

Running Deer

Butterdon Wood, Willingstone, Moretonhampstead, Devon TQ13 8PY

Inspection dates

16 December 2019

Overall outcome

The school meets the independent school standards relevant to the material change. The material change has already been implemented

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7

- Staff and directors show a strong understanding of current requirements to keep pupils safe.
- Leaders have effective systems for checking and reporting on pupils' welfare. Leaders use these systems well to work with other services and professional organisations to safeguard pupils. The head of school is fully trained in safeguarding and has a strong understanding of special educational needs to ensure that the school provides high-quality care for pupils.
- Leaders ensure that all staff are fully trained in safeguarding arrangements that meet the requirements set out in 'Keeping children safe in education' (2019). As a result, staff know what to do to take care of pupils. They understand their responsibilities well, for example in carrying out the 'Prevent' duty.
- Leaders ensure that every pupil has an individual timetable and personalised risk assessment. As a result, activities are well managed to reduce the risk of harm, such as when pupils are making campfires with adults.
- Staff know the pupils well. There are positive relationships between adults and pupils. Leaders ensure that staffing ratios are consistently high so that pupils' personal, social and emotional needs are fully met.

Paragraph 11-12

- Directors have a written health and safety policy. The designated health and safety director checks to see how well this is being put in place. As a result, leaders make necessary changes to ensure that the site and working practices are safe for all.
- Directors also make sure that the school complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. A fire evacuation drill was completed during the inspection which showed pupils responding quickly and safely towards agreed meeting points. Furthermore, various fire escape routes, signage and lighting are used well to direct school-users to safety. However, some record-keeping, for example fire-evacuation

records, are not as well maintained as they could be.

- Directors recognise other key dangers present to the school, particularly in terms of its location on Dartmoor. As a result, they have well-considered plans for extreme weather events, including storms and high winds, to keep pupils safe.

Paragraph 14

- All of the pupils have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan). As a result, staff are deployed to work individually with a pupil, or no more than two pupils per adult. Staff take full account of pupils' individual circumstances to make the day happy and safe. Therefore, supervision arrangements are fit for purpose.

Paragraph 16

- Leaders, including directors, ensure that appropriate written risk assessments are already being implemented. These are given high priority in the school given the pupils' needs and difficulties.
- Risk assessments are meticulous. These include small details to make sure that pupils are safe. For example, there are risk assessments for each different tool that pupils may use for crafting lessons outdoors.
- The standards in this part are likely to be fully met.

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

Paragraphs 18(2)-18(2)(e)

- The school already has an effective system for checking the suitability of staff. Leaders carry out all necessary checks in accordance with current requirements.

Paragraph 19(2)(a)-19(3)

- The school does not use supply staff. All teachers and case workers are used to provide cover for staff absence. This provides stability for pupils who work closely with staff.

Paragraph 20(6)-21(7)(b)

- The proprietor ensures that those with leadership responsibilities, including directors, are checked. This ensures that all who govern the school are safe. Where leaders have dual roles, nothing is left to chance. All leaders are subject to the same detailed checks as those who work directly with the pupils.
- Directors are diligent in vetting and appointing suitable staff, leaders and visitors to the school. This is seen in the school's single central record (SCR) and related information. The school's SCR is well maintained. Leaders use the Independent School Standards (ISS) as a guide for recruiting and appointing staff. As a result, leaders check that staff are suitable to work with children carefully.
- The standards in this part are likely to be fully met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 22-31

- The 16-acre woodland site is safe and secure. Directors check that the various outdoor activities, accommodation and trails are well maintained. The size of the grounds and how these are used meet the full range of pupils' needs.
- Leaders and staff have expert knowledge of the particular special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) of the pupils. As a result, they have ensured that the facilities and accommodation are fit for purpose. They provide high-quality care and education for pupils with an EHC plan.
- The use of the outdoors is inspirational. This includes providing pastoral support and therapies that the pupils need. The school site is used creatively to teach a range of subjects. Leaders use the premises well to deliver their aims and intentions for pupils.
- Leaders and directors make sensible adaptations to ensure that the ISS are met, particularly given the school's unique woodland setting. For example, a supply of cold water is provided at each camp and there are well-located external lights for safety. Similarly, the medical facilities are provided through on-site inflatable bedding. Toilets have sanitiser for cleansing in the absence of running water.
- Since the previous standard inspection, the proprietor has ensured that the school premises and accommodation are continuing to be suitable for educating vulnerable pupils. The school has plenty of room and resources to accommodate additional pupils.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34

- Since the previous standard inspection, there have been a few changes to the leadership structure. This has led to the appointment of the new head of school. All leaders continue to share a common understanding of what they want the school to achieve for the pupils it serves.
- Leaders understand their roles and responsibilities. They have a good understanding of the ISS. Leaders work closely alongside other staff in continuing to make a positive difference in the lives of the pupils.
- Leaders have high expectations of pupils. They expect staff to keep pupils safe and help them to achieve well. The well-being of pupils is of the highest priority. Staff demonstrate skill and patience in supporting pupils.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Schedule 10 of The Equality Act 2010

- Leaders and staff ensure that promoting equalities and diversity are at the heart of the school's work. This helps to prepare pupils for the world beyond and life in modern Britain.

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	143539
DfE registration number	878/6067
Inspection number	10120990

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 school
Proprietor	Running Deer CIC
Chair	Joanna Winterburn
Head of School	Rachael Knight
Annual fees (day pupils)	£68,000–£97,000
Telephone number	07805 706 147
Website	www.runningdeerschool.org.uk
Email address	info@runningdeer.org.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	2–4 July 2019

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	8 to 16	8 to 16	8 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	9	10	10

Pupils

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

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	9	10
Number of part-time pupils	2	10
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	9	10
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	9	10
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	9	10

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	4	4
Number of part-time teaching staff	1	1
Number of staff in the welfare provision	16	17

Information about this school

- Running Deer school is situated in Dartmoor, approximately two miles from Moretonhampstead.
- The school is run by Running Deer Community Interest Company. This is a non-profit making organisation.
- The previous standard inspection took place in July 2019, and the school was judged to be good.
- Since the previous standard inspection in July 2019, there has been a change to the head of education. The former head is taking a wider role within the group.

Information about this inspection

- The purpose of this inspection was to consider a material change request made by the school. The school has asked to increase their numbers from four to 10 pupils.
- Since the school currently has nine pupils, it has already implemented the material change.
- This was the first material change requested by the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector reviewed the school's website and checked key policies, including safeguarding and child protection. He also scrutinised other documentation, such as risk assessments and fire evacuation records. During the inspection, the lead inspector also met with staff and leaders to consider their knowledge of safeguarding arrangements.
- The lead inspector also checked the single central record and checked personnel files. He also completed a walk of the school site and accommodation to evaluate its readiness for educating 10 pupils.

Inspection team

Stewart Gale, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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