

# Wrenfield Learning Centre

**Inspection date**

14 December 2022

**Overall outcome**

**The school is likely to meet all the independent school standards when it opens**

## Main inspection findings

### Part 1. Quality of education provided

*Paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2), 2(2)(a), 2(2)(b), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(g), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i)*

- The proprietor has ensured that there is a curriculum policy in place that explains the rationale and the organisation of the curriculum.
- Detailed planning is available for each year group in each subject of the curriculum. A broad range of subjects is offered. Subject plans are ordered and sequenced so that they build on pupils' knowledge over time.
- The curriculum policy reflects the school's ambition to offer a personalised approach to every pupil placed at the school. Detailed information will be gathered on each pupil when they join the school. Baseline assessments of academic and personal and social development will be used to inform curriculum plans.
- A wide range of qualifications is in place for pupils to aspire to. These include GCSE and BTEC accreditation.
- Students in the sixth form will continue to gain English and mathematics qualifications. A bespoke curriculum will combine college courses with work experience to match each pupil's aspirations.
- Leaders are ambitious for pupils to play a positive role in society. The teaching of fundamental British values will support pupils to understand how to work and cooperate with others in adult life.
- Leaders have planned the personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) curriculum to teach pupils how to keep themselves healthy and safe. These plans reflect the school's aim to prepare pupils for life and work in modern Britain.

*Paragraph 2(2)(e), 2(2)(e)(i), 2(2)(e)(ii), 2(2)(e)(iii)*

- Pupils will be provided with independent careers advice and guidance.

- Leaders intend to prepare pupils to be successful citizens through the careers and citizenship curriculum. This curriculum will help pupils to develop their employability skills and understand how they can contribute positively to society.
- Leaders are developing work-experience placements with local businesses. This will help pupils to make informed choices about their career options.

*Paragraph 2A(1), 2A(1)(b), 2A(1)(d), 2A(1)(e), 2A(1)(f), 2A(1)(g), 2A(2)*

- The proprietor has ensured that there is a relationships and sex education policy and a health education policy in place. These policies reflect current government guidance. A written statement outlines the content of the programmes.
- The policies include the requirement to consult with parents and carers and to make arrangements for pupils who are withdrawn from aspects of sex education.

*Paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g), 3(h), 3(i), 3(j), 4*

- Leaders have carefully selected teachers with a range of subject knowledge to deliver the curriculum. Leaders are ambitious for pupils to make rapid progress.
- Leaders have a comprehensive understanding of the needs of the prospective pupils. Pupils' complex needs will be taken into account in the planning of lessons.
- A behaviour policy is in place that outlines the strategies for supporting pupils to manage their behaviour and emotions. Discussions with leaders show their commitment to pupils being 'caring, capable and confident' young people who will flourish in the wider world. A multi-disciplinary clinical team of professionals is on hand to support pupils who have challenging behaviour. All staff will be trained to support pupils who have experienced trauma in their lives.
- Leaders intend to use a range of assessment methods to check that each pupil is making as much progress as they can.
- Parents will receive reports regularly on their child's progress.
- It is likely that the independent school standards (the standards) in this part will be met.

## 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)*

- Leaders have considered how to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development sensitively. They are aware of the vulnerabilities that pupils may have. Pupils will learn about how to keep themselves physically and emotionally safe.
- British values will be taught explicitly through the PHSE curriculum. Topics include understanding democracy and how rules and laws keep people safe.
- Leaders intend to help pupils to develop their self-knowledge and self-esteem. This will be an important part of school life. A personalised approach, positive relationships between pupils and staff and clinical guidance will support pupils who have suffered trauma in their lives.

- Arrangements are in place to ensure that where staff or visitors discuss political views with pupils, there is a balance of opposing views presented.
- It is likely that the standards in this part will be met.

