

Inspection of Wirral Wrap

Summerhill House, Beechwood Drive, Beechwood, Birkenhead, Merseyside CH43 9LB

Inspection dates: 10 to 12 July 2024

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

No

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils who attend this school benefit from a second chance in their education. Many have been without access to learning for a period of time. Staff welcome them into a caring, safe environment. This helps pupils to put any difficulties that they have faced in the past behind them.

Pupils were keen to tell inspectors how the school has helped them to 'turn around' their behaviour. As pupils gradually increase the amount of time that they spend here, they begin to enjoy attending school again. However, some pupils take longer to overcome the challenge of managing their emotions. At times, this results in negative behaviour which interrupts the learning of some of their peers.

All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school has high aspirations for their success. The progress that they make in their personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education prepares them well to lead independent lives and contribute positively to society. However, the school's ambition for pupils' achievement in other subjects is not fully realised. Pupils' learning across the curriculum is uneven.

Pupils enjoy the wealth of enriching activities that the school provides. For instance, they learn to take care of horses and compete in e-sports tournaments.

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

The proprietor, leaders and staff share a clear vision for pupils to successfully re-engage with education during their time here. The school has set out a curriculum that supports this ambition. This curriculum is shaped around the needs of each pupil. It combines social and emotional learning with a broad range of academic subjects.

Pupils have typically missed a considerable portion of their education prior to joining this school. They often have large gaps in their learning due to interrupted attendance at, or exclusion from, their previous schools. The school identifies these gaps when pupils arrive, along with any additional needs that pupils may have. It uses the information in pupils' education, health and care (EHC) plans effectively to set achievable targets. This helps staff to choose appropriate strategies for supporting each pupil.

In some areas of the curriculum, in particular PSHE education and the social and emotional curriculum, the school has carefully considered the knowledge that it wants pupils to acquire. Over time, this helps pupils to be ready for learning in other subjects.

In many of the academic subjects, the curriculum is still developing. The school has not thought carefully enough about what pupils should know and remember. Added to this, some staff do not have the necessary subject expertise to ensure that pupils

learn what they need to. Learning activities are sometimes poorly thought out. This hinders pupils in building their knowledge. Furthermore, the school does not use assessment strategies to check pupils' understanding effectively enough. Staff sometimes move on before pupils' learning is secure. As a result, some pupils struggle to make sense of new content.

Most pupils join the school with gaps in their reading knowledge. They are beginning to benefit from support which is designed to help them to build accuracy and fluency. The school has recently prioritised reading for pleasure. Pupils are choosing to read independently more often than in the past.

The school has a keen understanding of the many complex factors that influence pupils' behaviour and attendance. Staff use a range of supportive strategies to encourage pupils to attend school more often. This is successful. Over time, pupils make considerable gains in their rates of attendance. Pupils are rightly proud of the improvements that they have made to their attendance and punctuality.

Many pupils' attitudes to learning also improve during their time at this school. On the whole, the support that pupils receive from staff helps them to learn to regulate their emotions. Nevertheless, at times, the poor behaviour of some pupils prevents others from learning. On occasions, pupils treat each other, and staff, disrespectfully. Some staff do not deal with these incidents effectively enough.

Pupils' personal development is of the highest priority at this school. Staff provide a rich variety of opportunities for pupils to build confidence and develop independence. These are thoughtfully adapted for each pupil to take account of their SEND and the opportunities that they may have missed out on earlier in life. Staff support pupils to develop friendships and to interact positively with each other. They learn about the importance of equality and tolerance. This helps pupils to accept each other's differences. The school encourages pupils to contribute to discussions about matters that affect them, for example by debating what type of school uniform they should wear.

The proprietor has appointed leaders with the required expertise to ensure that the independent school standards ('the standards') can be met consistently. There is clear capacity for the school to improve. However, difficulties in recruiting staff have hampered the proprietor's vision for the school. As a result, some of the proprietor's intended actions to improve the school have only just begun. Others are yet to start. Moreover, some of the school's systems for monitoring the standards are not employed as well as they should be. For instance, inspectors identified some routine maintenance issues that had not been addressed. While these matters were resolved fully during the inspection, the proprietor had not maintained a clear enough oversight of the school.

Policies, including a safeguarding policy that meets current statutory requirements, are available to parents and carers on the school's website. The proprietor has ensured that the school meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Staff are typically proud to work at the school. Many told inspectors that the school considers their views when making decisions that may impact on their workload. A minority of staff shared a more negative view. They said that at times they are not supported well enough to address pupils' poor behaviour.

