

# The Rowan School

Henne Drive, Bilston WV14 9JW

## Inspection dates

17 September 2019

## Overall outcome

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

## Main inspection findings

### Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

#### *Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b) and 32(1)(c)*

- Concerns about safeguarding were raised at the standard inspection that took place in June 2018. The progress monitoring inspection on 12 March 2019 found that leaders had not established a culture of safeguarding to make sure children were kept safe. Although arrangements for child protection had been strengthened, pupils' safety was undermined as leaders had not maintained a safe physical environment for pupils.
- Evaluation of the school's action plan found that there was insufficient detail to show how weaknesses were to be addressed. The action plan was judged unacceptable. After the school's action plan was judged unacceptable, leaders were determined to do better. The findings of this inspection show that leaders have been successful in bringing about rapid improvement.
- The headteacher has worked in close liaison with the two proprietors to improve the physical environment to ensure the safety of pupils. The school no longer uses the hall and community theatre area. A safe physical barrier prevents access from the community areas to the school. Clear signage indicates that the area is no longer accessed.
- Discussions with staff and pupils indicate their very clear understanding of the parts of the building to be used.
- The safeguarding policy reflects the latest guidance from the Secretary of State. The policy is made available to parents at the school.
- Staff have a clear understanding of the safeguarding policy and procedures to be followed should they have concerns about a pupil's welfare. Staff are trained appropriately and vigilant to child protection concerns.
- These standards are now met.

#### *Paragraphs 11, 16, 16(a) and 16(b)*

- The progress monitoring inspection on 12 March 2019 found that elements of the health and safety policy were not being followed. Inspectors also identified that some additional significant risks had not been identified by leaders in the school risk assessments. For

example, high narrow cupboards that were not attached to the wall were unstable, posing a serious crush risk to pupils. They also observed filing cabinets in classrooms that would pose a risk of crushing a pupil if drawers were left open and the cabinet became unstable. In addition, inspectors identified an unlocked power distribution cupboard in a corridor containing loose, large metal components that posed an injury risk to pupils.

- Inspectors in March 2019 found several hazardous chemicals being stored on the floor in the staff kitchen, within easy reach of pupils and present in the area where pupils' food was brought in from an external provider. Some of these chemicals were labelled as highly inflammable or posing a serious risk of irritation to the eyes.
- After the school's action plan was judged unacceptable, leaders sought the advice of several outside agencies and determined a course of action to ensure that risk assessments were rigorously undertaken and recorded.
- All the cupboards referred to have been securely attached to walls, with regular checks as to their safety. The checks are recorded and monitored weekly by the headteacher. Filing cabinets have been removed from classrooms.
- An electrical contractor has checked the power distribution cupboard. It is now locked and secure and can only be accessed by senior staff.
- Following the review of risk assessments, industrial chemicals are no longer stored in the staff kitchen. Materials for use with the dishwasher are stored in a locked cupboard. All industrial chemicals are stored in a secure, locked cupboard in an area of the building not accessed by pupils. Detailed analysis has been undertaken and leaders now have a greater knowledge about the storage requirements and safe use of such chemicals. Proper procedures are now followed around the control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH).
- Leaders have employed the services of pest control agencies to ensure the effective management of infestation reported at the previous progress monitoring inspection. Regular checks are made to ensure that any issues with pests are quickly identified and dealt with. Leaders monitor the activities of the agencies to ensure safe practice.
- The area of the building accommodating the staff toilets and kitchen is now closed off to pupils. The area is clean and hygienic and checked daily. Pupils' food brought in from an external provider is now served in an area close to the headteacher's room, which makes it easier to regularly check cleanliness and hygiene. Records show that regular hygiene and cleanliness checks are completed.
- The area of the building leased by the school is made clear. The hall and community theatre are no longer accessible to the school. All other parts of the building, not under the school's control, are no longer accessible.
- Leaders have completed a review of the supervision of medicines administered to pupils. Clear responsibilities have been established in relation to recording the process. Records of the administration of medicines are completed efficiently. Leaders check these records daily to make sure that staff follow the medication administration policy.
- These standards are now met.

## Paragraph 12

- The progress monitoring inspection on 12 March 2019 found that pupils and staff had access to areas of the building not covered by fire risk assessments. There was a lack of clarity as to the means of escape in the event of a fire. Signposted exits could not be used, and flammable liquids were stored in the area.
- Evaluation of the action plan indicated that the proposed actions to close off areas of the building were unclear. In addition, it raised concerns about the training of staff in fire safety.
- The school no longer accesses the part of the building not covered by its lease. Access is prevented by locked doors and clear signage.
- Leaders have thoroughly assessed all aspects of fire safety to ensure regular checks of fire-fighting equipment, fire alarms, emergency lighting and signage. Fire drills are completed regularly. Risk assessments are thorough with routes of escape in the event of fire very clearly signed. External contractors undertake fire safety checks and all events are carefully recorded and monitored by leaders.
- The school ensures that it complies with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) order 2005.
- This standard is now met.

