

Inspection of Clovelly House School

Clovelly, Merrylees Road, Thornton, Leicestershire LE67 1AP

Inspection dates: 28 to 30 March 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

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 this small school. This is because staff cater very well for pupils who have often spent long periods out of education. Due to the support they receive, over time, pupils' attendance improves. One parent stated, 'My child has changed since starting this school. He is more relaxed and now understands how to cope with his emotional behaviours. My child is now enjoying school and engaging in work which would have not happened in his previous school.'

Pupils say that they are happy and feel safe here. They trust staff to deal with any bullying fairly. Pupils value the opportunities they have during talk time to share their concerns or worries. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive. Staff help pupils to manage their emotions. They are effective at recognising when pupils are becoming distressed.

Most pupils engage well with their learning. They particularly value the range of opportunities they have to develop their interests. However, leaders have not thought carefully about how pupils' individual programmes will provide them with the knowledge and skills they need for future success.

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

Newly appointed leaders are starting to develop a clearer overview of the school curriculum. They have realised that the 'child-led' approach to the curriculum has meant that teachers have not always considered exactly what pupils need to know and be able to do before leaving the school. This has led to lessons not always building towards preparing pupils for their next steps in learning. Leaders have begun to identify what they want pupils to learn and when. They have begun to support teachers in planning how to teach pupils knowledge in the right order. This is particularly evident in mathematics and science, where pupils are working towards qualifications. However, leaders have yet to identify what pupils should learn and when across the whole curriculum.

Pupils study qualifications in a wide range of subjects. These include GCSEs, functional skills and awards linked to developing pupils' personal, social and work-related abilities and skills. This is also the case for students in the sixth form. However, teaching has not always prepared some pupils sufficiently well enough to be successful in exams.

Leaders do not routinely assess with sufficient accuracy what pupils do and do not know on their first admission to the school. Consequently, teachers do not always know what knowledge gaps pupils may have when they arrive at the school and what their next steps in learning should be.

Teachers present information clearly. They are skilled in finding creative ways to help pupils engage in learning. Pupils benefit from lessons being taught on a one-to-one basis. However, the focus of the lessons can be on pupil enjoyment rather than on

learning. It is not always clear exactly what teachers want pupils to learn.

In lessons, pupils listen and focus on their work. They take pride in their work. Teachers ask pupils questions during lessons to check their understanding. For example, in subjects such as mathematics, teachers set pupils short tests and quizzes. However, this practice is not consistent in all subjects.

Leaders have realised that promoting a love of reading has not always been a priority at the school. They have recently introduced the study of novels into English lessons. Staff read to pupils and encourage them to predict what might happen next in the story. However, pupils sometimes resist reading. Leaders have developed their own phonics-based scheme to help any pupils who may be at the early stages of learning to read. However, not all staff understand how to use this scheme to best support these pupils. The impact of the scheme on improving pupils' ability to read is not yet clear.

Leaders and teachers have focused on understanding and providing effective support for pupils' social, emotional and behavioural needs. Each pupil has a detailed risk assessment and behaviour support plan. All staff are aware of these plans. Staff apply a consistent and caring approach to each pupil. As a result, pupils are able to manage their behaviour better over time.

The curriculum for pupils' personal development is strong. Leaders ensure that pupils experience an extensive variety of visits. Pupils have many opportunities to explore the outdoors. They visit a local farm and 'Bird World' as part of their animal care studies. The curriculum provides weekly opportunities for pupils to develop their physical and mental health. Pupils particularly enjoy their regular visits to the gym. They receive independent careers advice and guidance, including visits to careers fairs and local colleges. Pupils are receiving appropriate relationships and sex education and health education. The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn and discuss the different protected characteristics, as well as social, moral and spiritual issues.

Staff value the support leaders give them. They say that leaders care about their well-being and are considerate of their workload.

The proprietor and senior leaders have ensured that the school's site promotes pupils' welfare, health and safety. Leaders assess the risk associated with any activities pupils engage in. Leaders regularly review all risk assessments to ensure that the assessments correctly identify any risks and the appropriate actions staff should take to reduce them.

The premises are maintained to a good standard. An appropriate fire risk assessment is in place.

The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The school's safeguarding policy is available on the school's website.

The proprietor has ensured that all the independent school standards (the standards) are met.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The proprietor has ensured that safeguarding is a high priority. Staff have undergone extensive safeguarding training and receive regular updates. They meet weekly to ensure that they are all aware of individual pupil circumstances. They are very knowledgeable about what signs to look out for that might indicate a possible concern. Staff know who to contact if they have any concerns about the actions of any adults in the school.

Safeguarding records are accurate and detail the follow-up work safeguarding leaders take to ensure that pupils receive the support they need. Leaders work effectively with other agencies to provide holistic support to pupils.

