

The White House School

170 Magna Road, Poole, Dorset BH21 3AP

Inspection date

6 March 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 2(2)(b), 2(2)(d) to 2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(h) to 2A(1)(b), 2A(1)(d) to 2A(2) and 3 to 4

- The proprietor body has ensured that a suitable written curriculum policy is in place. The policy includes the relevant information relating to the proposed increase in the school's age range.
- The school's curriculum takes into account the ages and abilities for the proposed age ranges. Detailed schemes of work include sufficient information about the teaching of linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, aesthetic and creative subjects. These are likely to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan, should the proposed changes be approved.
- The proprietor has ensured that there is a comprehensive curriculum in place for the development of pupils' personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education, including for the proposed age groups.
- The school intends to continue to promote respect and tolerance for all the protected characteristics through its curriculum. Its plans consider the different ages and abilities of pupils in Years 7, 8, and 9 which are the proposed new age groups. The curriculum includes a broad range of activities to help prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. Through the 'life skills' curriculum, pupils will be taught important skills to help them towards preparation for adulthood.
- Leaders have adapted the school's relationships and sex education policy and curriculum to ensure that all the requirements for secondary-age pupils are likely to be implemented.
- A suitable careers programme is in place which intends for pupils to receive impartial and up-to-date careers advice and guidance.
- The school intends to use its current assessment policy and procedures. The information gathered is used to inform pupils' achievement records and is shared with

parents and carers. The policy identifies how assessment information will be used to plan what pupils need to learn next.

- Training to implement the school's policies, including the teaching and learning and behaviour policies, forms part of the induction programme for new staff.
- The proprietor has ensured that the independent school standards (the standards) in this part are likely to be met if the Department for Education (DfE) decides to approve implementation of the material change.

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

Paragraphs 5 to 5(d)(iii)

- The school's ethos is clearly communicated and understood. The school aims to build positive and trusting relationships which develop pupils' confidence. 'The White House Way', for example, sets out the school's aims and values for everyone to understand and follow'. The school aims to enable pupils to thrive by promoting self-discipline, self-esteem and resilience.
- The school sees pupils' emotional and social development as an essential component to enable successful academic learning. Staff are experienced in working with autistic pupils.
- To support pupils' personal development, there is a sharp focus on helping them to recognise and understand their feelings. Staff work with a range of professionals to enable pupils to develop positive strategies to manage their emotions. Most pupils have a history of missing education. Part of the school's vision is to provide a range of trips, visitors, activities and experiences to help to build pupils' confidence.
- The school promotes pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the curriculum and wider personal development opportunities. Pupils will learn about world cultures, faiths and traditions. They will work in different groups and environments, such as the outdoor learning spaces or the new 'life skills' facilities.
- The promotion of British values is embedded through the school's work and ethos. These principles are taught directly, for example through the PSHE programme. The school has identified how pupils' understanding will be developed over time in an age-appropriate way, including in the proposed new year groups.
- The proprietor has ensured that partisan and political views will not be part of the teaching of any subject. The curriculum is designed in a way which intends for pupils of all ages to understand right from wrong and to develop tolerance and respect for the beliefs and cultures of others.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the DfE decides to approve implementation of the material change.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7 to 7(b), 11, 12, 14 and 16 to 16(b)

- The proprietor has ensured that there is a comprehensive safeguarding policy in place. The policy reflects the latest statutory guidance. A range of other school

policies underpin the safeguarding policy. These include a suite of health and safety policies and detailed risk assessments.

- Staff receive comprehensive training on important issues, such as sexualised behaviour and county lines. They understand how to identify and report safeguarding concerns.
- A designated safeguarding team meet regularly to monitor ongoing concerns. They understand the vulnerabilities of pupils at the school and adapt the range of support provided accordingly. Governors keep the proprietor informed about all safeguarding matters. The school has secure procedures in place to deal with the proposed increase to the number of pupils on roll.
- The school has a clear health and safety policy. It sets out the roles and responsibilities of key staff. Regular maintenance tasks, such as hot and cold-water checks are in place. The proprietor plans to apply the same exacting standards if the material change request is approved.
- The school has thorough fire procedures. Trained staff carry out frequent fire drills. They record how well staff and pupils evacuate the building. Evacuation points are clearly signed. Fire equipment, such as alarms and extinguishers, are regularly checked and serviced.
- The proprietor complies fully with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- The planned staff numbers would be appropriate to ensure suitable supervision of pupils if the increase to the number of pupils on roll is granted.
- The proprietor has ensured that there is a suitable risk assessment policy in place. The school intends to use the procedures already in place to mitigate risk to staff and pupils. The school has risk assessed the areas and activities they intend to use, including when pupils are off site. Staff monitor risk assessments closely and amend them as required. This ensures that risk assessments remain fit for purpose.
- The proprietor has ensured that thorough arrangements are in place to support pupils' welfare, health and safety.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the DfE decides to approve implementation of the material change.

