

The Lion Works School

543 Wallisdown Road, Poole, Dorset BH12 5AD

Inspection date

21 May 2024

Overall outcome

The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b), 9, 9(a), 9(b)

- The designated safeguarding leader has changed since the previous standard inspection in November 2023. She has previous extensive experience in this role and in implementing the legislation set out in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'. While only in post for six days at the point of this progress monitoring visit, she already has a firm grip of contextual safeguarding risks and any existing documentation relating to pupils who may be at risk of harm.
- Induction training is in place for new staff. These staff receive suitable on site and online safeguarding training.
- At the last inspection in November 2023, school leaders were raising the expectations for pupils' behaviour. Staff continue to use the school's system to record any behaviour concerns in line with the school's policy. The school uses suspensions appropriately. However, some pupils still use derogatory language regularly.
- A child protection policy is on the school's website and meets legislative requirements. Policies relating to addressing low-level staff concerns are implemented correctly. There is appropriate oversight of the school's procedures to identify, help manage and protect pupils from harm.
- The single central record includes all the required safer recruitment checks.
- Overall, the standards in this part are met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(c)

- At the previous standard inspection in November 2023, the requirements in this paragraph were met. This continues to be the case. The proprietor has ensured that all staff are fully trained and conversant in the relevant legislation to keep children safe. Since the last standard inspection in November 2023 the proprietor has improved

oversight of the working practices in the school and provided ongoing staff training to ensure pupils' welfare is actively promoted.

- This paragraph in this part is met.

Paragraph 34, 34(a), 34(b)

- At the standard inspection in November 2023 Parts 1 to 7 of the independent school standards were met. However, just prior to the inspection the proprietor needed to take swift action to address previous non-compliance around a number of parts of the standards. At this standard inspection, the proprietor also needed to resolve some inaccuracies in attendance recording. At this time the internal capacity to consistently and continually meet the standards over time was not proven.
- The proprietor wrote an action plan to address these failings. The Department for Education (DfE) found the action plan to be satisfactory. The proprietor and school leaders are working steadily to implement it.
- There have been changes to governance. Since January 2024, the proprietor has appointed an experienced director of education to line manage the headteacher and oversee the school's work. A new governor has joined the governance board with expertise in special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The proprietor intends that this will bring about greater oversight of the provision for pupils with SEND. However, this work is in its infancy.
- The current headteacher took up her role in August 2023. She is the third headteacher since the school opened in January 2021. After the standard inspection in November 2023, the proprietor instigated a major restructure of leadership. The proprietor has successfully appointed a deputy headteacher, SEND coordinator, and assistant headteacher. At the point of the progress monitoring inspection, the deputy headteacher had been in post six days, an assistant headteacher had been in post for five weeks and the SEND coordinator had not yet taken up her role. Each leader has clear roles and responsibilities set out. For example, the assistant headteacher is responsible for auditing the independent school standards. However, the newness of this leadership structure means that the internal capacity to continually meet the standards is not yet proven to be secure.
- There is stronger oversight of the independent school standards in Parts 1 and 2. Teachers now have a handbook that sets out their roles effectively. Leaders' evaluations in recent weeks are crystallising their plans to improve the quality of education pupils receive. For example, leaders plan to reorganise the structure of classes in Years 7, 8 and 9. Leaders are currently training staff to develop their subject knowledge and improve the quality of assessment across the school. Many of these changes and plans are too recent to see demonstrable impact.
- The headteacher provides the proprietor and governance board with regular written reports about the school's strengths and weaknesses. She has developed her knowledge of the independent school standards markedly since November 2023. She accurately identifies that the school needs more time to embed the school's systems and leadership structures before Part 8 of the standards are met.
- In November 2023, some minor adjustments to the school's attendance information were required during the inspection. During this inspection, different administrative errors needed correcting. This was not sufficient to fail standard 15. However, it

demonstrates that the proprietor does not have sufficient oversight of pupils' attendance records.

- The school's action plan sets out that newly appointed leaders will have oversight of and audit the independent school standards. At the point of this inspection, work had not started to gain sufficient oversight of Parts 3 and 5 of the standards. For example, some recent checks that leaders knew had been completed were missing in files. By the end of this inspection, the inspector was satisfied that all required checks for Part 3 and 5 were up to date. Nonetheless, records relating to health and safety, the Fire Safety Order 2005, and the school premises are disorganised. The proprietor has not ensured that leaders have sufficient oversight of standards in part 3 and 5. The proprietor has ensured that staff new to their roles receive online training courses in the standards. However, this has not yet secured these staff with sufficient knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the independent school standards.
- These paragraphs in this part are not met.
- Overall, the standards in this part are not met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection, as set out in the annex of this report. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

School details

Unique reference number	148031
DfE registration number	839/6013
Inspection number	10334572

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent special school
School status	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	37
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	3
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Classroom Education Services Ltd
Chair	Bruno Davis
Headteacher	Justine Collinson
Annual fees (day pupils)	£44,000
Telephone number	01202113707
Website	www.thelionworksschool.org
Email address	hello@thelionworksschool.org
Date of previous standard inspection	21 to 23 November 2023

Information about this school

- All pupils at the school have an education health and care plan and have a range of needs, including autism spectrum disorder or social emotional and mental health needs. Two local authorities fund these places.
- The school was registered by the Department for Education (DfE) on 21 January 2021.

- Since opening the school, the proprietor has not ensured that the independent school standards have been met in full.
- The school's first standard inspection was in March 2022 when it was graded inadequate. In November 2022, the DfE commissioned a progress monitoring inspection. This reported that the school did not meet all the independent school standards.
- In November 2023, the school received its second standard inspection and progress monitoring inspection when it was graded requires improvement and failed to meet the independent school standards in full.
- On 17 January 2024, the DfE gave notice that the school was requiring an action plan under section 114(5) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The proprietor submitted the action plan to the Secretary of State for approval, to specify the steps that it will take to meet each of the independent school standards that it did not comply with at the emergency inspection in July 2023. The DfE confirmed that the action plan was satisfactory.
- The school is registered for 70 pupils between the ages of 11 and 19 years.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- There have been several changes to the leadership of the school since it opened. The current headteacher started her role in August 2023. She is the third headteacher since the school opened in January 2021.
- The proprietor has appointed a director of education to oversee the work of the headteacher at The Lion Works school. She also oversees a school owned by the proprietor 'Arc Schools LTD'. The proprietor of The Lion Works school (Classroom Education Services Ltd) is one of two people who are beneficial owners of Arc Schools LTD.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- The inspection took place at no notice.
- The inspector checked the school's compliance with some independent school standards relating to the welfare, health and safety of pupils, the premises, leadership and management.
- A range of documentation was considered, schemes of work, the school's action plan, risk assessments, records of safeguarding, behaviour incidents and minutes of regular operational and board meetings. The inspector considered records held by Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole local authority.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, and other school staff. She also held a meeting with governors, the proprietor and the director of education. The inspector talked to school staff and took a tour of the school site and visited lessons.
- The inspector spoke to pupils unaccompanied by staff.

Inspection team

Julie Carrington, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain un-met at this inspection

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school-
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently;

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