Pupils are regularly taught about how to stay safe in their community, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Leaders have not ensured that there is a coherently planned curriculum in place across all areas of learning that identifies the key knowledge and skills they want pupils to learn. As a result, the curriculum does not always suit pupils' starting points and build towards clear goals. This can limit the effectiveness with which teachers plan learning that helps pupils to achieve as well as they should. Leaders need to ensure that there is an ambitious, well-sequenced curriculum in each area of learning that meets pupils' needs and enables them to achieve well.
- Recently, leaders have prioritised the teaching of reading. They have introduced a phonics-based intervention to help pupils who are at the early stages of reading to become confident readers. They have also introduced more texts into the English curriculum. However, not all staff understand the phonics scheme to know how best to use it to help pupils who struggle to read become more fluent readers. Furthermore, those pupils who are reluctant to read more widely do not receive sufficient support to encourage them to engage more readily. This can limit pupils' chances of being able to access the curriculum fully and achieve as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that staff understand how best to support those who struggle to read, including through using a phonics programme, and encourage all pupils to read widely so that all pupils become confident, enthusiastic readers who understand the importance of reading to achieving well.
- Leaders have not ensured consistency in the use of assessment. Checks on what pupils do and do not know when they first start at the school are not sufficiently

accurate. Not all teachers use ongoing assessment well enough to check pupils' knowledge. As a result, some teachers do not know what pupils can recall and what gaps they may have in their knowledge. Leaders need to ensure that all staff know how to use assessment effectively, including when pupils first start at the school so that they can identify what pupils need to learn next and any additional support pupils may need to be able to achieve well.

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

Unique reference number	144619
DfE registration number	855/6040
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10267084
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	10 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	13
Number of part-time pupils	2
Proprietor	Jennifer Collighan
Headteacher	Jennifer Collighan
Annual fees (day pupils)	£48,750
Telephone number	01455821253
Website	www.clovellyhouse.co
Email address	jcollighan@clovellyhouse.co
Date of previous inspection	16 to 18 November 2021

Information about this school

- Clovelly House School is an independent special school that provides education to pupils aged 10 to 19 with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The primary area of need for most pupils is social, emotional and mental health needs. Some pupils also have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. There is also provision for pupils with a diagnosis of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and those who have had adverse childhood experiences. All pupils have education, health and care plans (EHC plans).
- The school also operates from a second site at The Bungalow, Mill Lane, Enderby, LE19 4LX.
- An emergency inspection took place on 2 November 2022 at the request of the Department for Education (DfE). The DfE commissioned this inspection due to concerns related to safeguarding and the emergency closure of the associated

children's home, Clovelly House, on the same site, which was directly run by the same proprietor.

- The school's previous standard inspection took place on 16 to 18 November 2021.
- The school does not use the services of any alternative providers.

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.

Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The DfE commissioned Ofsted to carry out the standard inspection earlier in the inspection cycle than previously planned. This was because the school was judged as not meeting standards related to welfare, health and safety of pupils and leadership and management at the emergency inspection which took place on 2 November 2022.
- Inspectors held various meetings with the proprietor, who is also the headteacher, the head of school and the leader responsible for the curriculum.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into individual pupils' curriculums. 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 looked at individual pupils' EHC plans and discussed them with the headteacher and head of school.
- Inspectors considered a wide variety of school documents, including the school self-evaluation and school development plan.
- To judge the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors read the school's relevant policies, scrutinised the single central record, checked the school's procedures for the safe recruitment of staff and met with the safeguarding team. Inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils.
- Inspectors took note of the responses received on Ofsted Parent View and considered the results of the Ofsted surveys for pupils and the school's staff. Inspectors met with a small number of pupils to gather their views.
- Inspectors considered relevant documentation and reviewed the school facilities, to check the school's compliance with the standards.

The school's progress in meeting previously failed standards

During the inspection we checked whether the school now meets the independent school standards that it was judged to have failed at its previous emergency inspection on 2 November 2022.

