

# Inspection of Lokrum Fields

Copyholt Lane, Stoke Pound, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B60 3AY

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Inspection dates: 22 to 24 March 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

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?**

When pupils join Lokrum Fields, staff support them to settle into school well. There is an individualised approach. This is developed with parents and carers and external specialists. There is a strong focus on developing pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence. This helps pupils to overcome earlier, negative school experiences. The school's animals, a therapy dog and guinea pigs, play a central role in helping pupils to manage their own feelings when they are finding things difficult.

Pupils access a broad range of subjects. Most lessons are well matched to their needs. Sometimes, however, the work does not challenge the pupils to learn as much as they could. Leaders are not always clear about what pupils are learning and how much progress they are making.

Staff create opportunities to develop pupils' interests and talents, for example through art, music and crochet. Leaders have recently introduced careers education, but this is in the very early stages of implementation.

Pupils generally behave well. Almost all pupils who completed the pupil survey said that they enjoy school. They feel safe and have someone they can talk to if they have any worries. Bullying is very rare. Leaders follow up any incidents of perceived bullying.

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

The proprietor, governors and leaders have an ambitious vision for the school. They are working well together to address weaknesses in provision. These have come about because some of the approaches planned prior to the school's opening are not working as intended. There has also been some turbulence in staffing. The proprietor and governors understand and carry out their roles effectively. They meet their statutory obligations.

Leaders have put in place an ambitious curriculum that covers a wide range of subjects. It enables pupils to access the national curriculum and a range of GCSE qualifications.

The key stage 4 curriculum is partially provided through an online learning provider. Teachers support and supplement this through in-school teaching and practical work. They are alert to pupils' needs. Pupils' progress in key stage 4 is carefully tracked and monitored. As a result, teachers adapt the teaching of the curriculum if required.

In most subjects in key stages 2 and 3, pupils follow well-sequenced units of work at age-appropriate levels. Pupils are making progress from their starting points. However, some teachers do not routinely have high enough expectations for what pupils can achieve. This means that some pupils may not be fully ready for the next key stage.

Most teachers have good subject knowledge. They plan bespoke lessons to address gaps in individual pupils' understanding. Each teacher assesses and checks on their pupils' progress. They use this information to plan the next steps in learning. However, there is not a school-wide approach to curriculum planning, teaching and assessment. As a result, leaders do not have a clear picture of what is being taught, when it is being taught, or the details of the progress pupils are making. This is particularly the case in key stages 2 and 3.

The school is welcoming. It is well maintained and resourced. The buildings are accessible. The proprietor has ensured that the school is compliant with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. Leaders have created a positive learning environment. Staff are good role models. They do everything they can to create a calm environment that meets pupils' needs. Over time, this helps to increase pupils' readiness to learn.

Pupils have access to a wide range of engaging books, and staff are helping pupils to discover a love of reading. For example, 'Harry Potter' books are a current favourite in key stage 2. Pupils read fluently. Leaders are aware of the need to ensure that there is a suitable programme in place to teach phonics, should this be needed in the future.

Equality, diversity and an understanding of protected characteristics are positively reflected in school life. Pupils are tolerant of difference and show an awareness of diversity issues.

Pupils have regular 'community skills' lessons, therapeutic sessions and informal one-to-one sessions. These cover much of the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. However, not all aspects of the curriculum have been taught yet. For example, leaders are currently consulting parents about the content of planned relationships and sex and health education to be taught by the end of the summer term.

Leaders provide a range of opportunities to broaden pupils' experiences and to help prepare pupils for their next stage in life, for example horse-riding, rock-climbing and charity work. Older pupils can take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.

The COVID-19 pandemic has hampered leaders' work to provide pupils with effective careers information, education, advice and guidance (CIEAG). A careers adviser is now working with a small number of pupils, but this area of work needs further development.