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

*Paragraphs 18(2), 18(2)(a), 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(i), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(2)(c)(iii), 18(2)(c)(iv), 18(2)(d), 18(2)(e), 18(2)(f), 18(3), 19(2), 19(2)(a), 19(2)(a)(i), 19(2)(a)(i)(aa), 19(2)(a)(i)(bb), 19(2)(a)(i)(cc), 19(2)(a)(i)(dd), 19(2)(a)(ii), 19(2)(b), 19(2)(c), 19(2)(d), 19(2)(d)(i), 19(2)(d)(ii), 19(2)(e), 19(3), 20(6), 20(6)(a), 20(6)(a)(i), 20(6)(a)(ii), 20(6)(b), 20(6)(b)(i), 20(6)(b)(ii), 20(6)(b)(iii), 20(6)(c), 21(1), 21(2), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(i), 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(a)(iv), 21(3)(a)(v), 21(3)(a)(vi), 21(3)(a)(vii), 21(3)(a)(viii), 21(3)(b), 21(4), 21(5), 21(5)(a), 21(5)(a)(i), 21(5)(b), 21(5)(c), 21(6), 21(7), 21(7)(a), 21(7)(b)*

- The inspector examined the single central record of employment checks on staff and found it to be in order. All the proper checks on staff are completed and recorded correctly. The single central record complies with current requirements.
- These standards remain met.

### Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

*Paragraphs 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 23(1)(c), 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(1)(c), 25, 26, 27, 27(a), 27(b), 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(c), 28(1)(d), 29(1), 29(1)(a), 29(1)(b), 30*

- The progress monitoring inspection on 12 March 2019 identified risks to pupils' health, safety and welfare as the result of various hazards in the building. Toilets were not maintained to an appropriate standard and were unhygienic. Some parts of the building had evidence of rodent infection. One classroom was found to have a heavy door that had hinges coming away from a cracked frame. Pupils were sometimes taught in unlit corridors that were part of the disused secondary school. There were unstable temporary

room dividers.

- Actions set out in the school's action plan, to address these issues, were deemed unacceptable.
- Pupils are not taught in the corridor areas referred to in the previous progress monitoring report. The school no longer uses this area of the building. The cracked door frame and loose door referred to in the previous progress monitoring inspection are also in a part of the building that is no longer used by the school.
- Leaders have addressed issues of cleanliness and hygiene and ensure that toilet areas are clean and hygienic. Recorded risk assessments are regularly monitored, sometimes daily, by leaders, supporting a culture that places the safety and well-being of pupils at its heart. Classrooms and other areas have suitable lighting and acoustics. Rooms are fit for purpose.
- Pest control contractors carry out regular checks and, if necessary, treatments, to ensure that there are no infestations. Leaders monitor the records of their actions.
- A suitable medical room is available that has a washing facility and is near a toilet.
- These standards are met.

## Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

### *Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c)*

- At the time of the previous standard inspection on 19 to 21 June 2018 and the progress monitoring inspection on 12 March 2019, leaders did not demonstrate the knowledge they needed to safeguard pupils effectively and to promote pupils' well-being. For example, issues related to the safe storage of hazardous chemicals were still evident.
- Actions set out in the action plan did not address fully the shortcomings in leadership and management identified in the progress monitoring report.
- Leaders indicated their determination to take the outcome of the progress monitoring inspection 'extremely seriously' and to 'turn things around quickly'. Through training, leaders have improved their knowledge and understanding of how to effectively safeguard pupils and ensure their health and well-being. Such training and associated activities are carefully recorded in the staff training log. The impact of actions taken by leaders is carefully evaluated and future actions to further improve health and safety are planned, as a result.
- All the safety issues including those arising from the shortcomings in current accommodation have been addressed effectively. Leaders have recognised the limitations of the current accommodation and are planning to move the school to a newly refurbished building.
- The standards in this paragraph are now met.

## **The school's application to make a material change to its registration**

- The school is currently registered to admit 20 pupils. There are 18 pupils attending and the school requests an increase to meet the growing demand for placements from local authorities. They wish to increase capacity to 30 pupils.
- The school requests a material change to new premises located at Roseville House, Tunnel Street, Coseley WV14 9DE. The accommodation has been adapted and refurbished for educational use. The move is planned as soon as is practicably possible.
- In addition to the requirements of the independent school standards that were checked for the progress monitoring aspect of this inspection, the following sections refer to additional checks made for the material change requests made by the school.

### Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

#### *Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b)*

- Leaders ensure that safeguarding is effective.
- There are clear safeguarding and child protection procedures in place that reflect the latest statutory guidance.
- Leaders have ensured that staff have undertaken training covering a wide range of safeguarding and child protection areas. Regular updates are provided for staff to ensure that pupils are safe. They have made sure that staff are aware of their responsibilities when it comes to the safety and welfare of their pupils.
- This standard is likely to be met if the material changes are implemented.

#### *Paragraphs 11, 12, 14, 16, 16(a) and 16(b)*

- The school ensures that procedures for health and safety, fire safety, supervision and risk assessments are appropriate to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils and adults in the school. The headteacher has worked effectively with the proprietors to ensure that improvements since the previous progress monitoring inspection are maintained. There are effective plans in place to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils should the move to new premises be implemented.
- Risk assessments and appropriate safety tests have been undertaken for the new premises with appropriate plans to reduce any risks identified. Accommodation enables pupils to be taught in small groups in appropriately sized rooms, enabling staff to be suitably deployed.
- These standards are likely to be met if the material changes are implemented.

