

# Inspection of Lamledge School

Lamledge Lane, Shifnal, Shropshire TF11 8SD

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Inspection dates: 2 to 4 July 2024

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils enjoy attending the school. They say that staff are kind and caring. There are positive and strong relationships between staff and pupils. The pupils know that staff will look after them and keep them safe. Staff understand pupils' individual needs well. They are very aware of the difficulties pupils experience. They offer a nurturing approach to help pupils understand themselves. Pupils are engaging more now with their education than they have previously.

Staff provide 'calming spaces' and time for pupils to regulate their emotions. This proactive approach helps pupils to manage their anxieties. As a result, fewer pupils than previously resort to expressing their frustrations through undesirable behaviours. Pupils benefit from learning in a well-resourced and structured environment.

The school has high aspirations for all pupils to fulfil their personal potential. There is an ambitious curriculum in place that widens pupils' experiences and helps them to develop valuable skills that prepare them well for their next steps.

Pupils develop confidence and independence through well-planned and varied activities. The school's outdoor environment gives pupils many opportunities to play and explore, and to take appropriate risks. The outdoor education programme provides excellent opportunities for pupils to gain accreditation in a range of sporting and adventurous activities.

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

When pupils join the school, staff check what pupils know and can remember. They use this information to plan a curriculum that is matched to the outcomes in each pupil's education, health and care (EHC) plan. Primary-aged pupils benefit from well-structured lessons that build their knowledge and skills in the subjects they study. High-quality resources and well-considered learning environments help these pupils to access the curriculum and make good progress.

The secondary curriculum includes a range of vocational options that pupils can choose to study. Across all secondary subjects, teachers have good subject knowledge, present information clearly and engage pupils in interesting learning activities. Pupils value their lessons and enjoy talking about the work they have completed. They build on prior learning and develop work-related skills in the areas they study. However, in some subjects, including vocational subjects, the key knowledge that pupils must know and remember has not been clearly identified. As a result, some pupils have gaps in the underpinning knowledge they need to understand fully the subjects they are studying.

Reading has been prioritised for all pupils. The school has adopted a systematic phonics programme to support the teaching of early reading. Most pupils can apply their phonics knowledge effectively when reading unfamiliar words. Pupils' reading

books are well matched to the sounds they know. Older pupils who need extra help with reading have access to a range of resources and interventions. This support for older pupils is less well developed than that in the primary phase. Staff are being provided with extra training to help them develop their expertise in this area.

Secondary-aged pupils receive advice and guidance to help them make informed decisions about further education, employment and training. Students in the post-16 provision follow a curriculum that prepares them well for their next steps into adulthood. Staff arrange work experience which prepares pupils for further study or work.

Pupils in the 'Oaks' who follow a differentiated curriculum are supported by well-trained staff. The communication and sensory needs of these pupils are provided for well. The pupils complete meaningful activities that help them to develop the personal and learning skills they need to move on to their next stage.

Information about each pupil's needs is shared through their individual learning plans. However, these plans do not always contain the precise targets and success criteria that staff need to know. This limits staff's ability to know how best to check that pupils are making the progress they should.

Staff have recently had more refresher training from the therapy team to support pupils with their social, emotional and mental health difficulties. Staff provide the pastoral support pupils need to feel safe and ready to learn. They know the things that might upset or 'trigger' pupils. Most pupils try hard to manage their emotions and regulate their behaviour. However, there is not yet a consistent application of the approaches the school has adopted to support pupils to manage their emotions and behaviour.

Pupils benefit from a high-quality provision for their personal development. They appreciate the opportunities they have to go climbing, skiing, hill walking, paddleboarding and swimming. Trips and visits to places of interest widen their experiences and expand their cultural capital. Pupils understand why it is important to respect people who may be different to them. They learn about the protected characteristics, as well as British values. Younger pupils learn about different faiths. Older pupils visit shops to help them develop independent living skills.

The proprietor and senior leaders have focused their efforts on the areas that will have the most impact. More recently, considerable work has been done to address the issue of disruptive behaviour found during the last inspection. The proprietor and senior leaders know the school well. They understand their statutory duties and have a good understanding of the independent school standards (the standards). They have ensured that the school meets all the standards. The premises are well maintained. Frequent investment continually improves the school's facilities. Thorough checks ensure that all the health and safety and fire safety regulations are met. Risk assessments are routinely updated. Policies are up to date and reflect the latest national guidance.

Staff say that senior leaders are mindful of their workload and well-being. They appreciate the care leaders show them. Staff are proud to work at the school.

