



ISI Independent
Schools
Inspectorate

Regulatory Compliance Inspection Report

New Forest Small School

September 2022

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School's Details

School	New Forest Small School			
DfE number	850/6075			
Address	New Forest Small School 1 Southampton Road Lyndhurst Hampshire SO43 7BU			
Telephone number	02380 284415			
Email address	nfss@newforestsmallschool.com			
Headteacher	Mr Nicholas Alp			
Proprietor	Mr Nicholas Alp			
Age range	3 to 16			
Number of pupils on roll	74			
	EYFS	10	Primary	35
			Secondary	29
Inspection dates	28 to 29 September 2022			

1. Background Information

About the school

- 1.1 New Forest Small School is an independent co-educational day school. It was founded in 1994 by the current headteacher, who is now the sole proprietor, and his late wife. He oversees governance supported by an advisory board of governors. Since 2012, the school's main building has been a converted former police station bordering open forest. The school has a kindergarten, primary and secondary sections.
- 1.2 Since the previous inspection, the school has introduced a class where attendance operates with a degree of flexibility agreed between the school and parents or carers who oversee home schooling. These arrangements confirm relative proportions within a school week when pupils will attend school or receive home schooling. The proprietor assumed the headship in September 2022, at which point the school's first deputy head was appointed.

What the school seeks to do

- 1.3 The school seeks to give pupils an education adapted to their unique needs that both challenges them academically and gives them space and time to explore and be creative. Staff aim to nurture each child's social and emotional development so that they have both the confidence to cope with life's challenges; and the desire to continue exploring and learning into the next stage of their life.

About the pupils

- 1.4 Pupils come from a diverse range of mainly professional families living mostly within a 10-mile radius of the school. Standardised assessment data provided by the school indicate that the ability of pupils is average compared to those taking the same tests nationally. The school has identified 14 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), such as dyslexia, dyspraxia and ASD, all of whom receive additional specialist support within lessons. There are five pupils who have education and health care (EHC) plans. One pupil has English as an additional language (EAL), and receives additional specialist support.
- 1.5 The school modifies and extends the curriculum for pupils it has identified as the most able, providing differentiated learning opportunities within the curriculum as well as opportunities for enrichment beyond the curriculum environment.

2. Regulatory Compliance Inspection

Preface

The Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) is approved by the Secretary of State to inspect schools which are, or whose heads are, in membership of the associations which form the Independent Schools Council (ISC) and report on the extent to which they meet the Independent School Standards ('the standards') in the Schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Inspections of schools with early years settings not requiring registration also report whether the school complies with key provisions of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework, and for registered settings the full range of the Early Years Foundation Stage provisions is considered. Additionally, inspections report on the school's accessibility plan under Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996. Inspections also comment on the progress made to meet any compliance action points set out in the school's most recent statutory inspection.

ISI inspections are also carried out under the arrangements of the ISC Associations for the maintenance and improvement of the quality of their membership.

This is a COMPLIANCE ONLY inspection and as such reports only on the school's compliance with the standards. The standards represent minimum requirements and judgements are given either as **met** or as **not met**. All schools are required to meet all the standards applicable to them. Where the minimum requirements are not met, this is clearly indicated and the school is required to take the actions specified.

Inspections do not include matters that are outside of the regulatory framework described above, such as: an exhaustive health and safety audit; compliance with data protection requirements; an in-depth examination of the structural condition of the school, its services or other physical features; contractual arrangements with parents; an investigation of the financial viability of the school or its accounting procedures.

Inspectors may be aware of individual safeguarding concerns, allegations and complaints as part of the inspection process. Such matters will not usually be referred to specifically in published reports in this document but will have been considered by the team in reaching its judgements.

Links to the standards and requirements can be found here: [The Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#), [Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework](#).

Key findings

- 2.1 The school does not meet all of the required standards in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and relevant requirements of the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, and associated requirements, and should take immediate action to remedy deficiencies as detailed below.**

PART 1 – Quality of education provided

- 2.2 In the primary section, the school's own framework for assessment confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.3 Pupils take GCSE examinations in their final year at the school. The small numbers involved prevent reliable comparison with national averages, but inspection evidence confirms that teaching enables pupils to make good progress in the context of Part 1 paragraph 3(a).
- 2.4 The curriculum is documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for the pupils and covers the required breadth of material. The teaching enables pupils to make good progress, encompasses effective behaviour management and is supported by suitable resources. A suitable framework for the assessment of pupils' performance is in place.
- 2.5 Pupils receive relationships education in the primary section and relationships and sex education in the secondary section, except in so far as they are lawfully excused. The school has consulted parents and published a written statement of its policy which has regard to the relevant statutory guidance.
- 2.6 The standards relating to the quality of education [paragraphs 1–4] are met.**

PART 2 – Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

- 2.7 Principles and values are actively promoted which facilitate the personal development of pupils as responsible, tolerant, law-abiding citizens.
- 2.8 The standard relating to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development [paragraph 5] is met.**

