

Inspection of Rosewood Independent School

Within YMCA Northumberland, North View, Ashington, Northumberland NE63 9XQ

Inspection dates: 28 to 30 September 2021

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Not previously inspected

Does the school meet the independent school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy school and have positive relationships with staff. Many pupils have struggled at their previous schools and joining Rosewood has provided a new beginning. Pupils say that they feel safe. They talk to adults if they are worried.

Pupils say their favourite subjects are mathematics, art, French, outdoor learning, playing games and cookery. Pupils do well in mathematics, art and French where there is a logical order to the work they complete. However, in other subjects, adults follow pupils' interests when they plan work. This sometimes leads to learning being disjointed. Sometimes, this content change lowers adults' expectations of what pupils can achieve.

The small number of parents who gave their views, praised the school staff saying 'they go over and beyond to support and care' for the children.

Pupils' behaviour has improved since they first joined the school. There are times when their behaviour stops them, and other pupils, from learning. Pupils understand that staff are determined to help them to manage their behaviour better. Bullying and inappropriate behaviour incidents do occur, but adults deal with these quickly and appropriately.

Pupils support local and global charities. They like being a member of the school council. Leaders have planned a range of educational visits for the current academic year.

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

Leaders have completely changed the curriculum, to incorporate outdoor learning, since the school opened. There have also been several staffing changes. The school is in the early stages of their redesign of the curriculum, and so it is too soon to see the difference it is making to pupils. Curriculum plans are inconsistent across the different subjects. Where leaders carefully set out the order of learning, pupils can remember important facts. In other subjects, where planning is not as well sequenced, pupils are unable to recall previous learning.

The leaders of mathematics and art have secure subject knowledge. They identify exactly what all pupils need to learn and in which order. Pupils in two separate art lessons could talk about the tone and tint in artists' work. Adults helped them to practise these techniques on their own artwork. Pupils' mathematics books show that teachers set work in each lesson that builds on pupils' prior learning. However, links to mathematics across the curriculum, for example in cookery or outdoor learning, are weak. This is because they are not linked to curriculum planning in mathematics. Long-term plans in other curriculum subjects have not been thought out as carefully. Some subjects, such as outdoor learning or personal social and health education (PSHE), have stand-alone topics which do not enable pupils to build knowledge over time.

Pupils learn phonics and early reading from a variety of different programmes. Reading books are not matched exactly to the sounds and words that pupils know. Staff have not had the training they need to deliver high-quality phonics and reading sessions. The way adults help pupils to catch up when they struggle to read unfamiliar words is inconsistent. Leaders promote a love of reading by purchasing books that appeal to pupils' interests.

All pupils at this school have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They all have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan). The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) compiles detailed support plans for each pupil. They are shared with all staff so that adults can adapt the learning to meet pupils' individual needs. Adaptations are not as effective as they should be. This is because the curriculum is not fully established.

Despite some improvements to their attendance, most secondary-age pupils are still absent from school too often. This slows their learning and limits the opportunities that they have to catch up. Leaders provide careers advice to pupils. They encourage pupils to have high aspirations for themselves. Leaders intend to offer a wider range of study towards qualifications at key stage 4. For some subjects, this is still at the planning stage.

Staff try to adapt learning to respond to real-life problems and instances. They alter plans to educate pupils on staying safe and being responsible. There are fewer opportunities specifically planned to set out a progressive plan for personal development and spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

Pupils told inspectors that their behaviour had improved since starting Rosewood School. There is a high ratio of staff working with pupils. Staff know that pupils with SEND may find school stressful. Staff set expectations and manage pupils' behaviour using a trauma-informed approach. However, sometimes staff adjust the curriculum to appease pupils by playing a game or doing an unrelated activity. This means pupils' behaviour improves at the expense of their academic learning. This is not preparing pupils well enough for their next steps into secondary education or life outside of school.

The advisory board members bring a wide range of skills and experience to their roles. They understand the importance of providing support and challenge to leaders. They have formed very recently and know that they are in the early days of holding leaders to account. Leaders had not carried out section 128 checks on advisory board members, but these were completed before the end of the inspection.

The school meets all of the independent school standards. The proprietor makes sure that the school provides the required information that parents need. This includes a safeguarding policy available for parents on the school website. The proprietor ensures that there is a suitable accessibility plan in place. It complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. She ensures that leaders keep the school premises safe.

The proprietor's systems to check closely on how well school leaders are doing are not sharp enough. Systems to check on the welfare and safety of pupils are strong. The proprietor does not have the same urgency or strength of systems to check on the academic aspects of school.

All staff who gave their views say they are proud and happy to work at the school. Most staff say that leaders take staff's well-being and workload into consideration.

