

Inspection of Evergreen

Greenhills Farm, Ipstones Edge, Ipstones, Staffordshire, Staffordshire ST10 2LP

Inspection dates: 15 to 17 March 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 Good

Does the school meet the independent school standards? **Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

Prior to starting at Evergreen, many pupils have experienced a disrupted education. At Evergreen, because staff meet individual needs well, over time pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning improve. Pupils learn things that help them prepare for their success in future qualifications.

Pupils' behaviour can be challenging. Staff manage this effectively. They teach pupils about managing their feelings and provide a safe environment in which pupils can talk. A 'chatty lads' group encourages pupils to reflect on the positive aspects of their lives. This, alongside professional therapy sessions, ensures that pupils get the support they need. Pupils enjoy school. The highly positive environment and ethos of the school enables them to be successful and feel safe. If bullying occurs, pupils say it is dealt with swiftly and fairly by staff.

Pupils have access to a rich, ambitious curriculum, and as a result they experience a broad range of activities. A particular feature of the school is its ambitious outdoor education curriculum. Pupils told inspectors that they really enjoy learning in this way.

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

All pupils are looked after, and all have significant special educational needs. Leaders make careful checks on what pupils know and what they need, using a range of assessments. They use this information to plan the best ways to help them. Staff set clear rules and have high expectations of pupils. Pupils understand these clear behaviour boundaries and routines. This helps the school day run as smoothly as possible. Poor behaviour does happen, but its impact on learning is kept to a minimum.

Leaders have made many improvements to the school's curriculum recently. A new structured phonics programme for pupils who need support with their early reading is in place. Staff introduce pupils to different types of books and authors and encourage them to take an interest in reading. As a result, most pupils are making progress with their reading.

Pupils receive an appropriately broad curriculum. This includes all national curriculum subjects. The curriculum is well sequenced, so pupils develop and practise a range of knowledge and skills. Teachers give careful thought to the gaps pupils have in their learning. They address these so pupils learn well. However, staff do not have clear subject leadership roles and responsibilities. As result, there is a lack of oversight and monitoring of subjects. This hinders further development of the curriculum.

The school's personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme is established throughout the school. Pupils benefit from a range of well-planned activities. These

include a visit to Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and to places of worship, including a local mosque. During the inspection, 'living eggs' in the classroom brought learning to life when chicks hatched in front of pupils' eyes. This was carefully linked to learning about life cycles in science and more widely to animal welfare and husbandry.

The relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education curriculum adheres to current Department for Education (DfE) guidance. It has been fully implemented. Teachers ensure work is age appropriate. Staff teach pupils about healthy relationships, different types of families and the importance of a positive body image. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of stereotypes and discrimination.

Careers guidance is appropriate and interwoven into the PSHE curriculum. Pupils discuss future jobs and what qualification and skills they may need to achieve these. Staff also take pupils out and about to a variety of settings where people work. However, pupils do not receive bespoke advice and guidance based on their specific interests.

'Stepping into the shoes of others' features highly in classroom discussions. Pupils reflect on their behaviour and attitudes and consider how their actions affect others. Rewards charts and incentives help them to think about their choices and understand consequences.

Leaders have made sure that the school's policies are fit for purpose. The complaints policy, for example, sets out how to make a complaint and what to do at each stage of the process. The school buildings offer suitable accommodation and are safe.

The school's website includes all the information that it should for parents and carers. Attendance and admissions registers are kept correctly. Pupils' attendance at school is high.

The proprietor is well informed about leaders' work. The proprietor's decision-making is guided by the needs of pupils, while also being mindful of the welfare and workload of staff. The proprietor has ensured that the school continues to meet the independent school standards and that it has a suitable accessibility plan. Leaders comply with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff receive training in keeping pupils safe. Leaders and staff are very alert to the risks pupils can face. Staff record concerns in detail and share information with the right people. When needs be, the school is quick to refer matters to the appropriate local authority officer or other professional agency. The safeguarding policy is published on the school's website and follows the latest DfE guidance.

Pupils are knowledgeable about how to keep themselves safe. For example, the curriculum teaches about anti-bullying, first aid and how to stay safe when around water.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- Leaders are in the process of allocating subject leader roles and responsibilities to staff. Currently, there is not a clear oversight of the curriculum. This is hindering further development of some subjects. Many subjects require further monitoring by leaders. Leaders should ensure that the recent changes they have made to the curriculum continue to be evaluated.
- Careers advice and guidance is very general. Leaders should improve the quality of this guidance to ensure that it is tailored to pupils' individual aspirations, and adequately prepares pupils for the world of work.

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	142657
DfE registration number	860/6043
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10212816
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school (boarding school)
Age range of pupils	7 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	7
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Sean Fitzpatrick
Headteacher	Nicola Woolley (Acting Headteacher)
Annual fees (day pupils)	£40,964
Telephone number	01538 266874
Website	www.roachesschool.net
Email address	nickyw@roachesschool.net
Dates of previous inspection	5 and 6 December 2017

Information about this school

- This is the second standard inspection since the school opened. The previous inspection took place in December 2017.
- Evergreen school is registered as an independent boarding provision and day school for up to eight pupils aged seven to 16 years. To date, the school has not and does not intend to admit key stage 4 pupils. It is located in a village in Staffordshire. The school caters for children looked after by Staffordshire, Lancashire, Warwickshire, Nottingham City and Worcestershire local authorities. All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Evergreen school is part of the Farm Schools network, operated by Care Today (Children's Services). Evergreen School does not have its own website but directs parents to the Roaches School website where the relevant information for the Farm Schools network is available.
- The acting headteacher of Evergreen manages two of the schools in the Farm Schools network.
- The acting headteacher has been in post at Evergreen since the start of October 2021.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

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.

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.

- The lead inspector had a telephone call with the proprietor.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, PSHE and outdoor education. They spoke to subject leaders, teachers and pupils. They visited lessons and looked at the curriculum and pupils' work. They also considered religious education and computing as part of the inspection.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of information provided by the school. This included leaders' self-evaluations, the school improvement plan and behaviour, safeguarding and attendance records. Inspectors spoke to pupils, staff and the designated safeguarding lead about procedures to keep pupils safe. Inspectors checked the Roaches school website. They considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and the views of staff in Ofsted's online survey.

Inspection team

Heather Phillips, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Gareth Morgan

Ofsted Inspector

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