

The Greater Horseshoe School

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

Inspection date

8 January 2025

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)

- The school ensures the safety and welfare of pupils is paramount. The school has a comprehensive and up-to-date safeguarding policy in place. The policy complies with current government guidance in relation to 'Keeping children safe in education' (2024). In addition, well-considered policies and protocols make sure that the needs of each pupil are reviewed and understood. Staff are well informed on safety routines and protocols and work together to ensure pupils are safe and well cared for.
- There are secure and robust safeguarding procedures in place. Staff rigorously follow protocols to keep pupils safe. Regular training and review mean staff have a collective understanding of how to support pupils well. The school works closely with external partners and agencies to support pupils and their families. The culture of safeguarding is collaborative, open and well embedded. The arrangements for safeguarding are strongly established and would be undiminished with the proposed increase in pupil numbers.

Paragraphs 11 and 12

- The proprietor ensures that there are detailed and relevant health and safety policies and procedures in place. The policy is published on the school's website. The proprietor ensures that working practices around health and safety are evaluated and updated regularly. Staff are trained and know what actions to take to carry out their roles effectively. Health and safety records show that relevant checks take place daily, weekly and monthly in accordance with the policy. The checks and policy have been updated to include the three new classrooms recently completed. Assessments ensure the site is safe.
- The school has ensured that the recent changes to the school building comply fully with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 in line with the rest of the school buildings. The fire risk assessment and evacuation plans take into account the changes to the building. Staff are trained in their roles as fire marshals. Fire extinguishers and exits are clearly signed throughout the building. The new

classrooms have been prepared to a high specification. The effective systems and policies in place mean that procedures are regularly reviewed and easily adapted should the material change be approved.

Paragraph 14

- The school has an existing high ratio of staff to pupils. Staff-to-pupil ratios are high to best meet the needs of the pupils. In most cases, the ratio is one to one or small group when that is appropriate for the pupils. The school takes care to appoint staff with the skills and expertise appropriate to support the needs of each pupil. There are strong relationships between staff and pupils.
- Leaders have put appropriate plans in place to ensure that staffing levels remain at the expected ratios should the number of pupils on roll increase.

Paragraphs 16 to 16(b)

- There is a detailed risk assessment policy in place. The school's risk assessments consider a range of risks and identify appropriate management processes. Written risk assessments are in place to cover events, including the short transition between the school sites and off-site visits. Risk assessments relevant to the refurbished site have been updated to account for the changes. Risk assessments are continually reviewed and updated. Weekly updates to staff ensure staff are knowledgeable about how to implement any relevant actions.
- The school is likely to meet all the independent school standards (the standards) checked in this part if the material change is implemented.

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

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

- The proprietor has ensured the processes for safer recruitment are robust and regularly checked. All statutory checks are carried out for new staff, volunteers and governors prior to them starting in post. These checks are carefully recorded on the single central record. The proprietor has established thorough systems to make sure checks are properly carried out and recorded.
- The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part if the material change is implemented.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1)(a) to 24(1)(b), 24(2), 25 to 29(1)(b)

- The Greater Horseshoe School is based across three separate sites. Each site provides a wide range of curriculum priorities planned for the needs of each pupil. The Greater Horseshoe School and 'Musers' site are within short walking distance. Pupils attend the sites based on the most appropriate curriculum learning for them. Pupils learn in spaces that are safe, open and supportive for their learning.
- Having recently successfully planned for accommodating an increase in pupil numbers at the main site, leaders have carefully considered how they can appropriately

accommodate a potential further increase of pupils through refurbishing the 'Musers' site.

- The site at 'Musers' is a large, well-resourced unit. The upstairs floor has been refurbished to provide three new class spaces and an open space. Downstairs, the music and performance rooms have been soundproofed to provide appropriate acoustics. The new class spaces on the first floor are light, with room temperature and lighting controls.
- There are ample washing facilities and changing accommodation for pupils at the school. On the 'Musers' site, there is an existing fully equipped medical room, separate toilets with appropriately hot water for handwashing and a kitchen area used by staff. Drinking-water is readily available. The refurbishments have enhanced the existing areas as well as creating purposeful additional spaces for the pupils. The school has carefully planned for the growth to ensure the wide curriculum experience pupils currently have will not be diminished if the pupil numbers are increased. The additional refurbishment means the school is very well placed and resourced to accommodate the proposed additional pupils.
- The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part if the material change is implemented.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34 to 34(1)(c)

- The school's plans for the material change are thorough and sensible. The rationale for increasing the pupil numbers is in response to local demand. This has led to a refurbishment of one of the school sites and the addition of a large space and three additional classrooms in a part of the school building previously not used. This is to ensure that there continues to be ample space for staff and pupils to work one to one or in small groups based on the needs of the pupils.
- The high-quality curriculum for the pupils currently at the school, and for those who might attend in the future, has been fully considered to ensure that the current standards are maintained.
- The proprietor has established an experienced and knowledgeable governing body. This allows the proprietor to support the school effectively and hold it to account. This ensures the school fulfils its responsibilities towards its pupils.
- Leaders recruit and train staff with care. Leaders make sure there is a high level of skill, expertise and capacity to provide quality experiences and learning for the pupils. The school is very successful and skilled in meeting the needs of the pupils and preparing them for their next steps. Staff expertise and knowledge are strongly developed, and they are collectively ambitious in their work with the pupils who attend the school.
- The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part if the material change is implemented

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	146167
DfE registration number	878/6074
Inspection number	10375525

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 day school
Proprietor	Acorn Care and Education Ltd
Chair	Richard Power
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 and 8, and 17 March 2023

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	8 to 18	8 to 18	Not applicable
Number of pupils on the school roll	55	61	Not applicable

Pupils

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

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	55	61
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	55	61
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	55	61
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	55	61

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	57	58
Number of part-time teaching staff	3	3
Number of staff in the welfare provision	3	3

Information about this school

- The school is based on three sites. The main school site is The Greater Horseshoe School, Little Bovey Lane, Heathfield, Newton Abbot, Devon, TQ12 6RH. The second site is 'Musers', Unit 1, Charles 1st Business Park, Old Newton Road, Heathfield, TQ12 6UT. 'Musers' is a short walk from the main school site. At 'Musers', there are purpose-built rooms for music and performance. There is a third site at Chipley Mill Farm, Bickington, Newton Abbot, Devon, TQ12 6JW.
- At 'Musers', the school has recently renovated the building and added three additional classrooms and an open space on the first floor. This was previously an unused space.
- The Greater Horseshoe School is a specialist provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs and autism. All pupils have education, health and care plans. Placements are funded by Devon local authority or Plymouth local authority.

- The school's most recent standard inspection was in March 2023. The school had an additional material change inspection in May 2024.
- The school uses no alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education in response to the proprietor's request for a material change. The material change requested is to increase the number of pupils who can be admitted to the school from 55 to 61.
- This was the school's second material change inspection. The previous material change inspection was in May 2024.
- The inspector held discussions with leaders, including the regional director on behalf of the proprietor, the headteacher and the designated safeguarding lead.
- The inspector toured the site, including the newly built classrooms.
- The inspector reviewed the website and scrutinised the school development plan, self-evaluations and examples of governor minutes. While onsite, she viewed a range of school policies, assessments and documents.

Inspection team

Rachel Hesketh, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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