

The Lion Works School

543 Wallisdown Road, Poole, Dorset BH12 5AD

Inspection date

7 January 2025

Overall outcome

The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a) and 34(1)(b)

- At the last progress monitoring visit in May 2024, these parts of the school standards were not met. The newness of the leadership structure meant the capacity to demonstrate the standards were compliant was not yet secure. Many of the plans which leaders had put in place were early on in their implementation. Key leadership roles to bring capacity and greater oversight of the work of the school were either only recently appointed or yet to commence.
- School leaders have prioritised developing their knowledge of the standards. The proprietor has acted to make sure leaders have the capacity and skills they need to understand and take appropriate action to meet the independent school standards.
- The school has put in systems to evaluate how well the actions of the plan are being implemented. The steps identified in the school action plan are carefully tracked and reviewed. These are regularly checked by school leaders, the governing body and the proprietor. This means they have assurances about how well the standards are complied with.
- Leadership roles that were newly appointed at the time of the last progress monitoring inspection are now more established. The deputy headteacher, who is the designated safeguarding lead, has clear oversight of their role. They ensure professional development and training develops staff in the roles they do. Regular safeguarding training and updates mean staff are vigilant and clear in their duties to protect young people. The special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENCo) took up their post shortly after the last inspection visit. They have reviewed the SEND provision for pupils and they make sure this is in place. The SENCo has established the teaching of early reading to pupils who need it. She works with parents and pupils to listen to their needs.
- The governing body is proactive in its work with the school. The proprietor has appointed governors with experience in education and special educational needs. As a

result, the governing body has a well-founded knowledge of the priorities of the school. It provides challenge and holds school leaders to account.

- The chair of the governing body is the director of education. They have a high level of education experience. They line manage the headteacher. They also provide supervision and support to staff.
- The headteacher took up her role in August 2023. She has deepened her knowledge of the independent school standards. Members of the school leadership team are becoming secure in their roles. The school networks with another local independent school for support and development.
- A leader has been appointed to ensure there is compliance with the independent school standards. Systems for tracking and evaluating the standards which were not in place at the previous inspection visit are now embedded. Documents and policies are comprehensively organised and reviewed. This work is regularly checked and audited by school leaders and members of the governing body.
- The whole-school systems and processes that were being put in place at the time of the last inspection are now embedded. Staff have clarity about their roles and the roles of school leaders. The school has reorganised the class structures into year groups. It has put in revised assessment systems to track how well pupils are progressing. Leaders are clearer with staff and pupils about their expectations. As a result, staff are confident about school procedures. Staff identify that this has improved their experience of working at the school.
- At the last progress monitoring inspection, the proprietor did not have sufficient oversight of pupils' attendance records. Attendance records and procedures are in place. The school has established robust monitoring of pupils' attendance. It has clear processes in place when pupils do not attend.
- The standards in this part are now 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 meets 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. 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.

The school now meets the following independent school standards

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.

School details

Unique reference number	148031
DfE registration number	839/6013
Inspection number	10374686

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	42
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	3
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Classroom Education Services Ltd
Chair	Bruno Davis
Headteacher	Miss Justine Collinson
Annual fees (day pupils)	£44,000
Telephone number	01202 113707
Website	www.thelionworksschool.org
Email address	hello@thelionworksschool.org
Date of previous standard inspection	21 to 23 November 2023

Information about this school

- The school provides for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils have a range of needs, including autism or social, emotional and mental health needs.
- All pupils at the school have an education, health and care plan. Two local authorities commission these places.

- The school is registered for 70 pupils between the ages of 11 and 19 years.
- Following a standard school inspection in November 2023, the school was judged to require improvement and did not fully meet the independent school standards.
- In May 2024, the Department for Education (DfE) commissioned a progress monitoring inspection. This reported that the school did not fully meet the independent school standards set out in part 8.
- In July 2024, the school submitted an action plan under section 114(5) of the Education and Skills Act 2008 to the Secretary of State for approval. The action plan specified the steps taken to meet the independent school standards not met at the May 2024 progress monitoring inspection. The DfE confirmed the action plan was satisfactory.
- The school uses no alternative provider.

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.
- This was the school's second progress monitoring inspection since its last standard inspection in November 2023.
- The inspection took place at no notice.
- The inspector reviewed school documentation, including the action plan approved by the DfE, school development plans, a wide sample of documentation evidencing compliance with the independent school standards, the safeguarding policy, the single central record, records of pupils' attendance and a range of school policies.
- The inspection also considered the school's safeguarding arrangements, including the single central record of pre-employment checks and whether the school's safeguarding policy is available to parents and carers. These requirements of the independent school standards are met.
- The inspector met with the chair of governors, who represented the proprietary body and also has a role as the director of education.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, school leaders, the SENCo and other school staff. She also took a tour of the school and visited lessons.

Inspection team

Rachel Hesketh, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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