

# Inspection of Wood Edge Independent School

Wood Edge, Ruff Lane, Ormskirk, Lancashire L39 4UL

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Inspection dates: 11–12 March 2020

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

**Yes**

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils who come to this school usually have needs that are to do with emotional issues or their mental health. This can mean that they have missed out on large parts of their learning at other schools. At Wood Edge, they get the support and care that they need to help them do their best. They feel safe. Their self-confidence returns so that they can get back into learning again.

Pupils have a better experience of school compared to the last inspection. Behaviour is better now. There are clear expectations that pupils will cooperate with the school's behaviour policy. Staff make sure they carry it out consistently. Bullying is very rare. The school has systems in place that show that leaders will not put up with it, if it happens.

By the end of key stage 4, pupils have more choice of subjects they can get qualifications in. These include bushcraft and health and social care. However, the subjects that leaders provide in other age groups are not as well organised as they should be.

Pupils get opportunities to learn beyond the classroom. Activities outdoors help them to develop confidence. Visits to places of interest, like museums, help to deepen their understanding of their learning.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

The members of the body of proprietors have made sure that the school meets all the independent school standards. They have set up a curriculum that has all the subjects that pupils should learn. They build in activities that support the special educational needs and/or disabilities that all pupils have. There is also a detailed assessment policy that explains the way they check on how well pupils achieve.

The proprietors have a thorough process in place for checking on leaders and holding them to account for their work. Governors meet with school leaders every month. They ask them questions about things like how well pupils are doing. They report what they find out to the proprietors.

Pupils are safe in school. Adults look after them well. There is a range of policies in place to help them with this. For example, there are policies that cover health and safety and first aid. Staff and pupils also know what to do if there is a fire. For example, they regularly practise getting out of the building in an emergency.

Leaders have made suitable arrangements to ensure that pupils with disabilities can access the school. For example, leaders adapt learning resources to match pupils' needs as required.

Leaders make all policies and information available to parents on request.

Leaders keep the school building in good condition. There is a classroom that has plenty of space for lessons. There are also rooms where staff can work with pupils to get them into the right frame of mind for learning.

The school has enough toilets and washing facilities for pupils. These include showers. Pupils have access to drinking water whenever they need it. There is also a room for staff to look after pupils if they feel poorly.

Leaders have improved some aspects of the education which the school provides since the last inspection. There is now a wider range of subjects in key stage 4. Staff plan them in detail. It is clear what pupils need to learn and when. This helps them to build up their knowledge well.

In English in key stage 4, the work is demanding enough for pupils. Pupils mainly do well in getting qualifications, like functional skills awards, considering where they start when they enter the school. However, the range of books that are available for pupils to read is limited.

Leaders plan mathematics well in key stage 4. It is easy to see how pupils build their knowledge in a logical order. For example, they know that they need to understand fractions before they can do work on ratios. Some pupils even work at GCSE level in this subject.

Personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) supports pupils in key stage 4 to manage their emotional and behavioural needs. There are well-structured plans that cover a range of topics, such as respecting differences. The curriculum for physical education (PE) is also well organised for key stage 4. Pupils develop their knowledge well and can show how they build on what they already know.

The quality of the curriculum for pupils in other age groups is not good enough. There is an adequate programme of work across the required range of subjects in key stage 3. There are also appropriate activities for students aged 16 to 19. However, leaders do not plan how deeply pupils will learn about each subject. Consequently, staff are unclear about what pupils will know and be able to do by the time they are ready for the next stage of their education.

Leaders do not plan well enough what pupils will learn and when they will learn it. Because of this, pupils in these age groups cannot know how their learning builds on what they already know. This makes it more difficult for them to know more and remember more.

Teachers do not have strong subject knowledge across the full range of subjects. This stops pupils getting a deep enough understanding of what they learn. Leaders are aware of this and have started to provide training.

Teachers closely follow the school's system for managing pupils' behaviour. Pupils behave well as a result. They also show positive attitudes to their work and to school life in general.

Pupils take part in a wide range of activities outside the classroom. These include visits to places like a local fire station, a forest or a residential home for elderly people. Pupils also get helpful advice about careers they could aim for when they leave school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff have a deep knowledge of their pupils' needs. They keep a close watch on them. They are alert to any unusual behaviour or comments, however minor. They record these in detail, in case they might be signs of more serious issues.

Pupils who spoke with us said staff look after them well. They feel safe in school. They trust adults and relationships are positive.

Leaders train staff well. They make the required checks to see if adults are suitable to work with pupils. They keep detailed records of these checks.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and proprietor)**

- The curriculum that leaders have in place for pupils in key stage 3 and those aged 16 to 19, though broad, is not rich enough. There is a lack of detail about the depth to which pupils are expected to learn the range of subjects on offer. This means that it is not clear what pupils will be able to know and do by the time they finish their learning programme. Leaders must make clear the depth of knowledge they expect pupils to have across all subjects by the time they reach the end of key stage 3 or the 16 to 19 provision.
- Leaders have not organised the learning for pupils in key stage 3 or the 16 to 19 provision in a clear sequence. This means that pupils and staff do not know how learning builds on previous knowledge. Leaders must ensure that they plan pupils' learning coherently, so that it is in a logical order, enabling pupils to develop securely the knowledge they need for their future learning or employment.
- Teachers have subject knowledge that is sufficient for some of the subjects on offer. However, teachers' knowledge is not strong enough across the curriculum. This limits the depth to which pupils can learn some subjects. Leaders must continue the work they have started to provide suitable training to staff or to access staff with appropriate expertise to deliver the full range of subjects which the school provides.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## School details

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| <b>Unique reference number</b>             | 143936   |
| <b>DfE registration number</b>             | 888/6069   |
| <b>Local authority</b>                     | Lancashire   |
| <b>Inspection number</b>                   | 10128824   |
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Other independent special school                                 |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Independent school   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 11 to 19   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 2  |
| <b>Number of part-time pupils</b>          | 1  |
| <b>Proprietor</b>                          | My3 Limited  |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Julie Collings   |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Robert Lamb  |
| <b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>            | £65,000  |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01695 570668   |
| <b>Website</b>                             | None   |
| <b>Email address</b>                       | <a href="mailto:rob.lamb@my3ltd.co.uk">rob.lamb@my3ltd.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Date of previous inspection</b>         | 12–13 June 2018  |

## Information about this school

- The current headteacher has acting status and was formally appointed to the post on 6 March 2020. Before that, he had been the teacher in charge of the school since the beginning of January 2020.
- There are no pupils in the school aged 16 to 19.

## Information about this inspection

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

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- We spoke with a representative of the proprietor body, members of the governing body and the headteacher. We also spoke to a representative of one of the local authorities which places pupils at the school.
- We focused deeply on English, mathematics, PSHE and PE during the inspection. In each subject, we met with the subject leader and teachers. We visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and talked with pupils about their learning wherever possible.
- We took account of one response to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey. We also took account of six responses to the staff survey.
- We talked with staff about safeguarding matters, pupils' personal development and their behaviour and attitudes. We looked at pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school. We looked at the school's safeguarding policy and connected policies and documentation. We checked the school's records of the suitability of staff to work with children. We looked at a range of other policies related to pupils' welfare and their education.

### **Inspection team**

Mark Quinn, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

John Shutt

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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