

Marchant Holliday School

North Cheriton, Templecombe, Somerset BA8 0AH

Inspection date

6 December 2024

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 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 2(1) to 2(2)(b), 2(2)(d) to 2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(h) to 2(2)(i), 2A(1) to 2A(2), 3(a) to 3(j), 4

- Leaders have thought deeply about how to design and implement a broad and balanced curriculum for pupils aged 13 and 14. The school does not intend to take new pupils of this age but to provide an option for existing pupils to stay longer at the school when that is the best option to meet their needs. As many pupils are at an educational stage well below their chronological age, this will mean continuing to follow the curriculum that is already in place. The school has, however, detailed and well-developed plans to teach a new curriculum in Years 8 and 9 for those pupils that need it. Leaders have ensured that the school has sufficient expertise among the staff to develop and implement this curriculum.
- The new curriculum is well conceived, carefully planned and likely to meet the needs of pupils should the material change be approved. Aspects of the curriculum particularly relevant to older pupils such as careers education, work-related learning and age-appropriate relationships and sex education have been developed appropriately and thoughtfully.
- Should the material change be implemented, it is likely that pupils will continue to follow a curriculum that is appropriate to their needs. All pupils have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan), and leaders and teachers have a high degree of expertise in supporting such pupils to learn.
- Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education will be delivered, as it is for current pupils, through discrete lessons and also by weaving it through the curriculum in a very well-considered way. The PSHE education programme places an emphasis on preparing pupils for later life in modern Britain. Pupils learn to take responsibility and the importance of fundamental British values.
- The intended curriculum is likely to allow pupils to learn and make progress by acquiring new knowledge and skills. It is likely to continue to foster self-esteem, self-knowledge and increased social and emotional well-being, as it does with current

pupils.

- A framework for assessment, both formal and informal, is in place. It is likely to mean that both staff and pupils have a secure understanding of what pupils can do and what they need to learn next.
- The proprietor has ensured that the independent school standards (the standard) in this part are likely to be met by the school if the material change is approved.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Paragraphs 5 to 5(d)(iii)

- The school devotes a great deal of attention to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It is a central part of the school's ambition for pupils to thrive in all aspects of life. The school's plans for this to continue should its desire to take older pupils be approved are clear and well thought out. Fundamental British values are actively promoted.
- Trips out will be a feature of the programme for older pupils, as they are for current ones. They will have a large element of preparation for adulthood in them such as developing the ability to travel and shop independently, as well as being intrinsically worthwhile. Through these events, pupils will develop their social skills and their cultural capital.
- Pupils will have opportunities outside the taught curriculum to do art, gardening, music or sport depending on their interests. These will contribute to developing their self-esteem and self-confidence.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standard in this part is likely to be met by the school if the material change is approved.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 8, 32(1)(c)

- The school has further enhanced its culture of safeguarding since the previous standard inspection in March 2024, when the safeguarding was judged to be effective. Leaders have invested in a new electronic referral and recording system which has increased their ability to analyse patterns in safeguarding incidents.
- Leaders ensure that the safeguarding policy and practice has due regard to the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State. They ensure that staff have up-to-date knowledge of this guidance.
- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) as an education-only inspection, but it asked for consideration of paragraphs 8 to 8(b) to be undertaken. The arrangements made to safeguard boarders while they are accommodated at the school are likely to meet the requirements of paragraph 8 if the material change is approved.
- The school's safeguarding policy is published on its website.

Paragraphs 11, 12, 14, 16 to 16(b)

- The school has robust health and safety and risk assessment policies and procedures in place. They are likely to continue to meet requirements if the material change is approved.
- The school is likely to continue to comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 if the material change is approved. It has made a substantial recent investment in a fire alarm system that caters for all pupils, including those with hearing impairment or sensory issues related to loud noises.
- The levels of current and planned future staffing are likely to mean pupils are properly supervised.
- Overall, the proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met by the school if the material change is approved.

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

Paragraphs 18(1) to 18(3), 19(1) to 19(3), 20(6)(b)(iii), 21(1) to 21(7)(b)

- The proprietor and leaders have a secure understanding of the pre-employment checks that need to be made. The school has a well-maintained single central record in place. All the required checks that have been done on staff, agency workers and members of the proprietor body are recorded appropriately.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met by the school if the material change is approved.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

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

- The school currently has sufficient suitable toilet and washing facilities to cope with an increase of 19 in the maximum number of pupils from 56 to 75.

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

- The school's current medical room will continue to meet requirements if pupil numbers increase.

Paragraphs 25, 26, 27 to 27(b), 29(1) to 29(1)(b)

- The school has ample capacity to accommodate up to 19 more pupils if the school's maximum number on roll increases from 56 to 75. It currently has a spare classroom and space in its other classes. Leaders have thought carefully about this. The proprietor's application to raise the maximum number on roll by 19 pupils is the product of precise assessment of the capacity to accommodate additional pupils.
- The spare classroom and the ones currently in use are maintained to a high standard, with appropriate acoustic conditions and lighting.
- The school has extensive, well-maintained grounds, which will be more than ample for the planned increase in pupil numbers. Pupils will be able to undertake outdoor physical education or play outside.

- Overall, the proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met by the school if the material change is approved.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34

- The school is very well led by both senior leaders and governors. The school was judged to be outstanding at its most recent standard inspection in March 2024. Leaders are determined to push on from this success, and there is not a hint of complacency about their thorough, thoughtful approach. The material change is embedded in their school's improvement plan for 2024/25 and its five-year strategic plan for 2024/29.
- Leaders' rationale for the material change is convincing. They are responding strategically to both a rise in the number of children who would benefit from coming to the school and the rising levels of need of these prospective pupils. Moreover, by extending the age range, leaders are responding appropriately to the difficulty of finding suitable placements for pupils who leave the school at the end of Year 7.
- The school is a charity, and the governors are the directors of the charity which is the proprietor body. The proprietor body has made sure that the strong strategic direction it provides is shared and understood by all who work at the school. Governors and leaders clearly work well together to ensure that the standards are likely to be met.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standard in this part is likely to be met by the school if the material change is approved.

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	123920
DfE registration number	933/6089
Inspection number	10373811

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 category	Independent residential special school
Proprietor	Marchant-Holliday School Ltd
Chair	Anthony Palmer
Headteacher	Sarah Sellick
Annual fees (day pupils)	£75,000
Telephone number	0196333234
Website	www.marchant-holliday.co.uk
Email address	office@marchant-holliday.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	12 to 14 March 2024

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	5 to 13	5 to 14	5 to 14
Number of pupils on the school roll	52	75	75

Pupils

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

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	50	75
Number of part-time pupils	2	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	52	75
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	52	75
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	52	75

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	75	78
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0

Information about this school

- Marchant Holliday School is an independent residential special school for day pupils and weekly boarders. All pupils have an EHC plan, typically for social, emotional and mental health needs.
- The school is registered to admit up to 56 pupils. The boarding provision currently has eight residents.
- The school has a temporary material change in place, approved by the DfE, to raise its maximum age to 13.
- The school's most recent standard inspection was in March 2024, where it was judged to be outstanding.
- The school uses two unregistered alternative provisions.

Information about this inspection

- This material change inspection was commissioned by the DfE to assess whether the school was likely to meet the standards if its age range was changed from 5 to 13 to 5 to 14 and its maximum number on roll increased from 56 to 75.
- This was the school's first material change inspection in respect of these particular changes.
- The inspector met with leaders, other staff and governors. He visited classrooms and toured the premises and site. He reviewed documents on the school's website and other documentation during the visit.

Inspection team

Stephen Lee, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
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