

# Demeter House

Bigby Street, Brigg, North Lincolnshire DN20 8EF

## Inspection dates

14 October 2019

## Overall outcome

**The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school provision is implemented**

## Main inspection findings

### Part 1. Quality of education provided

*Paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g), 3(h), 3(i), 3(j)*

- Leaders ensure that the curriculum delivered to pupils meets their individual needs. Work in books shows that, despite their high levels of need, pupils make progress once they settle into school routines. Leaders stated during the inspection that their approach to meeting the needs of individual pupils would not change should they be permitted to admit girls.
- Staff plan learning carefully and take into account pupils' starting points. Learning observed during the inspection confirmed this approach, as pupils were seen carrying out very different work within the same classroom. Examples of work seen in pupils' books confirmed that this is the norm.
- Resources available in classrooms were effectively used by staff and were of sufficient quality and quantity to meet the needs of pupils. School leaders have thought carefully about what will be needed to meet the needs of girls and have made careful plans.
- School leaders currently assess pupils' progress regularly using a programme bespoke to the setting. It is planned that this system will continue should girls be admitted to the school.
- Pupils who attend the school do so because of their social, emotional and mental health needs. The school has an effective behaviour system which rewards pupils when they behave well. Leaders are aware that admitting girls to the school may impact on pupils' behaviour but plans are in place to ensure that any incidents of difficult behaviour will be dealt with appropriately.
- Leaders have a clear understanding of fundamental British values and have effectively woven this through the school curriculum. Leaders feel that the school curriculum is likely to remain very similar to the current curriculum. As a result, it is unlikely that significant changes will need to be made should girls be admitted to the school.
- The school's framework for assessing pupils' progress is securely in place and is to be

continued in its current form if girls are admitted to the school.

- The independent school standards in Part 1 are likely to be met if the proposed material change is implemented.

## Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

*Paragraph 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(i), 5(b)(ii), 5(b)(iii), 5(b)(iv), 5(b)(v), 5(b)(vi), 5(b)(vii), 5(c), 5(d), 5(d)(i), 5(d)(ii), 5(d)(iii)*

- School leaders have designed a diverse personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. This ensures that pupils are given opportunities to learn about individual liberty, mutual respect for others and other aspects of fundamental British values. The school's religious education curriculum also offers pupils opportunities to develop an understanding of other faiths and religions.
- Leaders are aware that they may need to make some changes to the PSHE curriculum, particularly in relation to delivering sex and relationship education. However, these changes are planned for and will be put in place should girls be admitted to the school.
- Currently, pupils learn to distinguish right from wrong and to control their own behaviour while attending school. Staff recognise this is fundamental to their ability to learn and develop as good citizens. Visitors such as the local police community support officers enable pupils to further develop their understanding of civil and criminal law.
- School leaders are very focused on ensuring that pupils make a contribution to the local community. Through entering local competitions such as Brigg in Bloom and participating in the local Second World War commemorations, pupils learn the importance of their contribution to the community and how to be good citizens.
- Staff and leaders are aware of the need to develop pupils' understanding of the protected characteristics outlined in the 2010 Equality Act. Staff described how they have helped and supported transgender and gay pupils over the years. Staff also described how pupils were universally supportive towards all their peers, and bullying and prejudiced behaviour in school is rare.
- The independent school standards in Part 2 are likely to be met if the proposed material change is implemented.

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

*Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)*

- The proprietor and school leaders have ensured that the school's safeguarding policy meets current requirements and is available to parents and carers on the school website or through the school office.
- Discussions with staff show that they have received regular and appropriate safeguarding training. Leaders and staff also confirmed that regular updates are provided for all staff on safeguarding issues within the locality.
- Safeguarding records show that staff know what action to take if a pupil has a concern. Records also show that leaders take appropriate action and work closely with

other professionals to safeguard pupils and ensure their welfare.

#### *Paragraph 8*

- The school has no boarders and does not intend to accept girls within the boarding provision. Leaders are clear about the action they need to take should they wish to admit boys into their care provision.

#### *Paragraph 10*

- School leaders have worked closely with pupils to put in place an effective anti-bullying policy which has been adopted by pupils on the two school sites currently in use. Records show that the strategy is effective as recorded incidents of bullying are low within school.
- Leaders intend to include any new pupils, including girls, in the review of the anti-bullying policy and practice.

#### *Paragraph 11*

- School leaders have ensured that a comprehensive health and safety policy is in place which covers all the school sites. The policy is closely linked to fire safety policy and manual handling policy.
- Required health and safety checks are carried out regularly and are recorded efficiently.

#### *Paragraph 12*

- A comprehensive fire safety audit has been carried out in line with legal requirements. This shows that the school is compliant with current regulations. School leaders carry out fire evacuation drills on all sites in line with legal requirements and fire extinguishers are checked annually.

#### *Paragraph 13*

- Leaders have ensured that an adequate number of staff have completed first-aid training in order to ensure that there are at least two first aiders on all school sites. Staff are aware of the importance of checking first-aid boxes and ensuring that dressings and bandages remain sterile.

#### *Paragraph 14*

- Timetables show that leaders have made sure that staff are appropriately deployed to ensure the safety and welfare of pupils throughout the school day. Stipulations for staffing levels on pupils' education, health and care plans are adhered to. This ensures that the most vulnerable pupils' needs are met. Leaders have plans in place to make sure that pupils are properly supervised on the school's new site. Further plans are also in place for staff to cover the predicted small increase in the number of pupils should girls join the school.

#### *Paragraph 15*

- The school has in place an admissions register which records accurate information

about when pupils arrive at school, as well as their destinations when they leave. Pupils' attendance is registered and recorded daily in a well-organised system.