Leaders have requested a material change to increase the school capacity. Currently, 35 pupils attend at the Ashington site. Leaders have requested that an additional 16 pupils can attend the school satellite site at Stannington. Leaders have ensured that the independent school standards are likely to be met if the Department for Education (DfE) decides to approve the material change.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders understand that pupils' individual needs can make them vulnerable. Staff respond to incidents in the local community by adapting PSHE sessions. Staff check regularly on pupils' mental health and welfare. The well-being leader has forged strong relationships with pupils and their families. This has helped some pupils attend school more often. Leaders have effective systems in place to check that pupils who are absent are safe.

The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputy DSL work with a range of professionals to keep pupils safe. Staff attend relevant safeguarding training. They act quickly on concerns about pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Curriculum plans are inconsistent across subjects. Some subjects, such as mathematics and art, pinpoint the core knowledge and skills that all pupils need to acquire. In other curriculum subjects, such as outdoor education or PSHE, the essential learning and the way it is sequenced is variable. Therefore, plans do not support adults to build on what pupils know and can do. Leaders need to ensure that all subjects have long-term plans that make explicit the knowledge pupils need to learn in each subject. Leaders should ensure all staff receive the necessary training to help them plan and deliver lessons across the curriculum.
- Staff set expectations and manage pupils' behaviour, but sometimes this is through staff adjusting the curriculum to play a game or do an unrelated activity. This means pupils' behaviour improves at the expense of accessing a sequenced curriculum. Leaders need to ensure that pupils are supported to modify their own behaviour so that they do not miss essential learning and to help them to be secondary ready or ready for life outside of school.

- Although leaders' actions have improved pupils' attendance, the proportion of secondary pupils who are regularly absent from school is too high. This reduces their learning time and opportunities to access the secondary curriculum. Leaders need to ensure pupils attend school more regularly to reduce the gaps in their knowledge over time.
- Leaders use a range of phonics schemes and reading books which has led to a lack of coherence in the teaching of reading. Adults' subject knowledge on how to teach reading, including how to support pupils who are falling behind, is variable. This means that pupils do not get regular reading practice and phonics sessions do not build sufficiently on pupils' existing phonics knowledge. Leaders should ensure that they have a consistent approach to teaching phonics and reading. They should ensure all staff access high-quality phonics training to provide effective support for pupils.
- The proprietor and senior leaders are committed to providing pupils with high-quality pastoral and welfare support. However, processes for checking on the school's academic provision need to be improved. The proprietor should strengthen systems for reviewing how well the school is doing and take decisive action to ensure all leaders tackle the weaknesses in the quality of education.

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.

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

Unique reference number	147980
DfE registration number	929/6010
Local authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	10202212
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	6 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	14
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Jennifer Abraham (also known as Jennifer Wood)
Headteacher	Janice Woods
Annual fees (day pupils)	£23,480 to £53,670
Telephone number	07720855935
Website	rosewoodindependentschool.com/
Email address	info@rosewoodindependentschool.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Rosewood Independent School opened on 1 September 2020. This inspection was the school's first standard inspection.
- The school does not use any alternative education provision.
- All current pupils on roll have special educational needs and/or disabilities. All current pupils have an EHC plan. The school caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. Some pupils have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder.
- The school operates within the YMCA, North View, Ashington, Northumberland, NE63 9XQ. Since September 2021, the school uses a second site at Station Road End, Stannington, Morpeth, NE61 6DR. This second site is used to provide outdoor learning for primary-age pupils. Pupils are transported between the site at Stannington and the site in Ashington via a taxi.

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. Checks of the premises on both sites were carried out to ensure compliance with part five of the independent school standards.

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the head teacher, deputy head teacher, senior leaders and other members of staff, including teachers and tutors. They also met with the SENCo.
- The inspectors did deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, PSHE and art and design. They met with subject leaders, staff and pupils, listened to pupils read to a familiar adult, looked at their work and visited lessons.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils to find out what it is like to attend their school. They observed pupils' behaviour at lunchtime and breaktime and as they moved around the school. They observed pupils' attitudes towards learning.
- Inspectors looked at how leaders keep children safe. This included checking a range of documentation and safeguarding procedures, including the single central record and recruitment checks. They met with the DSL and spoke to staff and

pupils about safeguarding. They checked the implementation of health and safety policies, including the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

- Inspectors talked with a parent and viewed one response to Ofsted Parent View, the online survey, including one free-text response. They considered eight responses to the survey for staff.
- The lead inspector met with the proprietor several times throughout the inspection and spoke to a member of the advisory board via a telephone call.

The school's proposed change to the maximum number 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 likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school is implemented.**

Inspection team

Alison Aitchison, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Debbie Redshaw

Her Majesty's Inspector

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