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, the school has not given sufficient thought to the most important knowledge that pupils should learn. This means that staff sometimes lack clarity about the content that they should emphasise when they select learning activities. This hinders pupils in building up their knowledge securely in these subjects. The school should ensure that it identifies clearly what pupils should learn and provide support and guidance for staff to help them to deliver the curriculum effectively.
- The school's assessment strategies do not give staff enough understanding of how well pupils are learning the curriculum. At times, pupils do not have the knowledge that they need for subsequent learning. This limits staff's ability to help pupils to catch up. The school should ensure that assessment strategies are well matched to the knowledge set out in the curriculum, so that staff can accurately identify, and then address, any gaps in pupils' learning.
- Some staff do not apply the school's behaviour policy consistently well. At times, the poor behaviour of a small proportion of pupils prevents others from learning. The school should ensure that staff are supported well to help pupils to develop positive behaviour and conduct.
- The proprietor has not had sufficient oversight of the quality of the school's provision. It has not ensured that the standards are met consistently. Added to this, at times, some strategies to improve the quality of education are not implemented effectively. The proprietor should ensure that any improvement strategies are monitored and evaluated carefully to ensure that they have the intended positive impact on the quality of education at the school, and that the standards are consistently met.

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

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| Unique reference number | 149638 |
| DfE registration number | 344/6019 |
| Local authority | Wirral |
| Inspection number | 10322526 |
| Type of school | Other independent special school |
| School category | Independent day school |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 14 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 20 |
| Number of part-time pupils | 0 |
| Proprietor | Wrap (Wirral) CIC |
| Chair | Peter Silcock |
| Headteacher | Hayley Cunningham |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £42,900 to £75,050 |
| Telephone number | 0151 3193024 |
| Website | www.wirralwrap.org |
| Email address | hayley@wirralwrap.org |

Information about this school

- This is the school's first standard inspection. The school was registered by the Department for Education (DfE) on 21 June 2023.
- The proprietor is Wrap (Wirral) CIC, a community interest company.
- The school operates from premises at Summerhill House, Beechwood Drive, Beechwood, Birkenhead, Merseyside CH43 9LB.
- Until recently, the proprietor also operated an unregistered alternative provision at the same location. This provision has ceased to operate.
- The number of pupils on roll at this school has grown considerably since it opened in September 2023. The school is registered for up to 32 pupils.
- There has been a change of headteacher since the school was registered.
- All pupils have an EHC plan. The school caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. In addition, some pupils also have autism.
- Pupils join the school throughout the year. Many have been permanently excluded from other schools. Places at the school are commissioned by local authorities.
- The school does not use any alternative providers for pupils.

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 has failed to meet the independent school standards. These are the requirements of 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.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke with members of the proprietor body, including the chair, and with the headteacher, senior leaders and staff.
- The lead inspector held a virtual meeting with representatives of the local authority.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation, including that relating to the standards and the curriculum.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the checks that had been carried out on staff to ensure their suitability; 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 considered the views of parents expressed through Ofsted Parent View, and through direct communication with the school. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. There were no responses to Ofsted's online survey for pupils.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school and their views of behaviour and bullying. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour at social times, in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, mathematics and PSHE education. They met leaders and teachers and visited a sample of lessons. Inspectors spoke with pupils about their learning in these subjects. They also considered the curriculum across some other subject areas and looked at examples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector made a tour of the school premises. This included previously unused rooms on the ground floor of the building.

The school's proposed change to the age range of pupils

The school has applied to the DfE to make a 'material change' to its registration. At the DfE's request, we checked whether the school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the DfE decides to approve the change. This part of the inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002.

- The outcome of this part of the inspection is: the school is unlikely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school provision is implemented.
- The school has requested to extend the age range of pupils to 18 years. The school intends for pupils currently in Year 9 to continue at the school. The school does not propose to increase the total number of pupils on roll.
- The curriculum that the school intends to offer to pupils in key stage 4 is suitable. Staff have sufficient expertise to deliver this curriculum appropriately. However, the school has not proposed a suitable curriculum for sixth-form students.
- Inspectors considered the potential detrimental effect on current pupils if they should have to leave the school at the end of Year 9. Despite a deficit in the quality of leadership and management at the school, it is in these pupils' best interests to continue their education at the school. Any further instability in their educational placement is highly likely to be detrimental to their well-being.
- Inspectors are of the view that the proprietor's failure to meet the standards listed below does not compromise the school's capacity to retain current Year 9 pupils into key stage 4.
- Inspectors are recommending that the school should increase its age range to cater for pupils up to 16 years old. However, it should not increase the total number of pupils on roll. This will allow current key stage 3 pupils to remain at the school for their key stage 4 education.

The school is unlikely to meet the following standards

- 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 material change inspection

- Inspectors considered the school's proposal to increase the age range of pupils as part of the standard inspection.

Inspection team

Ben Hill, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lindy Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school failed to meet the following independent school standards

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.

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