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

*Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b), 9, 9(a), 9(b), 9(c), 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 16(a), 16(b)*

- A comprehensive safeguarding policy is in place. It complies with government guidance.
- The school's behaviour policy takes into account the specific needs of the pupils who will attend the school. The secure and consistent environment and clear boundaries will help pupils to understand what is expected of them.
- Strategies to reduce bullying are set out in the anti-bullying policy. Systems are in place for responding to incidents of bullying. Leaders say that bullying will not be tolerated. Pupils will be trained as anti-bullying ambassadors.
- There are robust systems in place for keeping pupils and staff safe. Health and safety professionals across The Witherslack Group has put in place systems for managing and monitoring all aspects of health and safety.
- Fire evacuations will take place on a half-termly basis. Personal evacuation plans will be prepared for any pupils or staff who need support to leave the building in an emergency.
- Checks are in place to monitor the fire alarm system, fire extinguishers and fire exits. Other checks, such as for water temperatures and portable appliance testing, will be carried out regularly.
- A first-aid policy is in place. All staff will be trained to administer first aid. First-aid boxes are positioned around the school and in school vehicles.
- Leaders are knowledgeable about the legal requirements for maintaining school attendance and admissions registers.
- Staffing levels proposed indicate that pupils will be well supported at all times.
- A risk assessment policy provides staff with clear guidance on the purpose of risk assessments and how to write them. A number of well-written risk assessments were seen during the inspection.
- It is likely that the standards in this part will be met.

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

*Paragraph 18(1), 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), 20(6), 20(6)(a), 20(6)(a)(i), 20(6)(a)(ii), 20(6)(b), 20(6)(b)(i), 20(6)(b)(ii), 20(6)(b)(iii), 20(6)(c), 21(1), 21(2), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 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)(a)(viii), 21(3)(b), 21(6), 21(7), 21(7)(a), 21(7)(b)*

- Leaders are using the systems that have been established across The Witherslack Group to ensure that newly appointed staff are suitable to work with children.

Detailed recruitment checks are made, and leaders have received training in safer recruitment procedures.

- An electronic single central record includes all the necessary checks on staff.
- Leaders do not intend to use supply staff.
- It is likely that the standards in this part will be met.

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

*Paragraph 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 23(1)(c), 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(c), 28(1)(d), 28(2), 28(2)(a), 28(2)(b), 29(1), 29(1)(a), 29(1)(b)*

- At the time of the previous pre-registration inspection, the school building, which is a new-build, was not finished. The building is now complete. It has been finished to a high standard.
- There are suitable toilet and washing facilities for the sole use of pupils. Toilets have an adequate supply of hot and cold water. Mixer taps ensure that hot water does not pose a scalding risk to pupils.
- Drinking water is readily available from a water cooler. Cold-water supplies suitable for drinking are labelled as such.
- The school is situated in attractive and extensive grounds. Leaders are continuing to develop outside areas where a range of physical activities can take place.

*Paragraph 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(2)*

- There is a medical room for the short-term care of sick or injured pupils. This includes a washing facility, and it is situated near to a toilet. Medicines will be stored in a lockable cabinet.

*Paragraph 25, 26, 27, 27(a), 27(b)*

- The new building provides an attractive learning environment, with pleasant views of the grounds from all aspects. The school is spacious for the accommodation of six pupils.
- The lighting inside the building is appropriate for the activities taking place. There is significant external lighting to ensure the safety of pupils, staff and visitors during hours of darkness.
- Acoustic conditions and sound insulation are appropriate for activities that will take place in the school.
- It is likely that the standards in this part will be met.

#### Part 6. Provision of information

*Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(a), 32(1)(b), 32(1)(c), 32(1)(d), 32(1)(f), 32(1)(g), 32(1)(h), 32(1)(i), 32(1)(j), 32(2), 32(2)(a), 32(2)(b), 32(2)(b)(ii), 32(2)(c), 32(2)(d), 32(3), 32(3)(a), 32(3)(b), 32(3)(c), 32(3)(d), 32(3)(e), 32(3)(f), 32(3)(g)*

- Leaders have prepared a draft website for the new school. All policies required by the independent school standards will be published on this site. Policies, including for

behaviour, first aid, anti-bullying, health and safety and safeguarding, will be available to parents.