Leaders are in regular contact with parents. However, parents have mixed views about the school. Some feel that their children are not accessing the support that they had expected. Others are positive about the beneficial impact the school is having on their child's progress.

Staff benefit from a regular programme of professional development. This includes access to a range of additional qualifications. Staff feel that they are part of a cohesive team. They feel that leaders are mindful of their workload and well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Keeping pupils safe is a high priority, especially due to the increased vulnerability of many of the pupils. Leaders are vigilant and take the view that 'it could happen here'. Staff know what to do if they have any safeguarding worries about a pupil. They are aware of the signs and symptoms to look out for that may suggest there is a potential problem.

Leaders check that new staff are suitable to work with children before they start working in the school.

Staff adapt the curriculum to respond to safeguarding needs. For example, pupils have been taught how to keep safe when online.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and proprietor)**

- Leaders and staff do not have an overview of exactly what is being taught in each subject and when. This means that they do not have a shared understanding of the knowledge and skills that pupils are learning across different classes and subjects. Leaders and staff need to complete the work started to create a curriculum overview for each subject. This will help to assure leaders that key information is taught in a logical and well-sequenced order.
- Individual teachers carefully assess their pupils' work. However, there is not a coherent whole-school approach to monitoring pupils' progress. This means that leaders find it difficult to track the progress that individual pupils are making and to ensure that pupils are being suitably challenged in relation to their academic targets. The proprietor needs to introduce a system to enable staff to identify clearly the small steps of progress that pupils are making towards their targets.
- The school's curriculum for PSHE has yet to be fully implemented. This means that there may be gaps in some pupils' knowledge. Leaders must ensure that they fulfil their plans to fully implement the PSHE curriculum by the end of the current academic year, particularly in relation to the requirements for teaching relationships and sex education and health education.
- Only a few pupils have accessed careers education to date. Leaders need to continue to implement their detailed plan for CIEAG so that all pupils access this support in a timely way.
- A small number of parents are unhappy with the school's provision for their child. This may slow the progress that these pupils can make. The proprietor, governors

and leaders need to develop further approaches to better support and communicate with parents.

## **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.

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	148156
<b>DfE registration number</b>	885/6058
<b>Local authority</b>	Worcestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10192416
<b>Type of school</b>	Other independent special school
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	9 to 17
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	10
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	Wider Ambition Limited
<b>Chair</b>	Lynn Evans
<b>Headteacher</b>	Alison Prosser
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£85,000
<b>Telephone number</b>	01905 349915
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.widerambition.org">www.widerambition.org</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:lokrumfields@widerambition.org">lokrumfields@widerambition.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Lokrum Fields opened to most pupils in September 2021. The school was registered by the Department for Education (DfE) in January 2021. This is the school's first standard inspection.
- It is a special school catering for academically able pupils with a range of needs associated with autism spectrum disorder. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school's stated aims are for every pupil to fulfil their academic and personal potential.
- The school has a Christian ethos.
- 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.

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors spoke to the proprietor, acting headteacher, consultant headteacher, members of staff and pupils. The lead inspector spoke to the chair of the governing body and an educational psychologist who supports the school. The lead inspector also spoke to some parents as they dropped their child off at school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: art, reading, science and PSHE. For each deep dive, inspectors met with the subject leader, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders and looked at examples of pupils' work in some other subjects, including mathematics.
- Inspectors spoke to the proprietor, chair of the governing body, leaders and staff about the systems and actions they take to ensure that pupils are kept safe. They looked at policies and school records. Inspectors spoke to pupils and observed the relationships between pupils and adults.

- Inspectors also met with leaders and staff to find out about the wider curriculum and how well pupils' special educational needs are met.
- The lead inspector conducted a tour of the premises with the proprietor and the acting headteacher.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's online questionnaires for staff and pupils and Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View. This included comments received via the free-text facility and by email from a small number of parents.

### **Inspection team**

Catherine Crooks, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Mary Maybank

Ofsted Inspector



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