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

*Paragraph 17, 18(1), 18(2), 18(2)(a), 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(i), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(2)(c)(iii), 18(2)(c)(iv), 18(2)(d), 18(2)(e), 18(3), 19(2), 19(2)(a), 19(2)(a)(i), 19(2)(a)(i)(aa), 19(2)(a)(i)(bb), 19(2)(a)(i)(cc), 19(2)(a)(i)(dd), 19(2)(b), 19(2)(c), 19(2)(d), 19(2)(d)(i), 19(2)(d)(ii), 19(2)(e), 19(3), 20(6), 20(6)(a), 20(6)(a)(i), 20(6)(a)(ii), 20(6)(b), 20(6)(b)(i), 20(6)(b)(ii), 20(6)(b)(iii), 21(1), 21(2), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(i), 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(a)(iv), 21(3)(a)(v), 21(3)(a)(vi), 21(3)(a)(vii), 21(3)(a)(viii), 21(3)(b), 21(4), 21(5), 21(5)(a), 21(5)(a)(i), 21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(b), 21(5)(c), 21(6), 21(7),*

*21(7)(a), 21(7)(b)*

- At the school's standard inspection, these standards were met. They remained met at the previous progress monitoring inspection and remain met at this progress monitoring inspection.
- Leaders' checks on staff's suitability to work with pupils are secure and thorough. Recruitment systems are followed meticulously with senior staff and the proprietors trained in safer recruitment.
- All the required pre-employment checks on staff are carried out and carefully recorded.
- The proprietors and headteacher have ensured that the standards are likely to remain met if the material changes are implemented.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

*Paragraph 22, 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 23(1)(c), 23(2), 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(1)(c), 24(2), 24(3), 25, 26, 27, 27(a), 27(b), 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(c), 28(1)(d), 28(2), 28(2)(a), 28(2)(b), 29(1), 29(1)(a), 29(1)(b), 29(2), 30, 31, 31(a), 31(b), 31(c)*

- Leaders have carefully considered the needs of pupils in planning the refurbishment of the new premises. There are separate suitable washing and toilet facilities for the sole use of pupils, with appropriate facilities to accommodate the needs of pupils who are disabled.
- The accommodation provides an appropriate room to cater for the medical and therapy needs of pupils and for the medical examination and treatment of pupils. Fittings and fixtures are new and well planned. As far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils is likely to be assured.
- The quality of internal and external lighting is of good quality, provided in six classroom areas and a large central hall. Water supplies have been tested and are suitable for washing, with separate clearly marked sources of drinking water.
- Suitable outdoor space is provided, including a large tarmac play area and a grassed area.
- These standards are likely to be met if the material changes are implemented.

## **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 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.
- 11. The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.
- 12. The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- 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 5: Premises and accommodation at schools**

- 25. The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the school premises and accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured.

#### **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.

## School details

Unique reference number	144374
DfE registration number	332/6008
Inspection number	10114550

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.

The inspection of the school's provision in relation to the material change that the school has applied to make 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 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 special school
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	15
Number of part-time pupils	3
Proprietor	Mike Searle and Ben Whittall
Headteacher	Ms Snita Verma
Annual fees (day pupils)	£29,000
Telephone number	01902 679 877
Email address	<a href="mailto:sverma@therowanschool.org">sverma@therowanschool.org</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	19–21 June 2018

## Information about this school

- The Rowan School is a day school for pupils with special educational needs. It currently occupies part of a former high school in Coseley, West Midlands. Local authorities place pupils in this school. All pupils who attend the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan in place.
- The school is currently fully staffed. Two proprietors have joint ownership of the school



and play an active role in developing the school's provision.

- At the time of the previous progress monitoring inspection, the school was accessing the hall and community theatre in the former high school. These areas are no longer used.
- The school does not use any 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 progress monitoring inspection. This is the second progress monitoring inspection.
- The school's last standard inspection took place on 19 to 21 June 2018. This inspection found that the school did not meet all the independent school standards. The first progress monitoring inspection took place on the 12 March 2019 and found several independent school standards were still not met. The evaluation of the school's action plan, on 31 May 2019, found that the proposed action plan was not acceptable.
- If the unmet standards were met at the time of this inspection, the registration authority also commissioned the inspector to consider material changes to increase the capacity from 20 pupils to 30, and to consider a change to new premises.
- This inspection was carried out without notice.
- The inspector visited the proposed new premises with the headteacher and the two proprietors.
- During the inspection, the inspector scrutinised evidence to evaluate leaders' work to meet previously unmet standards. This included making observations around the current building and discussions with the headteacher and the two proprietors.
- A range of documentation was considered, including policies and records related to the welfare, health and safety of pupils, the current premises and proposed new premises.
- Policies and information related to safeguarding were scrutinised.
- The inspector met briefly with the school staff and spoke with some pupils.

## Inspection team

Mike Onyon, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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