

# Yarrow Heights School

Cobden Avenue, Southampton SO18 1FS

**Inspection date**

18 July 2023

**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

*Paragraph 2(1)–2(2)(b), 2(2)(d)–2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(g)–2A(1)(b), 2A(1)(d)–2A(2), 3 and 4*

- The proprietor body has ensured that there are well-considered policies and schemes of work in place to underpin the curriculum. Leaders have made sure that the curriculum includes what pupils should learn from key stage 3 through to key stage 5, in anticipation of implementing the proposed material change.
- Leaders have been ambitious for all pupils in designing the curriculum. There has been careful consideration of how to meet the individual needs of pupils, including as detailed in their education, health and care (EHC) plans.
- All pupils at the school study a broad range of subjects. Most go on to complete a range of GCSE qualifications, which sets them up well for further post-16 study. Leaders have identified that some pupils will require additional support to make the step to college. The proposed material change will help to meet this need by providing a supported pathway into further education alongside offers from local colleges.
- Leaders prioritise personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education in the curriculum provided to pupils. This will continue to be the case in the proposed post-16 provision. Leaders have plans in place for delivering an age-appropriate personal development curriculum to key stage 5 pupils alongside their college study.
- Relationships education in the primary phase, and relationships and sex education (RSE) in the secondary phase, forms a substantial part of pupils' PSHE programme. Leaders rightly prioritise this, recognising that this is an area of the curriculum their pupils find challenging to understand. This will continue to be the case for pupils in key stage 5. The policy for RSE complies with the relevant guidance. It is available on the website and has been subject to consultation with parents and carers.
- Pupils in the secondary phase have access to impartial careers advice and guidance. This will extend into key stage 5 if the proposed material change is approved.
- Leaders have made sure that there is a well-designed framework in place to evaluate the performance of pupils. This includes the use of assessments designed to identify

gaps in pupils' knowledge, with teachers using this information to inform their teaching.

- The independent school standards in this part are likely to be met if the request for the material change is approved.

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

### *Paragraph 5–5(d)(iii)*

- Leaders have ensured that the fundamental British values are actively promoted as part of the taught curriculum that pupils receive as well as assemblies and planned group discussions. This provision will be extended to key stage 5 using the existing model should the proposed material change be approved.
- Leaders have made sure that discussion and debate are an integral part of the planned curriculum. They intend extending this into the proposed key stage 5 provision so that post-16 students can continue to engage with new ideas and views that differ from their own.
- Teachers promote fundamental British values through the delivery of the planned PSHE curriculum. This includes teaching pupils about equality, diversity and protected characteristics. There are planned opportunities for pupils to learn about and celebrate different cultural traditions.
- Enrichment opportunities are built into the school day to ensure that all can and do participate. Leaders will extend these opportunities to key stage 5 students.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the change is implemented.

## Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

### *Paragraph 7–7(b), 11, 12, 14, 16–16(b) and 32(1)(c)*

- The safeguarding policy is compliant with the relevant statutory guidance. A copy is published on the school's website. The policy is detailed and includes clear information for staff about how to report concerns.
- The school's designated safeguarding lead has completed suitable training. They ensure that all other staff in the school have up-to-date knowledge about this aspect of their work. This includes expertise on particular safeguarding considerations for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- The school's system shows that concerns about pupils are recorded in sufficient detail. Leaders take appropriate action to provide support for pupils and their families where necessary. This includes working with external agencies where appropriate.
- Leaders have considered how they will adapt their safeguarding systems appropriately if the proposed change to the age range of pupils is implemented.

### *Paragraph 11, 12, 14 and 16*

- The school employs a team of staff who ensure that the school is maintained to an excellent standard. The proprietor has ensured that there is an effective health and safety policy to underpin this aspect of the school's work.

- Where appropriate, leaders employ outside consultants to ensure that the premises remain compliant with relevant health and safety regulations, including those relating to fire safety.
- Pupils are supervised well throughout the school day. If the plans for the material change are approved, leaders will increase their overall staffing.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the change is implemented.

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

*Paragraph 18(2)–18(2)(e), 18(3), 19(2)–19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3), 20(6)–20(6)(c), 21(1)–21(3)(b) and 21(5)–21(6)*

- Leaders ensure that all necessary checks on new members of staff are carried out. The single central record contains records of all these checks, including those made on members of the proprietor body.
- The single central record is organised well and kept up to date with any changes.
- The school does not currently use any supply staff but has procedures in place to check their suitability should the need arise.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the change is implemented.

#### Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

*Paragraph 23(1)–23(1)(c), 24(1)–24(1)(b), 24(2) and 25–29(1)(b)*

- The existing premises would continue to provide ample space if the proposed material change were to be implemented. Classrooms are distributed between two buildings with an adjoining walkway. Each building has two storeys. Corridors are already zoned so that primary and secondary pupils do not share classrooms. Social times are also staggered. Leaders have rightly considered the implications of having older pupils in the school and will be able to manage this well using their existing system.
- The school site has suitable toilets and washing facilities for pupils, staff and visitors. There are changing rooms and sports facilities to enable physical education lessons to take place in the school grounds.
- On either side of the school building, there are grounds that provide ample space for pupils to play. With the support of their teachers, pupils have recently created a tranquillity garden and are in the process of designing a mosaic at its centre. There are indoor dining spaces where pupils can eat and socialise.
- There are facilities in the school for the medical treatment of students as needed. These facilities are situated close to pupils' toilets.
- The school does not cater for pupils with complex needs.
- Working with the proprietor body, leaders have designed classrooms and corridors to be light and spacious. There are specialist classrooms such as science and computing laboratories.
- The proprietor body is in the process of extending the school building further to add three new classrooms. There are also plans to add a new building specifically for key stage 5 students in the future.

- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the change is implemented.

## Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

### *Paragraph 34–34(1)(c)*

- Leaders and members of the proprietor body understand their roles very well. Their decision-making, including in relation to the proposed material change, is guided by a strong sense of moral purpose. They demonstrate a commitment to pupils' well-being and a determination to provide them with an excellent education.
- Members of the proprietor body, through their link work with the school, ensure that the independent school standards are met in all areas. They ensure that the school complies with schedule 10 of the equality act 2010.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met if the 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	148599
DfE registration number	852/6013
Inspection number	10294738

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	Independent school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Yarrow Heights School Limited
Chair	Alfred Foglio
Headteacher	Karen Gaster
Annual fees (day pupils)	£77,500 – £83,921
Telephone number	02382 124 590
Website	<a href="http://www.yarrowheights.com">www.yarrowheights.com</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:reception@yarrowheights.com">reception@yarrowheights.com</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	8 to 10 November 2022

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	7 to 16	7 to 19	7 to 19
Number of pupils on the school roll	84	130	130

## Pupils

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

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	102	130
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	102	130
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	102	130
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	102	130

### Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	20	22
Number of part-time teaching staff	1	1
Number of staff in the welfare provision	18	19

### Information about this school

- Yarrow Heights is an independent special school for up to 102 pupils with SEND, aged between 7 and 16 years.
- All pupils at the school have an EHC plan relating to social, emotional and mental health needs. The majority of pupils at the school also have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder.
- Many of the pupils at the school have had prolonged periods of absence prior to joining the school.
- All pupils at the school are funded by local authorities, with the majority being placed by Hampshire local authority.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- The proprietor body has applied for a material change to increase the maximum number of pupils at the school from 102 to 130 and to change the age range from 7 to 16 years old to 7 to 19 years old.
- The DfE requested that Ofsted conduct a material change inspection to report against paragraphs 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 11, 12, 14, 16 and 34 as well as parts 3, 4 and 5 of the independent school standards.
- This is the first material change inspection since the school's last independent school standard inspection, which took place in November 2022. At the previous inspection, a material change was also agreed to increase the maximum number of pupils from 60 to 102.
- The inspector checked the school's arrangements for safeguarding as part of the inspection. This included a meeting with the school's designated safeguarding lead and looking at records of safeguarding concerns. The inspector also scrutinised the school's single central record and the checks carried out on members of staff.
- The inspector met with senior leaders at the school, including the headteacher, deputy headteacher and representatives of the proprietor body.
- The inspector checked the suitability of the school's premises and discussed this with the school's headteacher and the director of operations.
- The inspector looked at a range of documents in relation to the material change request. He discussed with leaders and members of the proprietor body their plans for implementing the proposed material change.

## Inspection team

Chris Ellison, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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