PART 3 – Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 2.9 Good behaviour is promoted; bullying is prevented so far as reasonably practicable; health and safety requirements are met, including those relating to fire safety; provision is made for first aid. Pupils are properly supervised; admission and attendance registers are maintained, as required, and there is a strategic approach to risk assessment. A disability access plan is in place.
- 2.10 Effective arrangements are implemented to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils in areas such as listening to children; making referrals to external agencies; and arrangements to handle any allegations against adults working in the school. In these areas, senior leaders' actions have due regard to current statutory guidance.
- 2.11 However, not all required recruitment checks have been carried out promptly. References have not been obtained for all staff before they begin work. The school lacks sufficient knowledge of requirements regarding checks of the lists of those prohibited from teaching and/or management to ensure correct procedures are followed. Oversight of this area of safeguarding has not ensured that staff carrying out recruitment checks have sufficient understanding of the requirements.
- 2.12 The standards relating to welfare, health and safety in paragraphs 9 to 16, the requirement of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 (accessibility plan), and the ban on corporal punishment under section 548 of the Education Act 1996 are met, but those in paragraph 7 [safeguarding] are not met.**

Action point 1

The school must ensure that at two least references are received for all staff before they begin work [paragraph 7(a) and (b); EYFS 3.7 and 3.9].

Action point 2

The proprietor must maintain the required oversight so that staff carrying out recruitment checks have sufficient understanding of the requirements of *Keeping Children Safe in Education*. In particular, with regard to which checks are required for different staff, how to undertake them effectively and the need to retain the evidence required to support checks [paragraph 7(a) and (b); EYFS 3.7 and 3.9].

PART 4 – Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors

- 2.13 The school requires appropriate enhanced criminal records checks for staff before work begins. It similarly makes appropriate checks of medical fitness, qualifications, and, where appropriate, checks on those who have lived overseas. The school does not use supply staff. Checks of the proprietor are appropriate.
- 2.14 The school has not completed appropriate checks of identity and right to work in the UK. It has not checked staff where relevant against the lists of those prohibited from teaching and/or management for all staff. Dates for these checks and dates of checks for qualifications, enhanced criminal record checks and checks against the barred list are not all appropriately recorded on the single central register (SCR) of appointments.
- 2.15 The standards relating to the suitability of those in contact with pupils at the school in paragraphs 19 and 20 are met, but those in paragraphs 18 [suitability of staff] and 21 [SCR] are not met.**

Action point 3

The school must ensure that all required checks of staff are undertaken before they begin work, in particular: checks against the lists of those prohibited from teaching and/or management; and of each member of staff's identity and their right to work in the UK [paragraph 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c)(i) and 18(2)(c)(iii); EYFS 3.9].

Action point 4

The school must ensure that the date on which each check identified in the standard is completed on a member of staff is recorded accurately in the SCR [paragraph 21(3)(a)(i – v, vii) and 21(3)(b); EYFS 3.9].

PART 5 – Premises of and accommodation at schools

- 2.16 Suitable toilet and changing facilities, and showering facilities where required by the standard, and appropriate accommodation for pupils' medical and therapy needs are provided. The premises are maintained to a standard commensurate with health and safety; acoustics and lighting are appropriate; water provision is adequate. Suitable outdoor space is provided for physical education and outdoor play.
- 2.17 The standards relating to the premises and accommodation [paragraphs 22–31] are met.**

PART 6 – Provision of information

- 2.18 A range of information is published, provided or made available to parents, inspectors and the Department for Education. This includes details about the proprietor, the ethos of the school and the

curriculum, and of the school's arrangements for admission, behaviour and exclusions, bullying, health and safety, first aid, details of the complaints procedure, and the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year, and the provision for any with education, health and care plans or English as an additional language. It also includes particulars of the school's academic performance during the preceding school year, inspection reports and (for parents only) a report at least annually of their own child's progress. The safeguarding policy is posted on the school's website.

2.19 The standard relating to the provision of information [paragraph 32] is met.

PART 7 – Manner in which complaints are handled

2.20 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful.

2.21 The standard relating to the handling of complaints [paragraph 33] is met.

PART 8 – Quality of leadership in and management of schools

2.22 The proprietor has not ensured that senior leaders and managers demonstrate good skills and knowledge, in particular with regard to checking the suitability of staff. They have not fulfilled their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils.

2.23 The standard relating to leadership and management of the school in paragraph 34 is not met.

Action point 5

The proprietor must ensure that senior leaders and managers implement and monitor safeguarding and welfare arrangements effectively so that the other standards are consistently met and they actively promote the wellbeing of the pupils [paragraph 34(1)(a), (b) and (c)].

3. Inspection Evidence

- 3.1 The inspectors observed lessons, had discussions with pupils and examined samples of pupils' work. They held discussions with members of staff and with the proprietor and observed a sample of the extra-curricular activities that occurred during the inspection period. Inspectors visited the facilities for the youngest pupils, together with the learning support and educational resource areas. Inspectors considered the responses of parents, staff and pupils to pre-inspection questionnaires. The inspectors examined curriculum and other documentation made available by the school.

Inspectors

Mr Matthew Lovett

Reporting inspector

Mrs Jane Stanley

Compliance team inspector (Clerk to governors, HMC school)