

# Undershaw Education Trust

Portsmouth Road, Hindhead, Surrey GU26 6AQ

**Inspection date**

25 July 2023

**Overall outcome**

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

## Main inspection findings

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

*Paragraphs 7–7(b), 32(1) and 32(1)(c)*

- Leaders talk with clarity when describing the culture to keep pupils safe here. Staff at all levels undertake a wide range of training to ensure that they are aware of the potential danger pupils face. They know that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are additionally vulnerable, both in and out of school.
- The school's routines and systems to keep pupils and staff safe are well developed. Record-keeping is detailed. Staff are well versed in the localised contextual risks faced by pupils who attend the school.
- Safeguarding has a high profile. Regular meetings and briefings for staff ensure that communication is clear and open. The oversight of safeguarding by those in positions of governance is sound. Leaders' work with external professional partners is purposeful and far-reaching in support of pupils and their families.
- The school's policies linked to keeping pupils safe are appropriate. These include the safeguarding policy which meets current guidelines and is published on the website.

*Paragraphs 11, 12, 14 and 16–16(b)*

- The health and safety of pupils and staff are treated seriously here. Policies are clear and accessible to staff and give useful guidance regarding aspects such as completing risk assessments.
- A small site team is responsible to the headteacher for day-to-day aspects of health and safety. Leaders work closely with external experts to ensure that the wider picture is also considered fully. Annual health and safety audits are in place. Routine tasks such as testing of portable electrical appliances or for legionella are carried out in a timely manner.
- Fire risk assessments are in place for both sites of the school. These are updated at least annually. Leaders also seek advice from the local fire service if they are unsure about aspects of fire safety. Servicing of emergency lighting, alarms and equipment is carried out by a specialist external company.
- At the time of this inspection, the fire alarms sounded and a full evacuation of the

school buildings on the main site was carried out. Staff who were present knew what to do. Processes to assess and confirm that this was a false alarm caused by contractors working on site worked well.

- School leaders have considered fully the impact of additional pupils on the school's roll if this material change request is approved. Capacity of staff to safely supervise pupils has been carefully assessed. This includes both sites of the school and across all phases of education.
- Leaders have ensured that all of the independent school standards (the standards) checked in part 3 are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

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

*Paragraphs 18(2)–18(2)(e), 18(3), 19(2)–19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3), 20(6)–20(6)(c), 21(1)–21(3)(b), 21(5)–21(6)*

- Procedures to recruit staff are sound. Leaders are aware of the checks required on adults, including visitors, at the school. They have attended relevant training to ensure that they understand the potential pitfalls and what to be aware of when recruiting suitable teaching and support staff.
- The school's single central record is sound. It contains all of the information required by part 4. It is maintained and monitored by leaders who fully understand what enquiries need to be made and why. This includes arrangements for agency supply staff and those in positions of governance.
- Leaders have ensured that all of the relevant standards in part 4 are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

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

*Paragraphs 23(1)–23(1)(c), 24(1)–24(1)(b), 24(2), 25–29(1)(b)*

- The premises and accommodation on both school sites are fit for purpose. The main school site is a mix of historic and modern buildings that are well suited to their role. Buildings look well cared for. Teaching spaces are bright and relatively spacious for the small groups of pupils who use them.
- Leaders' proposals to increase the number of pupils at the school have been carefully thought through. The capacity for an additional 20 pupils to be absorbed into the school's present classroom and teaching spaces is evident.
- Aspects such as toilet facilities, lighting and acoustics are all suitable. The medical room meets the requirements of part 5. Drinking-water is available throughout the school.
- The school has extensive grounds and outdoor spaces, including wooded areas, a multi-use games area and an outdoor classroom. The school's arts and media centre also has dedicated external classrooms for music tuition. The school's swimming pool complex has appropriate changing and shower facilities.
- Leaders have ensured that the relevant standards contained in part 5 are likely to continue to be met if the material change is approved.

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

### *Paragraph 34(1)–34(1)(c)*

- Leaders have thought carefully before applying for this material change. They have considered the impact it will have on pupils already at the school. Their rationale for the increase in numbers makes sense. The school has capacity to increase its roll with little or no impact on the quality of education it provides or the welfare, health and safety of pupils and staff.
- Leaders have a clear understanding of the requirements associated with the standards. Those with additional responsibility for safeguarding are knowledgeable. They understand fully their responsibility to keep pupils safe.
- Oversight of those in positions of governance is established and effective. Governors are also the directors of the proprietor company. The current model of governance allows committees to have oversight of specific areas of responsibility. Safeguarding and well-being of pupils and staff are given a high priority.
- Leaders have ensured that all of the standards in part 8 are likely to be met if the material change is approved.

## **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	134833
DfE registration number	936/6584
Inspection number	10300455

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
Proprietor	Undershaw Education Trust
Chair	Deborah Gerring
Headteacher	Emma West
Annual fees (day pupils)	£25,987 to £63,095
Telephone number	01428 609 953
Website	<a href="http://www.undershaw.education">www.undershaw.education</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:businessmanager@undershaw.education">businessmanager@undershaw.education</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	8 to 10 February 2022

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	7 to 19	Not applicable	Not applicable
Number of pupils on the school roll	Up to 95	Up to 115	Up to 115

## Pupils

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

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	94	Up to 115
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	94	Up to 115
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	94	Up to 115
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	94	Up to 115

## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	19	19
Number of part-time teaching staff	1	1

## Information about this school

- Undershaw is an independent special school for pupils with mild to moderate physical or learning difficulties. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school operates across two sites within a short distance of each other. The school does not use alternative provision.
- The last standard inspection took place in February 2022, when the school's overall effectiveness was judged to be good and all of the standards were found to be met. The acting headteacher in post at that time has since been appointed to the substantive role.
- The school's current proprietor information recorded on the Get Information about Schools website is not accurate. The change in proprietor name was confirmed by the Department for Education in March 2023 but details have not yet been updated.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education because the proprietor has applied to make a change to the school's registration. The proprietor wishes to increase the number of pupils on roll. This was the first inspection regarding this particular material change.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and the school's business manager. He met with other leaders responsible for safeguarding and pastoral care at the school. He also met with the chair of the governing board.
- The inspector toured both sites of the school, visiting classrooms and communal areas. During the tour, the inspector talked to staff, including the school's head of special educational needs.
- The inspector took part in an evacuation of the main school site due to an unplanned fire alarm. He took this opportunity to discuss evacuation procedures with the teaching, support and site staff who were present.
- The inspector considered a wide range of policies, records and documentation in relation to the specific standards that were checked at this inspection.

## Inspection team

Clive Close, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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