

Inspection of Woodside Lodge Outdoor Learning Centre

14, Bond Lane, Mountsorrel, Leicestershire, Leicestershire LE12 7AA

Inspection dates: 14 to 16 May 2024

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at this school. This is because staff know pupils exceptionally well. Staff thoroughly understand pupils' needs. The care that pupils receive is genuine and tangible. Pupils benefit from excellent opportunities to learn academically and about themselves.

Pupils learn the curriculum in the classrooms and through a wide range of practical outdoor activities. They appreciate the opportunities that working in farm settings provide. Pupils enjoy working with the schools' animals. Tiny, the horse, is a particular favourite. In one base, pupils have adopted a family of stray cats. One pupil, typical of many, commented, 'We learn to look after everything here.' Pupils also benefit hugely from learning in the school's wooded areas, woodwork workshop, paddocks and outdoor gymnasium.

Pupils behave exceptionally well. They are motivated by the 'AWESOME' points on offer. They look forward to exchanging points for cash and buying rewards that help with their learning or do good for others. Pupils are taught to understand their learning and autism needs. Over time, they learn the strategies that they need to be successful in their next stages. Pupils are supported extremely well when preparing to move to their next settings.

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

Across all subjects and areas of learning, the school's curriculum is highly ambitious. The curriculum is meticulously planned and sequenced to build pupils' learning excellently over time. It is tailored precisely and skilfully to the individual needs of each pupil. The curriculum makes clear the precise learning that pupils are expected to know and remember. The well-established 'session contracts' ensure that there is clarity about what pupils are expected to know in every lesson. The school carefully checks that pupils are learning and remembering key knowledge. These checks are thorough and accurate. Pupils learn exceptionally well in all areas of the curriculum.

Reading is prioritised. Those who are at an early stage of learning to read benefit from a well-structured phonics provision. Phonics is taught regularly and skilfully. Pupils know and remember the sounds that they have learned. Beyond phonics, the reading curriculum is very well organised. Pupils learn to read across the school's 'three Ps' of pleasure, progress and performance. Their progress through these is checked meticulously. Pupils become fluent and confident readers.

Across all aspects of the school's work, close attention is paid to the longer term targets set out in pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans. These targets are carefully evaluated and distilled into smaller, achievable targets. These refined targets are precisely matched to pupils' needs. The school uses this information to adapt the curriculum and teaching to meet pupils' needs.

Pupils' personal development sits at the heart of everything that the school does. It is underpinned by the school's 'AUTISM' values. Pupils are expected to, 'go above and beyond, understand autism, take ownership, use initiative, show stickability and to make memories'. The school lives these values. Pupils learn about autism and how to deal with the challenges that it may present. Pupils work with the local and wider communities to increase awareness and understanding. The school provides exemplary support and advice to the schools, colleges and workplaces that pupils move onto. Pupils are very well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Pupils are helped to understand how they learn best. Weekly review meetings and personal progress meetings enable pupils to understand what is working well and what they can do to bring around improvements. These discussions are celebratory. The school recognises the important small steps of achievement. Pupils are well-prepared to recognise and manage risk, both within and beyond the school. Older pupils have an astute and impressive understanding of radicalisation and extremism. They articulate this both accurately and eloquently. Pupils benefit from a rich and varied programme of careers information and guidance. They are very well prepared for their next steps.

Leadership is exemplary. Across the school, ambition and commitment to improving the life chances of pupils are tangible. Staff are very proud to work at the school. Their well-being and workload is highly considered. Staff work cohesively, flexibly and with mutual support. The school ensures that staff training and development is systematic and highly effective. No one is left out. The school nurtures and grows its leaders through its own leadership development programme. The school checks on the quality of every aspect of its work. If it happens, it is monitored and reviewed. The findings from quality assurance activities are used to inform further improvements. The school is ever evolving, self-improving and aspirational.

The proprietor has ensured that all the independent school standards (the standards) are met securely and consistently. All required information is available to parents, including the school's safeguarding policy, which is available on the school's website. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The school's premises are maintained very well across all sites. The proprietor has made sure that the premises are suitable, including outdoor areas. Risk assessment procedures are appropriate, understood and acted on by all staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 139734 |
| DfE registration number | 855/6032 |
| Local authority | Leicestershire |
| Inspection number | 10322501 |
| Type of school | Other Independent Special School |
| School category | Independent school |
| Age range of pupils | 5 to 19 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 43 |
| Number of part-time pupils | 1 |
| Proprietor | Johnathan Lakin |
| Headteacher | Stacey Bollard |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £48,000 to £71,000 |
| Telephone number | 01509 415474 |
| Website | www.woodside-group.co.uk |
| Email address | woodsidemail@woodsidelodgeolc.co.uk |
| Dates of previous inspection | 8, 9 and 21 June 2021 |

Information about this school

- Woodside Lodge Outdoor Learning Centre is an independent day school.
- The school is situated on two sites, with four separate bases. The Oaks at Bond Lane, Mountsorrel LE12 7AA is where the school is registered. It provides education for secondary-age pupils. It is adjacent to Stonehurst Lodge which provides education for primary-aged pupils. Stonehurst is located at 149 Loughborough Road, Mountsorrel LE12 7AR. The Oaks and Stonehurst sit adjacent to Stonehurst Farm, Wood Lane, Quorn LE12 7AA. Vale Farmhouse and The Forge are bases located at Upper Vale Farm, Charley Road, Charley, Loughborough LE12 9YB. They provide education for secondary-age pupils.
- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher, executive headteacher and head of education have been appointed.
- There are currently 43 pupils on roll. This exceeds the number for which the school is registered. The school is registered to admit 40 pupils between the ages of five and 19 years.
- The school caters for pupils with autism. All pupils have an EHC plan. Leicester City, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire and Warwickshire County Councils currently have pupils placed at the school.
- Pupils who are above the compulsory school age receive a curriculum that is appropriate to their stage of education, including preparing them for adulthood.
- The school does not use the services of any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors 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.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the second routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, art and personal, social and health education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also looked at curriculum documentation for science, physical

education and vocational studies. An inspector also scrutinised the school's therapeutic curriculum.

- Inspectors looked at individual pupils' support plans and spoke with leaders responsible for the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Inspectors considered a wide variety of school documents, including the school's self-evaluation and the school development plan.
- Inspectors considered parental responses, including free-text comments, to Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors met with groups of pupils and staff to gather their views.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; 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 of safeguarding that puts pupils' needs first.
- Inspectors considered relevant documentation and reviewed the school facilities, to check the school's compliance with the standards.

Inspection team

Vic Wilkinson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Peter Monk

Ofsted Inspector

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