed.
- Leaders regularly undertake their own health and safety and fire safety checks. They carefully record the outcomes of these checks and quickly resolve any issues that arise.
- Staff use an effective system to report any faults or concerns they have about the premises. This ensures timely responses from those responsible for the maintenance of the building.
- Staff hold regular fire drills. They ensure that all pupils know what to do in the event of a fire.
- The governor responsible for safety conducts half-termly visits to the school to check on the work of leaders.
- The recent building work completed at the proposed additional premises has been approved by the relevant authorities. Additional work identified by the external fire risk assessment in July has been completed to ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- The proprietor has ensured that professionals external to the school regularly check the school's health and safety and fire safety arrangements.

Paragraph 14

- There is a sufficient number of staff to provide appropriate supervision of pupils.
- The proposed additional premises are adjoined to the existing school building, so current staff can be utilised for supervision across the site.
- A centre manager has been appointed to have responsibility for the proposed additional premises. The school has plans to recruit additional teachers and support staff if the proposed material change is approved.

Paragraphs 16 to 16(b)

- There is a detailed risk assessment policy in place that guides staff to produce accurate assessments of risks. Risk assessments written by leaders detail the risk rating for the school premises as well as a wide range of activities. They provide comprehensive and up-to-date information for all staff about how to mitigate against the risks identified. These assessments are reviewed annually and updated after any new incident or newly identified risk.
- The risk assessment policy contains limited detail for staff to produce accurate assessments of risk for each pupil. For example, the policy does not state how frequently these risk assessments should be reviewed. However, the individual risk assessments seen during the inspection detailed a comprehensive risk rating for a wide range of behaviours and activities. They provide comprehensive and up-to-date information for all staff. These assessments are reviewed every three months and updated after any new incident or change in pupils' behaviour. This ensures that staff

are informed, in a timely manner, of any new strategies that they should adopt to support pupils to help keep them safe.

- There is a secure procedure in place to assess risk when taking pupils out of school. There are a range of risk assessments produced for all aspects of any trip, including staff taking into account pupils' individual risk assessments. Walking routes to local sports facilities are carefully planned and include photographs of key risks such as road crossing points.
- The school is likely to continue to meet the independent school standards (the standards) checked in these parts if the school receives approval for the implementation of the material change.

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

Paragraphs 18(2) to 18(2)(e), 18(3), 20(6) to 20(6)(c), 21(1) to 21(3)(b), 21(6)

- Leaders know what checks must be undertaken to reassure themselves of any new member of staff's suitability to work with pupils. These checks are completed before new staff begin working at the school.
- The school does not use any supply or agency staff.
- Leaders have undertaken all the necessary checks required for members of the proprietor body.
- Leaders record all recruitment checks on the school's single central record.
- The school is likely to meet the standards in this part if the school receives approval for the implementation of the material change.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1) to 23(1)(c), 28(1)(a) to 28(2)(b)

- The proposed school premises provide appropriate toilet and shower facilities for the sole use of pupils. The hot water in these facilities does not pose a scalding risk to pupils.
- The number of these facilities across the adjoining sites is sufficient to cater for the increase in pupil numbers that the proposed material change would bring about.
- Pupils have access to drinking water from clearly labelled taps in the kitchen that are available to pupils at all times.

Paragraphs 24(1) to 24(1)(b)

- There is an appropriate medical room on the school site. The room, which can also be used for one-to-one meetings, contains a separate bathroom with a sink and a toilet.

Paragraphs 25 to 27(b)

- The school site is maintained to a good standard. There is sufficient, newly installed lighting, both internally and externally. The acoustics in each room are appropriate.

Paragraphs 29(1) to 29(1)(b)

- There is a garden to the rear of the premises for pupils to take a break and play. The school uses local sports facilities that are within walking distance for aspects of the pupils' physical education.
- The school is likely to meet the standards in this part if the school receives approval for the implementation of the material change.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1) to 34(1)(c)

- The proprietor has a secure understanding of the standards that were checked as part of this inspection. They have ensured that the school consistently meets these standards.
- All pupils who currently attend the school have additional social, emotional and mental health needs. Many have been permanently excluded from a mainstream school setting or are at risk of exclusion. Leaders have ensured that the education and care that the pupils currently receive at the school is appropriate to their additional needs. They have thought carefully about the impact on current pupils of additional pupils sited in the proposed attached additional premises. They plan to increase numbers of pupils slowly if the material change is approved to limit the impact on pupils' welfare and education. Leaders have focused on ensuring that the school will continue to meet the standards that were checked as part of this inspection.
- The school is likely to meet the standards in this part if the school receives approval for the implementation of the material change.

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	148756
DfE registration number	940/6000
Inspection number	10369126

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	Independent school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	Refocus Ltd
Chair	Hayley Perry
Headteacher	Paula Tucker
Annual fees (day pupils)	£158 per day
Telephone number	01933391660
Website	www.refocus.school
Email address	enquiries@refocus.school
Dates of previous standard inspection	4 to 6 October 2022

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	14 to 16	14 to 16	14 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	35	60	60

Pupils

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

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	33	60
Number of part-time pupils		Up to 60
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	35	Up to 60
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	10	15
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	10	15

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	11	14
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	11	14

Information about this school

- The school provides full-time or part-time education for up to 40 pupils aged 14 to 16 years. There are currently 35 pupils on roll.
- The school receives referrals from local authorities and secondary schools.
- The school proposes to operate from an additional site to its current registered premises should the Department for Education (DfE) approve the material change application. This site is at 18 Sheep Street, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire NN8 1BL.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school's most recent standard inspection took place from 4 to 6 October 2022.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002, to check the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards relevant to the proposed change to increase to 60 the maximum number of pupils that the school is permitted to have on roll, including at a proposed additional site.
- This was the school's first material change inspection for this proposed change.
- The DfE commissioned the inspector to inspect the suitability of the school's provision in relation to: policies and procedures relating to safeguarding, health and safety, fire safety and risk assessment; supervision of pupils; recruitment of staff; the suitability of the premises and accommodation; and the quality of leadership and management.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and three other senior leaders who are all members of the proprietor body, including the chair and some staff.
- The inspector also met with the chair of governors.
- The inspector met with some pupils. He undertook a tour of the school site, which included the proposed site.
- The inspector considered school documentation in relation to safeguarding, health and safety, fire safety and risk assessment. He looked at the school's single central record and the system for undertaking checks on new staff.

Inspection team

Dave Gilkerson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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