

Inspection of Lodge Farm Education

Lodge Farm, Sutton-in-the Elms, Leicester Road, Broughton Astley LE9 6RB

Inspection dates: 4 to 6 May 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

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 flourish at this inclusive, therapeutic 'school on a farm'. Pupils enjoy the responsibility of caring for various animals. These include rabbits, geese, donkeys, horses and hens. Pupils say that they are happy and safe here. Their attendance and behaviour improve dramatically when compared with their previous setting. Staff are skilled in dealing with any rare instances of poor behaviour. Bullying is also rare. There are many adults for pupils to share their concerns or worries with. There is a warm, busy and friendly atmosphere.

Pupils gain a range of qualifications. These include animal care, fishing and GCSE and functional skills in English and mathematics. Staff expect pupils to achieve well and to move on to appropriate next steps. Pupils do: recently, these have included college courses, apprenticeships and employment.

Staff know the pupils extremely well. They are skilled in helping pupils, who all have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff work hard to improve pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Positive relationships and respect are abundant here.

A small number of parents and carers expressed their positive views. One parent said, 'This school is instrumental in improving my child's life and education. I would recommend Lodge Farm to anyone.'

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

Leaders have ensured that the vast majority of subjects are well planned and sequenced. Teachers plan a variety of appropriate activities that are well matched to pupils' needs and abilities. Pupils enjoy a bespoke and varied curriculum. Leaders ensure that pupils' interests are well catered for. These include outdoor learning, farming, woodwork and welding. In a small number of subjects, there is still some work to do. Leaders have not yet thought carefully enough about the key knowledge and vocabulary they want to pupils to learn, and when, in all subjects. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They check pupils' understanding by asking appropriate questions. Frequent assessments help to inform teachers' planning.

Some pupils struggle to read confidently and fluently. However, leaders are working to address this. Pupils undertake daily online reading and spelling challenges. They like these. One pupil said, 'I know this helps my reading because I don't do enough at home.' Pupils read class books, plays, poems and text extracts alongside the teacher. They are encouraged to think about the different characters and make predictions. Pupils can choose from a good selection of reading books. This work is helping pupils to access the rest of the curriculum.

Pupils have a very positive attitude to school. They follow well-established routines. Pupils enjoy receiving points for effort, completing work and showing respect. The points are then exchanged for appropriate end-of-term visits. Lunchtime is

particularly social. Here, pupils and staff sit and chat while eating in the inviting dining room. Pupils' attendance is high. They are punctual at the start of the day.

The curriculum for pupils' personal development is a strength. Pupils learn how to live in the wider world, manage their mental health and well-being, and be healthy. There are opportunities for pupils to think, discuss and understand different faiths and cultures, same-sex marriages, discrimination and British values. Pupils are being prepared well for life in modern Britain. Leaders ensure that pupils receive appropriate careers advice and guidance. Wherever possible, pupils attend appropriate work-experience placements.

All pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Staff are skilled in identifying, and then improving, pupils' specific areas of need. This is particularly the case for pupils' therapeutic needs. There are strong links with outside agencies, such as the speech and language and occupational health teams. For a small number of pupils, the support that they receive is not as specific as it could be.

The proprietor, headteacher and chair of governors work well together. The chair of governors and the proprietor are frequently in school. They find out for themselves what is and what is not working well. This work is helping them to hold the school leaders to account for their actions. Leaders are sensitive to staff workload and to their well-being. The school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

The proprietor has ensured that all of the independent school standards are met. Frequent checks help to ensure that the premises are maintained to a good standard. There are appropriate toilets, a shower and an outdoor area for pupils to exercise. The website contains all the required information. This includes a safeguarding policy with the most up-to-date statutory information.

Leaders check on how well the staff are implementing the curriculum. However, this process is at the early stages of being developed.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff have received appropriate safeguarding training. They are vigilant for the potential signs of abuse or neglect. These include county lines drug trafficking and potential risks related to the 'Prevent' duty. Staff also know what to do should they have a concern about an adult. Leaders keep appropriate safeguarding records. Outside agencies, such as social care, are contacted swiftly should the need arise.

The curriculum teaches pupils to be safe in a number of ways, for example when they are online. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of relationships and sex education and health education.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- The school's curriculum is not yet sufficiently sequenced in a few subjects. Leaders have not yet precisely identified all the exact knowledge and vocabulary that they want pupils to learn and when. This means that pupils cannot always successfully build on what they have learned before. Leaders need to complete the process of reviewing the curriculum in all subjects within their identified timescale, so that teachers are confident they know what they should teach and when to ensure that all pupils achieve well in all subjects. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied.
- Leaders have begun to check on how well staff are implementing the curriculum. However, this process is in the early stages of development. Leaders are unsure as to which aspects are working well and which need support. Leaders should ensure that they robustly monitor the implementation of the curriculum, so that they can check which aspects are being taught well and which are not.

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	147963
DfE registration number	855/6050
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10213180
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	11 to 17
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	9
Proprietor	MCXI Limited
Chair	Chris Leeming
Headteacher	Joy Brown
Annual fees (day pupils)	£58,250
Telephone number	01455 283665
Website	www.lodgefarmeducation.org
Email address	natalie@lodgefarmeducation.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This is the school's first standard inspection. The school registered with the Department for Education and opened on 16 December 2020.
- The school caters for pupils with behavioural, social, emotional and mental health needs. All pupils have an EHC plan. They attend from different local authorities.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider.

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.

This was the first routine inspection the school had 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 held various meetings with the proprietor, the headteacher and a selection of staff.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into individual pupils' curriculum in key stages 2, 3 and 4. Inspectors looked at curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to staff, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector checked the single central record. Checks were made on staff's training and their knowledge of the school's safeguarding procedures. Safeguarding records were scrutinised.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted's pupil, staff and parent questionnaires.

Inspection team

Peter Stonier, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Chris Stevens

Her Majesty's Inspector

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