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

Paragraphs 18(2) to 18(2)(e), 18(3), 20(6) to 20(6)(c), 21(1) to 21(3)(b) and 21(6)

- The proprietor follows safer recruitment procedures when appointing staff. Leaders have undertaken appropriate safer recruitment training. They understand the checks that need to be made to confirm the suitability of staff to work with pupils before they start working at the school.
- The school does not make use of supply staff. However, it knows what checks need to be carried out should it become necessary to do so in the future.
- Members of the proprietor body complete the checks needed to confirm their suitability for the role, including section 128 management checks.

- The school records statutory information about staff safeguarding checks on an electronic single central record. It is compliant with current guidance.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the DfE decides to approve implementation of the material change.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1) to 24(1)(b) and 25 to 29(1)(b)

- The building is well maintained, clean and tidy. The stairwell and corridors are appropriately lit and free from clutter.
- Toilets are well maintained and lockable from the inside. There is an appropriate supply of hot and cold water for hand washing. The hot water is at a suitable temperature and will not pose a scalding risk.
- The school has ensured that drinking water is always available for existing pupils. It will be readily available for proposed new pupils.
- The school has well-equipped shower and changing facilities for pupils' use, including those taking part in physical education (PE). A dedicated medical room is appropriately equipped and adjacent to a toilet.
- Classrooms are well resourced and have suitable light, acoustics and ventilation. External lighting ensures that pupils can enter and leave the building safely during the hours of darkness.
- Pupils have ample outside space to play and socialise. Some PE lessons will continue to take place off site at different venues. Appropriate risk assessments are in place.
- The current premises are large enough to accommodate up to 55 pupils. At the time of the inspection, the proprietor was developing an additional site adjacent to the school. When finished, these buildings will increase the school's capacity to 70 which is the proposed new maximum number of pupils.
- This second site will house classrooms, a therapy room, office space, a staff room, two wet rooms, separate staff toilets and an enclosed outdoor space for social times. The site will be accessed through its own secure entrance.
- Appropriate plans are in place to stagger the start and end times of the day to ensure pupils are safe in the car park.
- The proprietor understands the health and safety requirements needed to be completed before these premises can be used by staff and pupils in September 2025. This includes an updated fire risk assessment. Leaders demonstrate the necessary knowledge to complete this work effectively.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the DfE decides to approve implementation of the material change.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraphs 32(1), 32(1)(c), 32(3), 32(3)(c) and 32(3)(d)

- The proprietor has ensured that all relevant information is available on the school's website. This includes a suitable safeguarding policy. Other information is also available on request, including the school's prospectus.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the DfE decides to approve implementation of the material change.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- The proprietor has ensured that a suitable curriculum is in place, ready for the proposed increase in the age range of pupils. The curriculum reflects the anticipated needs and ages of pupils to 14 years of age.
- Leaders have given considerable thought to the extra staffing, training and learning spaces that will be used in order to manage the growth in pupil numbers successfully.
- Leaders are vigilant about all aspects of safeguarding. They know how to meet the special educational needs of pupils.
- The proprietor, governors and school leaders oversee the school's work effectively. Clear lines of accountability are in place. They have the knowledge, skills and understanding to ensure that the health, safety and welfare of pupils are maintained should the proposed changes be granted.
- The proprietor has ensured that the standards in this part are likely to be met if the DfE decides to approve implementation of the material change.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The proprietor has ensured that there is an appropriate accessibility plan in place. Leaders have ensured the requirements under schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 are likely to be met.

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	149536
DfE registration number	839/6015
Inspection number	10383606

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 special school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	ARC Schools Ltd
Chair	Sarah Rempel
Headteacher	Elle Vinall
Annual fees (day pupils)	£65,000
Telephone number	01202 985 215
Website	www.thewhitehouseschool.org
Email address	reception@thewhitehouseschool.org
Date of previous standard inspection	17 to 19 April 2024

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	6 to 11	6 to 15	6 to 14
Number of pupils on the school roll	40	70	70

Reason for inspector's recommendations

The new curriculum is designed to meet the needs of pupils up until the end of Year 9 in Key Stage 3. Therefore, the inspector recommends the maximum age of pupils admitted to the school should be 14 years of age, not 15 years of age as requested.

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	40	70
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	40	70
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	40	70
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	40	70

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	5	7
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0

Information about this school

- The proprietor body is ARC Schools Ltd. Since the last inspection, a new chair of the board has been appointed.
- The school is located at 170 Magna Road, Poole, Dorset BH21 3AP.
- It provides education for pupils with moderate and severe learning difficulties, alongside pupils with autism. All pupils have education, health and care plans.
- Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, Dorset and Hampshire local authorities commission places for pupils at the school.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The previous standard inspection was in April 2024.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the DfE to evaluate the school's application for a material change. The proprietor wishes to increase the maximum number of pupils on roll from 40 to 70 and increase the age range to 15 years of age.
- This was the school's first material change inspection.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and some members of staff.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including that relating to the standards and the curriculum. She also visited some lessons and observed social times.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the checks that had been carried out on staff to ensure their suitability, took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspector spoke with a group of pupils about their learning and wider experiences in school.

Inspection team

Marie Thomas, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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