Orange Tree School

Oakleigh Park North, Whetstone, London N20 9AR

Inspection date	22 May 2025
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 4

- The school proposes a change to its status from independent school to independent special school. It also proposes an increase in the number of pupils on roll from 81 to 110 in total. The increase will be at the Oakleigh Park North site, taking the number on roll there from 51 to 80.
- The school's curriculum is designed to take full account of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). It is, therefore, in a strong position to provide a well-designed, high-quality education for pupils with social, emotional, mental and health needs.
- Nearly all pupils start at Orange Tree School having missed many months of education. Staff identify gaps in pupils' learning swiftly when pupils arrive. They use this information to adapt their teaching astutely. While all pupils have the same opportunities to achieve and make progress, staff also ensure that pupils are supported individually to catch up with their learning where appropriate.
- The school's detailed schemes of work reflect clearly its aims and policies. The curriculum is designed effectively and sets out clearly the school's curriculum intent, how this is to be implemented and the expected impact on pupils' learning. This is expanded by documents that identify clearly what is to be taught each term in each subject.
- The curriculum covers all areas of learning as specified in section 8 of the Education Act 1996. This includes the curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE). It sets out in detail what is taught each term, the objectives for each activity and a curriculum 'map' that shows how the themes are sequenced over time.
- Strong emphasis is given to developing pupils' language, communication and number skills. Pupils take GCSE examinations in English and mathematics, and other subjects, such as science and history, where appropriate. In addition, pupils can gain external accreditation in subjects such as food technology. The school also provides opportunities for pupils to gain skills outside of the classroom, for example in equine

studies and through learning in woodland areas. As a result, the school ensures that pupils acquire the knowledge and skills they need to move to the next stage of their education.

- Fundamental British values are covered securely through the PSHE programme. The curriculum covers online safety in detail, as well as risks related to radicalisation and extremism. Clear reference is made to the protected characteristics, as set out in the Equality Act 2010. Developing pupils' social and emotional skills is a key component of the programme. This is supported by a programme to help parents and carers to learn about how to keep their children safe online.
- The school's relationships and sex education curriculum is taught through the PSHE programme. It is based on a commercial scheme that is adapted sensibly to meet the pupils' specific needs. Parents are consulted about what is taught and the school makes clear that parents have the right to withdraw their children from specific aspects of sex education. The policy is available on the school's website.
- The school's approach to assessment is suitably clear and detailed. Assessment is used effectively to identify pupils who may be falling behind in their learning so that they can be given support to catch up. The school's approach to assessment is also designed carefully to take account of pupils' specific needs. For example, assessment is planned and carried out in a way that seeks to avoid pupils becoming stressed. It is this attention to detail, and knowledge of pupils' needs, which illustrate the school's likelihood in ensuring the standards are met, should the material changes be approved.
- The proprietor has ensured that the independent school standards (the standards) in this part are likely to be met if the material changes relating to the school provision are implemented.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7 to 7(b)

- The school's safeguarding policy sets out clearly the arrangements for keeping pupils safe. It is suitably detailed and takes account of the current government guidance, covering the full range of issues, including online safety, female genital mutilation, child-on-child abuse and sexual exploitation. The school's designated safeguarding lead and deputy leads are clearly identified, as are the contact details of the local authority's designated officer. There is guidance for teachers about how and when to share and record information and concerns. The policy is available on the school's website.
- These standards are likely to be met if the material changes relating to the school provision are implemented.

Paragraphs 11, 12 and 14

- The school's health and safety policy reflects the relevant legislation and guidance. It covers a broad range of health and safety issues, including guidance on fire safety and first aid.

- The school's fire procedures and fire safety policy are detailed and up to date. They comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. An independent fire risk assessment has been carried out and regular checks are carried out on the fire equipment and fire alarm system. Where issues are identified, remedial action is taken quickly.
- Staff are deployed effectively, ensuring that pupils are appropriately supervised throughout the day. This includes at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in these paragraphs are likely to be met if the material changes to the school are implemented.

Paragraphs 16 to 16(b)

- The previous additional inspection in February 2025 noted that risk assessment covers key details, such as information about staff first-aid training, the storage of medication, and care plans for any pupils with complex medical needs. It also noted there are clear procedures for fire safety and that staff received appropriate safeguarding training, including for online safety. In addition, there are systems to support and protect vulnerable students. These include access to counselling and one-on-one support.
- This inspection finds that this continues to be the case. There is clear guidance for risk assessment and for the procedures for dealing with concerns. Daily, weekly, termly and annual checks and risk assessments of the premises are carried out diligently. There is a clear focus on protecting pupils with SEND, including risk assessments for out-of-school activities such as equine studies and educational trips.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed material changes are implemented.