- Parents will receive a termly report on the progress of their child.
- An annual account of income and expenditure incurred by the school will be provided to local authorities.
- Information pertaining to the proprietor and governing body will be available on the website.
- Details of previous years' academic performance will be published on the school's website. Leaders intend to publish inspection reports so that these are easily accessible to parents.
- It is likely that the standards in this part will be met.

#### Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

*Paragraph 33, 33(a), 33(b), 33(c), 33(d), 33(e), 33(f), 33(g), 33(h), 33(i), 33(i)(i), 33(i)(ii), 33(j), 33(j)(i), 33(j)(ii), 33(k)*

- The proprietor has ensured that there is a complaints policy in place, which will be accessed from the school's new website.
- The complaints process has informal and formal stages, with timescales for when the school will respond. Where the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, the complaint can be considered by an independent panel.
- Records of the decisions and actions taken will be provided to the complainant. These records will be kept confidentially.
- It is likely that the standards in this part will be met.

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

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

- The proprietor is a well-established provider of care and education for pupils with a range of special educational needs.
- Processes and procedures are adopted from existing successful systems in the organisation. There are well-rehearsed arrangements in place for supporting, monitoring and holding leaders to account for standards in the school. A Witherslack central team offers guidance and advice on all aspects of meeting the independent school standards.
- A regional director and governing body will provide detailed and timely information to the proprietor.
- Leaders have a comprehensive knowledge of the standards. They have ensured that all the standards are likely to be met.
- It is likely that the standards in this part will be met.

#### Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The proprietor has ensured that there is an accessibility plan in place. This plan sets out how the school will improve access to the curriculum, the premises and to communication for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

## **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.

## Proposed school details

Unique reference number	149482
DfE registration number	805/6004
Inspection number	10262286

This inspection was carried out under section 99 of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards that are required for registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Independent school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	The Witherslack Group Ltd
Chair	Richard Wilkins
Headteacher	Ashley Roberts
Annual fees (day pupils)	£96,383
Telephone number	01539 566081
Website	Under construction
Email address	WrenfieldLC@witherslackgroup.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected



## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	N/A	7 to 18	7 to 18
Number of pupils on the school roll	N/A	6	6

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	N/A	Girls
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	N/A	6
Number of part-time pupils	N/A	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	N/A	6
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	N/A	up to 6
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	N/A	up to 6

## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	N/A	3
Number of part-time teaching staff	N/A	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	N/A	5

## **Information about this proposed school**

- The proprietor of the school is The Witherslack Group. The Witherslack Group is an established company that provides education and care for pupils with special educational needs.
- The proposed school intends to cater for secondary-age female pupils. The school will admit pupils who have cognitive and learning and neurodiverse needs. It is expected that these needs will be particularly related to trauma-informed social, emotional and mental health.
- The school will provide full-time education for six girls. Some pupils may have an education, health and care plan.
- The school has been recently built to a high standard. It is set in large grounds that will provide opportunities for physical education and socialising.
- The school does not intend to use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at two days' notice and was commissioned by the Department for Education.
- This was the school's second pre-registration inspection.
- The inspector met with a regional director from The Witherslack Group, the headteacher, the pastoral manager and the deputy headteacher. The inspector spoke on the telephone with the chair of the proprietor body.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documents and policies provided by the school. These included the curriculum policy, safeguarding policy, single central record, behaviour policy, anti-bullying policy, health and safety documentation, and the complaints policy.
- The inspector made a tour of the premises. A discussion took place with the health and safety manager for The Witherslack Group.

## Inspection team

Suzette Garland-Grimes, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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