*Paragraph 16, 16(a), 16(b)*

- School leaders have put in place a risk assessment policy which gives guidance to staff on how to assess possible risk to pupils and staff, both on and off the school sites.
- Completed risk assessments show that staff follow the policy guidance when completing risk assessments. This contributes to the school's continuing focus on safeguarding pupils.
- The independent school standards in Part 3 are likely to be met if the proposed material change is implemented.

Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

*Paragraph 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)*

- The proprietor has ensured that all of the appropriate checks required to check adults' suitability to work with children have been carried out.

*Paragraph 21(1), 21(2), 21(3), 21(3), 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)(b)*

- The proprietor has ensured that an electronic single central record is in place and all required checks have been carried out. The checks that have been carried out on staff are clearly recorded.
- The independent school standards in Part 4 are likely to be met if the proposed material change is implemented.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

*Paragraph 23*

- Leaders have made sure that there are sufficient toilets on each of the three school sites to meet the needs of current pupils. The toilets all have adequate handwashing facilities. Leaders have also ensured that there are sufficient toilets for girls on each site should the material change be implemented.
- Leaders have also ensured that there are showers on each of the sites should pupils, whether they are boys or girls, wish to take a shower after physical education (PE).

*Paragraph 24*

- Each school site has a medical room in place which is suitably placed for the care of sick pupils. Each room has a sink and a bed and is easily accessible to staff so that pupils may be monitored closely.

*Paragraph 25*

- The school is currently located on two sites. A third site has recently been acquired. Leaders have ensured that all sites are maintained to a standard where pupils' health

safety and welfare are not at risk. The primary site is in need of some external maintenance. However, leaders cannot proceed until further planning consent has been obtained. All sites are in reasonable decorative order and pose no risk to pupils' health and well-being.

*Paragraphs 26, 27*

- The acoustic and lighting in classrooms across all three sites are maintained to a satisfactory standard. Checks on lights are carried out regularly.

*Paragraph 28*

- Drinking water is freely available from bottled water coolers across the two sites currently occupied by the school. It is planned that the third site will also have drinking water provided in the same way.
- Taps are clearly marked where they provide water that is fit for drinking.
- Hot water for handwashing checked at the time of the inspection did not pose a risk of scalding. Nor did water from the showers available on all sites pose a scalding risk.

*Paragraph 29*

- All three sites have appropriate areas for pupils to play outside the buildings. The secondary school site and the primary school site also have space for PE to take place.

*Paragraph 30*

- At the time of the inspection, the school did not have pupils residing in the boarding provision and it does not plan to have girls boarding in the future.
- The independent school standards in Part 5 are likely to be met if the proposed material change is implemented.

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

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

- The headteacher has a clear vision to move the school forward. This is shared with staff and the proprietors. The addition of provision for girls within the school is a clear part of the headteacher's vision.
- Plans are also in place to develop a bespoke assessment centre for pupils on the new premises, which will include the assessment of the needs of girls.
- The proprietors and the headteacher have ensured that pupils' welfare and safety are a key priority. Safeguarding systems currently in place are effective and staff receive regular updated training to enable them to support pupils should they encounter difficulties.
- Leaders and the proprietors are well informed about current safeguarding issues within the locality.
- The systems put in place by the proprietors and leaders are robust and should support the proposed inclusion of girls at the school.
- The standards in Part 8 are likely to continue to be met if the material change is implemented.

## Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school has an accessibility plan which meets current requirements.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The school is likely to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that are relevant to the material change.

## School details

Unique reference number	135247
DfE registration number	813/6005
Inspection number	10124085

This inspection 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 likely compliance with the independent school standards relevant to the material change that the school has applied to make.

Type of school	Other Independent school
School status	Independent special school/Independent boarding school
Proprietor	Rodney Wardlaw
Chair	Rodney Wardlaw
Headteacher	Mrs Melissa Marris
Annual fees (day pupils)	£35,000–£36,000
Telephone number	07729 207323
Website	<a href="http://www.demeterhouseschool.com">www.demeterhouseschool.com</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@demeterhouseschool.com">admin@demeterhouseschool.com</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	14–16 May 2019

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	5 to 19	5 to 19	5 to 19
Number of pupils on the school roll	65	100 including girls	100 including girls

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Boys	Mixed

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	64	100
Number of part-time pupils	1	1
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	64	100
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	64	100
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	64	100

## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	78	78
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	0	0

## Information about this school

- The school is an independent special school which is based on two sites. The school has a residential provision which is not being used. At the time of the inspection, no plans were in place for this facility to be used in the near future.
- Currently, the school caters for the needs of up to 100 boys aged between five and 19 who have social, emotional and mental health difficulties. Many also have associated further needs, including autism spectrum disorder.
- Many pupils join the school having missed substantial amounts of previous schooling, often related to difficult behaviour.
- The school is currently seeking a material change to allow it to offer places to girls, as well as boys.
- The school currently operates from two sites. Primary pupils attend school in Brigg and secondary-aged pupils are based in Scawby. At the time of the inspection, two pupils were post-16 but were accessing a key stage 4 curriculum in order to make up

for work missed due to long-term absence.

- The school has recently obtained a new building between Brigg and Scawby. It is planned that this well-maintained building, which was previously an alternative provision, will become an assessment centre for all new pupils, including girls.
- There has been no change in the headteacher or the chair of governors since the previous inspection in May 2019.
- The school is registered for up to 100 pupils and currently has 64 boys on roll.
- The school does not have a religious character.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out at one day's notice.
- The inspector met with senior leaders, teachers, pupils and parents.
- Documents analysed by the inspector included those relating to safeguarding, the school premises, fire safety and health and safety.
- The inspector visited all three of the school sites in order to carry out checks on the premises.

## Inspection team

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Marian Thomas, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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