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

Paragraphs 18(2) to 21(8)

- The procedures to ensure the suitability of staff appointed to the school are robust. They are applied rigorously. The single central record (SCR) reflects government guidance. For example, all staff are required to provide evidence of an enhanced criminal record check, proof of identity, overseas checks and the right to work in the UK. In addition, the school carries out overseas and prohibition checks where appropriate. The SCR contains all required information and is up to date and available for scrutiny.
- The proprietor has a clear process for the safe recruitment of staff, including the use of supply staff. It ensures that these staff have the required vetting checks, including enhanced criminal record checks, the right to work in the UK and whether a prohibition order is in place. Similarly, the proprietor carries out the required vetting checks required for members of the advisory board and volunteers.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in part 4 are likely to be met if the proposed material changes are implemented.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 22 to 30

- The school's premises and accommodation are of a very high standard. The accommodation is designed specifically to support pupils with SEND, particularly those with social, emotional and health needs. There is sufficient classroom space to accommodate an increase in the number of pupils on roll from 51 to 80.
- There are separate toilet facilities for boys and girls. These have lockable cubicles and are always available. There are suitable changing facilities and showers for those pupils aged 11 years or over.
- Procedures for ensuring that the building is maintained to a high standard are robust. There are regular and frequent checks of the premises to identify any issues that need rectifying. As a result, the school is extremely well maintained and provides a suitable environment for pupils for pupils to learn and thrive.
- The hot- and cold-water supply is suitable for washing. The temperature of the hot water does not pose a risk of scalding. Drinking water is available through dedicated taps that are separate from the toilet facilities.
- The school has gone to great lengths to ensure that the lighting is suitable for pupils with SEND. In each classroom, for instance, light diffusers are specially designed to take account of pupils' needs and their views.
- The accommodation includes appropriate provision to cater for pupils' medical needs. The medical room has direct access to water and toilet facilities are nearby.
- The health, safety and welfare of pupils are likely to be well promoted if the proposed material changes are implemented.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the proposed material changes are implemented.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- The proprietor has ensured that those with leadership and management responsibilities have the skills and knowledge to fulfil their role effectively. In addition, these responsibilities are carried out with a focus on making sure that the standards are met consistently. Leaders are reflective, knowledgeable about teaching pupils with SEND and understand the importance of using the latest research to drive forward the quality of education. The senior leadership has the capacity to manage the additional pupils should the material changes be approved.
- The school is likely to meet the requirements of the standards that are relevant to the material change.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school's equality policy identifies clearly areas where access to the curriculum and other activities can be improved. This includes, for example, developing the

curriculum further and refining how it is taught so that it is fully accessible to all pupils regardless of their needs. In addition, the school analyses patterns of attendance and achievement to identify areas for improvement.

- The proprietor has ensured that the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 are likely to be met if the proposed material changes are 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	135072
DfE registration number	302/6118
Inspection number	10401569

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 school
School category	Independent day school
Proprietor	Orange Tree School Ltd
Chair	Peter Curtis
Headteacher	Zoe Ramshaw
Annual fees (day pupils)	£36,000 to £81,000
Telephone number	020 8148 1700
Website	https://www.orangetreeschool.org
Email address	zoe.ramshaw@ellernmede.org
Dates of previous standard inspection	6 to 8 February 2024

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	8 to 19	8 to 19	Not applicable
Number of pupils on the school roll	81	110	110

Pupils

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

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	81	110
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	81	110
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	56	80
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	56	80

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	13	16
Number of part-time teaching staff	6	8
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	Not applicable

Information about this school

- The Orange Tree School is located at Oakleigh Park North, London N20 9AR. It provides education for pupils with a range of SEND, for example social, emotional and mental health needs. Nearly all pupils at this location have an education, health and care plan.
- The Orange Tree School has a second site that provides education for pupils who are being treated as inpatients at Ellern Mede Hospital. This is based at Ellern Mede Ridgeway Hospital, Holcombe Hill, London NW7 4HX.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school's previous inspection was a standard inspection, which took place in February 2024, when the overall effectiveness was judged to be outstanding.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was commissioned by the DfE, following the school's application to make material changes to its registration. The material changes are to change its status to independent special school and to increase the number of pupils on roll. The purpose of the inspection was to check if the school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material changes are implemented.
- This was the first material change inspection in respect of these particular changes applied for.
- Meetings were held with the chief executive officer, the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior leaders.
- The inspector had a tour of the premises with senior leaders. He also reviewed the SCR and other relevant documents, including those for the curriculum, safeguarding, and health and safety.

Inspection team

Brian Oppenheim, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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