

Inspection of Salford Farm Outdoor Learning Centre

Salford Court Farm House, Clifton-on-Teme, Worcester WR6 6EW

Inspection dates: 9 to 11 July 2024

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

In a short space of time, pupils have started to thrive at Salford Farm Outdoor Learning Centre. This is because they feel safe and well cared for. Staff know the pupils and genuinely understand their needs. They go above and beyond to support those needs. As a result, pupils have made a great start to fulfilling the vision of the school to 'contribute independently to society, embrace lifelong learning and achieve without ceiling'.

The school has high expectations for both behaviour and learning. The pupils are well supported to meet these high expectations. Pupils enjoy learning through a range of engaging and well-planned experiences. The school has spent time building an accurate understanding of what the pupils can and cannot do in their core subjects. Staff provide work well matched to pupils' ability. This has supported pupils to develop more confidence. They are now ready to make even more progress.

Pupils make positive contributions to their school community. They support and encourage each other when carrying out challenges, participate in discussions to understand differences, and contribute to the purchase of resources through donating part of their rewards. Pupils are being well prepared for life in modern Britain.

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

Through a thorough and well-considered admissions process, the school ensures that it can meet pupils' needs before they start. The school has an excellent understanding of pupils' previous barriers to learning and engagement with education. Leaders understand that overcoming these barriers is crucial for pupils to make the progress of which they are capable. This has rightly been the focus of their work with the pupils who joined the school just a few months ago.

Very quickly, staff have built positive relationships with both pupils and their families. This has helped staff to know what interests and motivates the pupils. Staff use this knowledge, alongside meticulously detailed sequencing documents and the targets from pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans, to create an appropriate curriculum for each pupil. This curriculum includes a heavy focus on personal development and behaviour, as well as academic content.

Through a carefully planned transition period, pupils have learned more about autism and how this affects them. This work has helped pupils to develop an understanding of how they can deal with the challenges it presents for them, including how they can regulate their emotions when they feel anxious.

In a short space of time, most pupils at the school have transformed their attitude to education. They engage well with the creative learning opportunities provided, which often take place outside of the classroom. For example, pupils learn to count

and classify using the natural surroundings and develop their understanding of 3D shape through big scale construction.

Pupils have now started to work on closing the gaps in their learning. Staff have carried out thorough assessments over an extended period to gain an accurate picture of what the pupils can and cannot do. They have used this knowledge to plan a curriculum for each pupil, tailored to their needs. The time taken to do these academic assessments, however, means that pupils have not made as much progress in the academic curriculum as they have in the personal development and behaviour curriculum.

Reading is a priority and pupils have enjoyed engaging with texts that capture their interest. Pupils at the early stages of reading have recently started to secure their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make through following a structured phonics programme. Opportunities to listen to and discuss texts, ensure that pupils also experience reading for pleasure. The careful choice of text has enabled pupils to switch from reluctance to enjoyment when reading or being read to.

Pupils behave exceptionally well, and this behaviour is rewarded through 'awesome' points. Pupils exchange these for a monetary value which can be spent on items of their choice. A 10 percent tax on the value is given to the school council. The school uses this to enhance the resources available to all pupils.

Through a 'let's chat' framework and a life-skills programme, pupils learn how to build independence, contribute to society and carry out essential tasks around the home. These real-life scenarios and experiences contribute exceptionally well to preparation for adulthood.

Leaders, including the proprietor, are ambitious for all pupils and determined to improve pupils' life chances. Staff are passionate about the work they do and feel very well supported. Staff training is intelligently planned so that workload is balanced with well-being. Well-considered systems and processes for quality assurance mean that practice is constantly evolving and, where required, improving. Leaders' constant reflection and determination to provide the best that is possible has already had a significant impact in a short space of time.

The proprietor has ensured that all the independent school standards are met securely and consistently. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)

- The school has spent a considerable amount of time finding out what pupils know and can do through an extended period of baseline assessments. This means pupils have not yet benefited from the academic curriculum as much as they have benefited from the curriculum for behaviour and personal development. The school should ensure that they maximise pupils' academic progress by making sure that pupils who join the school access the rigour of the academic curriculum more quickly.

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

Unique reference number	149718
DfE registration number	885/6082
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10322624
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	8 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	3
Number of part-time pupils	1
Proprietor	Jonathan Lakin
Chair	N/A
Headteacher	Melissa Lines
Annual fees (day pupils)	£67,000
Telephone number	07780 587 370
Website	www.woodside-group.co.uk
Email address	jonny@woodsidelodgeolc.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Salford Farm Outdoor Learning Centre is a small independent school for pupils with autism.
- The school caters for pupils aged eight to 19. All pupils have an EHC plan. Pupils are placed at the school by Worcestershire Local Authority.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

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.

- Inspectors held meetings with the director of education, the head of education, the executive headteacher and the headteacher.
- The lead inspector also met with the proprietor and the head of compliance.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, early reading, mathematics, personal, social, health and economic education and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; examined relevant documentation; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent view, including free-text responses. The inspector also took account of responses to Ofsted's staff survey and pupil survey.
- Inspectors toured the premises and examined a range of documents relating to health and safety.

Inspection team

Helen Forrest, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Mike Onyon

Ofsted Inspector

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