- The outcome of this part of the inspection is: **the school now meets the previously failed standards.**
- At the previous emergency inspection, leaders could not account for the well-being and welfare of all pupils who are in their care. The attendance registers were inaccurate. Leaders did not maintain the registers appropriately. There was confusion regarding whether pupils were, or were not, on the school's roll. The proprietor had not secured a strong culture of safeguarding.
- Leaders have ensured that registers are accurate. There are no missing registration marks. All pupils on the register are on the school roll. The proprietor has introduced weekly checks on the register. Leaders know about any pupil absences. These are chased up by the administrator who alerts all staff when pupils do not arrive at school. These processes ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- At the previous emergency inspection, leaders' analysis of behaviour data showed that staff applied the behaviour policy inconsistently. This resulted in fluctuation in pupils' behaviour. Behaviour had deteriorated since the previous inspection. The school's approach to behaviour management was not improving pupils' behaviour.
- The proprietor has promoted good behaviour among pupils by ensuring the effective implementation of the new behaviour policy. A new system of coding and recording on a daily basis any unwanted behaviour has led to greater consistency in the way staff apply the policy. Pupils' behaviour during the inspection was very positive. Relationships between staff and pupils are very strong. Leaders have presented evidence that some of the more extreme behaviours pupils can demonstrate have reduced.
- At the previous emergency inspection, leaders recognised that bullying was a concern. They had not ensured that staff implemented the anti-bullying strategy effectively. Some pupils said that bullying occurred and that staff did not deal with it. Leaders were not taking effective action to remedy this.
- Pupils say that bullying now rarely happens and that if it does, they are confident that staff will deal with it. Records show that there have been no incidents of bullying this term. Newly appointed leaders highlighted that pupils are now able to get on much better with each other. For example, recently, pupils have all gone on a trip together. Leaders attribute this improvement partly to the workbook about 'unfriending bullying' all pupils have worked through.
- At the previous emergency inspection, leaders had not implemented the health and safety policy effectively. There had been very few health and safety checks at the school's main site. The proprietor had not ensured that leaders were fulfilling their health and safety responsibilities.
- The proprietor has appointed two health and safety officers. They each have a responsibility for one of the school sites. There is evidence of regular checks taking place since November 2022. Records of these checks are kept in the health

and safety folder. The folder for this term shows that all checks outlined in the policy are up to date.

- At the previous emergency inspection, the proprietor was unable to provide evidence that fire safety checks had been completed at the main school site. Regular checks on fire extinguishers, emergency lighting and the fire alarm system had not been undertaken. There were no records of recent fire drills. The proprietor did not ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- Fire evacuation documentation shows that fire evacuation practices have taken place each term this academic year. Weekly checks on fire extinguishers take place at both sites, as do daily checks on smoke detectors and the fire alarm. Emergency lighting at the bungalow site is checked weekly. Fire risk assessments for both sites have taken place and a professional health and safety company completed an audit in January 2023. The proprietor has now ensured compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- At the previous emergency inspection, leaders did not implement the first-aid policy effectively. Accident and first-aid records were not complete. Records were not available from the end of September 2022. Historic records were not complete.
- Since the end of November, accident books on both sites have been kept up to date with details of incidents. These records also contain details of any first aid administered.
- At the previous emergency inspection, the proprietor had failed to maintain an accurate admission register. The admission register was not complete as it did not have all the required information for each pupil on roll. Some addresses were incorrect. Registers were also incorrect. The proprietor did not monitor the admission and attendance registers effectively. Leaders were not maintaining attendance registers in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. They were unaware of the weaknesses found in these registers at the time of the inspection.
- The admission register has been fully updated with the correct details of all pupils. Registers are accurate. The proprietor conducts regular checks on these documents. The proprietor has ensured compliance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.
- At the previous emergency inspection, it was found that risk assessments varied in quality. The school policy stated that each pupil should have a regularly updated risk assessment. Some risk assessments did not record pertinent and known risks for some pupils. The school's risk assessment policy was not effectively implemented.
- The individual pupil risk assessments are much improved. There is accurate detail for each pupil and risks are amended and updated as new behaviours and concerns emerge. All pupil risk assessments are updated each half term. The detail in the documents gives staff clear instructions about how to manage the risks associated with each pupil. Staff sign the documents to say they have read them each time they are updated.

- At the previous emergency inspection, leaders had not demonstrated good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so the standards were not met consistently. They had not fulfilled their responsibilities effectively so that the school consistently met all the standards and actively promoted the well-being of pupils.
- Through their actions in meeting the unmet standards in relation to safeguarding, behaviour, risk assessment, health and safety and pupil registration, leaders have demonstrated the knowledge appropriate to their role. These standards are now all met. Consequently, leaders now demonstrate the necessary skills and knowledge in relation to the standards

Information about the progress monitoring inspection

- The 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 relate to the welfare, health and safety of pupils and leadership and management that were judged as unmet at the emergency inspection which took place on 2 November 2022.
- This was the school's first progress monitoring inspection.
- The DfE required the school to submit an action plan. Ofsted evaluated this plan on 13 February 2023 and deemed it to be acceptable.
- The lead inspector met with the proprietor and school leaders.
- The lead inspector considered documentation related to safeguarding, behaviour, anti-bullying procedures, health and safety, fire safety, first aid, admission and attendance and risk assessment.

Inspection team

Dave Gilkerson, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

George Huthart

Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school now meets the following requirements of the 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.

- 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.

- 10 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that bullying at the school is prevented in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy.

- 11 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that 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.

- 13 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that first aid is administered in a timely and competent manner by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written first aid policy.

- 15 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

- 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 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.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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