

Inspection of Ellern Mede Moorgate School

136 Moorgate Road, Rotherham S60 3AZ

Inspection dates: 7 to 9 December 2021

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Does the school meet the independent school standards?	No

What is it like to attend this school?

Staff take great care in considering the mental health and medical needs of pupils while planning their curriculum. Pupils who spoke to inspectors said how much they enjoyed school. They spoke of how school was a welcome break from the pressures that being in hospital brings.

Relationships with staff and pupils are good. When pupils are well enough to access the school, they have good attitudes to learning. Pupils' behaviour is good. Those who spoke to inspectors were polite, articulate and friendly.

Staff make every effort to make the curriculum accessible for these pupils. Each pupil has a very bespoke curriculum which takes into account their particular needs and how those needs change from day to day.

Leaders have not taken steps to ensure that the independent school standards are consistently met. Some leaders have not had the training, support and development to complete their roles effectively. A lack of clarity in leadership roles also contributes to some missing elements of quality assurance. However, this does not negatively affect the overall quality of care and education that pupils receive.

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

The proprietor has a clear strategic overview of how well pupils' needs are being met. He receives regular reports from multidisciplinary teams to reassure him and give him the information he needs. The proprietor has ensured that systems are in place to allow the independent school standards to be consistently met. However, at operational level these processes are not always completed accurately. At times, this is because it is not clear whose responsibility it is. At other times, leaders do not have the knowledge and skills to complete tasks appropriately. For example, the admissions and attendance registers are not completed accurately and therefore not all the independent school standards are met.

During the inspection, many tasks were completed to enable other independent school standards to be met; for example, ensuring that parents and carers know which policies are available to them. Some leaders do not have the appropriate professional development to support them in their roles. Other leaders do not follow the line of responsibility and this then confuses other staff.

The stronger elements of leadership can be seen in leaders' active role in multidisciplinary meetings. They liaise with a range of professionals to make sure that pupils' medical, mental health and educational needs are well met. Teachers plan a bespoke curriculum for every pupil to meet their needs. Curriculums are built around commercial schemes and planned so that pupils increase their knowledge over time. Teachers give great thought to making the curriculum accessible for pupils. For example, lessons are generally taught on a one-to-one basis and resources are specifically chosen for the pupil being taught. Teachers are very good

at checking pupils' understanding. They also check any gaps in learning that may occur when medical intervention prevents learning from taking place. Pupils' outcomes in national examinations are strong and pupils achieve well over time.

Leaders are aware of how important the personal, social and relationships education is. Teachers weave this element of the curriculum through other subjects as well as teaching discrete lessons for some pupils. The close work completed with other professionals enables pupils' personal development to be central to their overall development.

Pupils study a relatively narrow range of subjects. This is because the subjects which are most important to that pupil take priority in the teaching time available. However, a range of subjects are available. Some of these subjects are only available through remote education. Some pupils do not enjoy this kind of learning and therefore this can occasionally limit their willingness to access these subjects.

There is a small library area in the corner of one of the classrooms. Pupils are encouraged to read. Teachers try to resource books that will engage pupils and that will extend their interests and knowledge. All pupils have access to remote education should the COVID-19 pandemic or their own needs mean they cannot access the school rooms. Leaders have ensured this accessibility now and throughout the pandemic.

Staff feel well supported. They consider that training is effective and that professional development is freely available.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff regularly access safeguarding training. Leaders ensure that pupils' safety is paramount. Risk assessments assess the suitability of activities. Teachers ensure that resources in lessons are appropriate to keep pupils safe. Pupils told us that they can speak to a member of staff if they are worried. Pupils can join multidisciplinary meetings so that they can voice an opinion. Recruitment checks are made on all staff. Section 128 checks were made during the inspection. Enhanced disclosure and barring checks were already held for these adults. Some safeguarding procedures, such as ensuring that all staff sign out when they leave the building and that all visitors take lateral flow tests, as required, are not being completed consistently.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and the proprietor)

- Leaders have not ensured that the independent school standards are consistently met. The proprietor has put in place systems, such as attendance registers, to ensure that statutory responsibilities are met and that the independent school standards are met. However, there is a lack of clarity regarding different

responsibilities and clear paths of line management. This has meant that it is not clear who is checking that tasks have been completed. For example, no one is checking that staff always sign out when they leave the building. This weakness is also affecting the quality assurance of the curriculum. For example, it is not clear who is ensuring that the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum is being taught, when planned, through other subjects.

- Some leaders have not been given appropriate direction or professional development to ensure that they have the skills and knowledge to complete their role with confidence. This has led to some quality assurance of the curriculum not being completed. Therefore, no one is identifying minor weaknesses which might in time become major issues. The proprietor needs to ensure that leaders new to role are given the appropriate training and support to know what their role is and to complete it with skills and confidence.

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	147666
DfE registration number	372/6004
Local authority	Rotherham
Inspection number	10202202
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	8
Proprietor	Peter Curtis
Chair	Peter Curtis
Headteacher	Adel El-Shirbini
Annual fees (day pupils)	£33,250
Telephone number	0208 959 7774
Website	www.ellernmede.org
Email address	school@ellernmede.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school opened in 2020 following a pre-registration inspection in January 2020.
- The school caters for pupils with acute physical and mental health issues linked to eating disorders. Most pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The school has pupils on its admission register aged 19, which exceeds the requirements of its registration with the Department for Education (DfE).

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.

- 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.
- The inspection took place over one-and-a-half days following a day's notice.
- The inspectors met with the head of site, the headteacher, teaching staff and pupils. A telephone conversation was held with the proprietor. Members of the advisory board were not available.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in history, English, PSHE and mathematics. Inspectors looked at curriculum plans, pupils' work, visited lessons and spoke to pupils and teachers.
- Inspectors considered documents to check whether the independent school standards are consistently being met; for example, a range of policies and the record of recruitment checks.

Inspection team

Jo Sharpe, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Gordon Watts

Ofsted Inspector

Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school failed to meet the following independent school standards

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

- 15 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006[13].

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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