

New School Canterbury

New School Canterbury, Garlinge Green Road, Garlinge Green, Canterbury, Kent CT4 5RU

Inspection date

7 July 2021

Overall outcome

The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 2(1)–2(1)(a), 2(2)(f), 2(2)(h), 3–3(g), 4

- At the last standard inspection, the quality of education was judged to be inadequate. Leaders' monitoring of the quality of education was not strong enough. A new assessment tool had been purchased but was not being used. Levels of challenge and support to develop pupils' mathematics and reading skills were inconsistent in some classrooms.
- Despite having to deal with the impact of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, leaders have made steady progress in addressing weaknesses in the teaching of reading and mathematics.
- Key staff, including the headteacher, have attended training in how to deliver the school's phonics scheme. A range of resources to support staff in their work to help both younger and older pupils to develop their reading skills have been purchased. Interventions are in place for pupils who are at risk of falling behind, including specialist speech and language support if required. As a result, the teaching of reading is more effective than in the past.
- Although there is still work to do, leaders have ensured that a more consistent approach to teaching mathematics is now in place. A new mathematics scheme is available, although staff have yet to attend specialist training which will support them in delivering it. Leaders' plans to develop this aspect of the curriculum are not as advanced as with reading, due mainly to the impact of COVID-19.
- Staff are now using the school's assessment tool to monitor the progress pupils are making. This means that leaders have a better understanding of the progress pupils are making, and they ensure that additional support is put in place where required.
- The school now meets all previously unmet standards in Part 1.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7–7(b), 32(1), 32(1)(c)

- At the time of the last inspection, leaders had not ensured that safeguarding was effective. Not all checks on adults who came into contact with pupils connected to the school were in place. Adequate risk assessments were not in place.
- Leaders acted quickly to address the issues identified with safeguarding during the last inspection. The safeguarding culture at the school is strong. Systems and protocols to promote the welfare, health and safety of pupils, staff and visitors are appropriate. Checks are now fully in place on all adults who work or volunteer at the school.
- The school no longer runs a 'home-schooling' service. As a result, risks associated with how this service was run no longer exist. A written risk assessment policy is in place and implemented effectively. Appropriate risk assessments are in place.
- The school's safeguarding policy complies with current guidance and is published on the school's website.
- The school now meets all previously unmet standards in Part 3.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1)–34(1)(c)

- At the last standard inspection, leaders' monitoring of the quality of education was not strong enough. Their self-evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses was weak. As a result, leaders and trustees did not have a clear understanding of the quality of education the school was providing, and some independent school standards were found not to be met.
- Much has been achieved in the period since the last inspection. Not least of these achievements is that the school has continued to operate despite COVID-19.
- As a result of the last inspection, leaders and trustees put together a post-Ofsted action plan. This is still in place. It targets all areas identified in the inspection report as needing to be better. Although some areas are still a work in progress, much of the plan has already been achieved. This is particularly the case with aspects of safeguarding that were found to be weak.
- A new external educational consultant with experience of the Waldorf/Steiner curriculum has also been appointed. Leaders' monitoring of the quality of education the school provides is now established. Monthly visits by the consultant are valued by the headteacher. Staff are now subject to appropriate levels of support and challenge because leaders have a better understanding of how pupils are being taught and the progress they are making through the curriculum.
- Trustees, who are also the listed directors of the proprietor, have a stronger understanding of the quality of education the school provides. They have supported the school well since the last inspection. This includes in monitoring the post-Ofsted action plan and ensuring that safeguarding is effective.
- New trustees are currently being recruited in order to fill places recently vacated on the board of trustees. The chair of trustees was able to explain plans to expand the board of trustees, as well as developing a model of governance that will be more strategic in

nature. This work is ongoing and points to improving governance at the school since the last inspection.

- The school now meets all previously unmet standards in Part 8.

Statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage

- At the time of the last standard inspection, the proprietor had not applied to the Secretary of State for Education for any exemptions from the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (EYFS). Children in the kindergarten were following a curriculum that was designed as though exemptions had been granted. These exemptions have now been granted. The school now meets the statutory requirements of the EYFS.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

The school now meets the following independent school standards

Part 1. Quality of education provided

- 2(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if–
 - 2(1)(a) the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified in sub-paragraph (2) is drawn up and implemented effectively; and
 - 2(2)(f) where the school has pupils below compulsory school age, a programme of activities which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills;
 - 2(2)(h) that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress.
- 3 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school–
 - 3(a) enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught;
 - 3(b) fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves;
 - 3(c) involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time;
 - 3(d) shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons;
 - 3(e) demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught;
 - 3(f) utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range; and
 - 3(g) demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and use information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress.
- 4 The standard in this paragraph is met where the proprietor ensures that a framework for pupil performance to be evaluated, by reference to the school's own aims as provided to parents or national norms, or to both, is in place.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
 - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
 - 16(a) the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and
 - 16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

- 34(1) The standard about the quality of leadership and management is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school–
 - 34(1)(a) demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently;
 - 34(1)(b) fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and
 - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

Early Years Foundation Stage

- 1.5 Educational programmes must involve activities and experiences for children, as follows:
 - **Literacy** development involves encouraging children to link sounds and letters and to begin to read and write. Children must be given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest.
 - **Mathematics** involves providing children with opportunities to develop and improve their skills in counting, understanding and using numbers, calculating simple addition and subtraction problems; and to describe shapes, spaces, and measure.
 - **Understanding the world** involves guiding children to make sense of their physical world and their community through opportunities to explore, observe and find out about people, places, technology and the environment.

School details

Unique reference number	147331
DfE registration number	886/6158
Inspection number	10196809

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

Type of school	Waldorf (Steiner) School
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	47
Number of part-time pupils	7
Proprietor	New School Canterbury Limited
Chair	Louise Rowley-Jones
Headteacher	Beth Cuenco
Annual fees (day pupils)	£8,000
Telephone number	01227 730 067
Website	www.newschoolcanterbury.co.uk
Email address	info@newschoolcanterbury.co.uk
Dates of previous standard inspection	28 to 30 January 2020

Information about this school

- The school's first standard inspection took place in January 2020, when the overall effectiveness was judged to be inadequate and not all the independent school standards were found to be met.
- The school offers a Waldorf (also known as Steiner) curriculum.

- The school's proprietor is New School Canterbury Limited. The organisation has charitable status and is run by a board of trustees. The board of trustees also provides governance for the school.
- The school has an approved exemption from some aspects of the learning and development requirements of the early years foundation stage.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous standard inspection held in January 2020.
- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education during the COVID-19 pandemic of 2021. The inspection was conducted with 30 minutes' notice.
- This was the first monitoring inspection since the school's last standard inspection. The school was not required to produce an action plan after the last standard inspection.
- Inspectors met with school leaders, teaching and support staff. For some meetings, the headteacher was accompanied by an external educational consultant. The lead inspector also talked with the chair of trustees on the telephone. Inspectors toured the school and visited classrooms as part of their work to assess the progress made since the last inspection and compliance with the independent school standards. Inspectors also talked to pupils.
- Inspectors checked a range of policies and documents, as well as reviewing the school's improvement plan. They also reviewed records regarding the welfare, health and safety of pupils and staff, including the single central register.

Inspection team

Clive Close, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Shazia Akram

Her Majesty's Inspector

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