The school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The policies for relationships and sex education, and safeguarding, are available on the school's website.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- In some subjects, including vocational subjects, it is not clear what the important knowledge is that secondary-aged pupils are expected to know and remember. The implementation of these curriculums does not always lead to these pupils knowing and remembering this knowledge. The school should ensure that, in all subjects, it is clear what pupils in the secondary phase should know and when, and that this is then taught in such a way as to enable these pupils to know and remember more in all the subjects that they study.
- Pupils' individual learning plans do not precisely identify the support staff need to provide and what success for pupils looks like. This limits staff's ability to know how best to support pupils and check that they are making as much progress as they should. The school should ensure that all pupils' targets have the necessary precision and focus to enable staff to support pupils to achieve as well as they can.
- The school's universal offer to help pupils with their social, emotional and mental health needs is not consistently embedded across the whole school. As a result, there are some missed opportunities to support pupils with the precise approaches they need help them regulate their emotions. The school should ensure that all staff consistently apply the school's chosen therapeutic approaches so that pupils are helped to make progress in managing their emotions.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	133478
<b>DfE registration number</b>	893/6025
<b>Local authority</b>	Shropshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10322641
<b>Type of school</b>	Other Independent Special School
<b>School category</b>	Independent school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	64
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	5
<b>Number of part-time pupils</b>	0
<b>Proprietor</b>	P Bloom Ltd
<b>Chair</b>	Richard Power
<b>Headteacher</b>	Laura Smith
<b>Annual fees (day pupils)</b>	£47,093 to £86,909
<b>Telephone number</b>	01952 468220
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.lamledgeschool.co.uk">www.lamledgeschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:info@lamledgeschool.co.uk">info@lamledgeschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	18 to 20 October 2022

## Information about this school

- The school provides education for pupils aged five to 19 who have social, emotional and mental health difficulties. Some pupils also have a diagnosis of autism and others with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Nearly all pupils have an EHC plan.
- For pupils above compulsory school age, the school provides a programme of activities which is appropriate to their needs.
- The school operates from a large site on Lamledge Lane, Shifnal, Shropshire TF11 8SD.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- Since the previous standard inspection, the school received an emergency inspection on 20 November 2023, where it did not meet all the standards that were checked.
- There have been several changes in the senior leadership since the previous inspection, including the appointment of a new headteacher in May 2024.

## 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 discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, other members of the senior leadership team and executive representatives of the proprietorial body. The lead inspector met with the chair of the proprietorial body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, personal, social, health and economic education and the vocational curriculum. Inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also considered curriculum plans for, and pupils' work in, religious education.
- Inspectors considered a wide variety of school documents, including the school development plan.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors took note of parents' and carers' responses to Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's survey of school staff. Inspectors met with pupils to discuss different aspects of the school's provision.
- Inspectors toured the premises and reviewed the school facilities.

### **The school's progress in meeting previously failed standards**

During the inspection, we checked whether the school now meets the independent school standards that were judged to have been failed at its previous emergency inspection which took place on 20 November 2023.

- The outcome of this part of the inspection is: **the school now meets the previously failed standards.**
- At the emergency inspection of the school, inspectors found that pupils' challenging and/or defiant behaviour was not as well managed by staff as it should be. This disrupted the learning of others, particularly in the secondary phase. Staff were inconsistent in applying boundaries to help pupils improve their behaviour.
- The school has addressed many of these issues. The proprietor has provided the new leadership with high levels of support from executive leaders and other staff from another of the group's schools. Staff have had training on the school's behaviour policy from the therapeutic team. There have been regular checks made on how staff are consistently implementing the policy. Pupils' behaviour witnessed during the inspection was mostly calm and respectful and there were strong relationships between staff and pupils.
- At the emergency inspection, inspectors found that the proprietor had not ensured that leaders had managed the transitional phase the school had undergone well enough so that pupils were supported in managing their anxiety and behaviour. Leaders had not ensured that all staff implemented the school's behaviour policy effectively. The proprietor had not ensured that the school consistently met all the standards.
- The proprietor has ensured that lessons have been learned from the transitional phase that the school went through in the autumn term. The new school leadership structure and the additional support for the school leaders have both brought stability to the school. No new pupils have been enrolled this academic year. The school has in place well-considered systems to manage carefully any future increase in the number of pupils. Leaders have ensured that staff are trained to implement the school's behaviour policy better. The proprietor has ensured that all the standards are now met.

## **The school now meets the following standards:**

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

- 9 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor promotes good behaviour amongst pupils by ensuring that–
  - 9(b) the policy is implemented effectively.

### **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.

### **Information about the progress monitoring inspection**

- The Department for Education (DfE) commissioned a progress monitoring inspection to take place at the same time as the standard inspection. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the requirements of the standards that were judged as unmet at the emergency inspection which took place on 20 November 2023. These unmet standards related to the ineffective implementation of the behaviour policy, and leadership and management.
- The DfE required the school to submit an action plan. Ofsted evaluated this plan on 20 February 2024 and deemed it to be acceptable with modifications.
- The lead inspector met with the proprietor and school leaders.
- The inspectors considered documentation related to: behaviour and attitudes; safeguarding; the recruitment of staff; and risk assessment.

### **Inspection team**

Dave Gilkerson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Dan Lambert

His Majesty's Inspector



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