

Penarth Group School

25 Buxton Road, Hazel Grove, Stockport SK7 6AD

Overall outcome

The school is unlikely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material change relating to the school provision is implemented.

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)

- The school has a suitable safeguarding policy. This has recently been revised and takes account of the current statutory guidance. Staff have received training to ensure that their knowledge about safeguarding is current.

Paragraph 11, 12, 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- The school has suitable policies and procedures for fire safety, risk assessment and overall health and safety. However, where these relate to the school's premises, this is to the current site. The proprietor has not yet considered these policies and procedures in relation to the proposed new premises for the school. For example, no risk assessment for the proposed buildings has been completed and the health and safety policy refers to lifts and hoists, which are not part of the equipment in the proposed premises.
- While the proposed new premises are clean and well maintained, these are currently completely empty. This meant that their suitability when equipped could not be checked. In one room on the ground floor, electrical sockets currently stand proud from the floor creating a trip hazard.
- Fire signage is in place and there is a fire escape from the first floor but there are no fire extinguishers. The building appears to have a fire alarm but it was not possible to identify where its control panel was during this inspection.
- The proprietor told the inspector that a fire risk assessment will be carried out by a suitably qualified professional before any use of the premises by the school. She further indicated that the school would address any recommendations made in such a risk assessment. In addition, the proprietor indicated that a full electrical safety check of the buildings will be commissioned prior to any use by the school.
- The standards in this part are unlikely to be met by the school if the DfE decides to approve the implementation of the proposed changes of premises.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 23(1)(c)

- The proposed premises' toilet facilities include two toilets intended for use by individuals, with one downstairs and one upstairs. Each has a separately lockable door and a washbasin supplied with hot and cold water. These toilets could provide

separate facilities for pupils and staff. However, the separate rooms have no definite designation at present. In addition, while suitable for the number of pupils currently on roll, one toilet for use by up to 15 pupils, should the school ever operate at full capacity, is not likely to be sufficient.

- The premises have no changing or shower facilities.
- The proprietor told the inspector that improvements would be made to the premises to provide more toilets, and changing and shower facilities, before any use of the building by the school.
- There appears to be sufficient space for such improvements to be made.

Paragraph 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(1)(c)

- The proposed premises do not have suitable accommodation to provide for any medical or therapy needs of pupils.
- The proprietor has identified a space near to the upstairs toilet which could be made into a separate room by installing a partition wall and so provide a medical room. At present, this space does not have its own washing facility.
- The school does not admit pupils with complex needs requiring specialist medical facilities.

Paragraph 25

- The proposed premises are in a good state of repair. The heating system is functioning. Apart from any necessary improvements to make the premises suitable for its specific proposed use as a school, the buildings are ready to be occupied.

Paragraph 26

- The proposed premises have a number of rooms that are suitable for teaching and other school activities. During the inspection, these rooms were unfurnished and there was a little sound reverberation. It appears that this would not be significant if the rooms were furnished.

Paragraph 27, 27(a), 27(b)

- The rooms inside the proposed premises are well lit by natural light and ceiling lights are sufficient. However, a few light bulbs or fluorescent tubes need to be replaced.
- There is no external lighting near to the premises' main entrance. A sensor-controlled light is available to illuminate the area intended for use as the school's playground.

Paragraph 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(c), 28(1)(d), 28(2), 28(2)(a), 28(2)(b)

- The proposed premises have supplies of hot and cold water in all washing facilities, and properly functioning toilets. However, the temperature of the hot water supply is currently too high and poses a scalding risk. In addition, there are no signs to indicate which cold water taps provide drinking water.

Paragraph 29(1), 29(1)(a), 29(1)(b)

- The proposed premises have a hard-surfaced area currently in use for car parking which would provide a suitably sized space for pupils to play and some physical education activities. The proprietor intends that other physical education activity would continue to be offered off-site. Alternative car parking is available near to the premises.
- This area backs on to the school buildings and is fenced on two sides with a medium-height wall surmounted by iron railings. This arrangement provides security but little privacy to pupils. The remaining side is protected by a wall and a low hedge. This side is not sufficiently secure. The gates to this area are electrically controlled but are also too low to be fully secure.

Paragraph 30

- This standard is not relevant because the school is not a boarding school.
- The standards in this part are unlikely to continue to be met by the school if the DfE decides to approve the implementation of the proposed changes of premises.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)

- The proprietor has identified proposed new premises which, with improvement, may be suitable for use as a school. It is not yet confirmed whether a move to the new premises will be required. Until this decision has been made and any contractual arrangements confirmed, the proprietor will not be in a position to make the necessary changes to the premises for the independent school standards to be met.
- The proprietor indicated to the inspector that, if a move was required, appropriate advice and checking from suitably qualified contractors would be sought. However, insufficient evidence was available during the inspection to be able to confirm that the building would be suitable. The evidence available during the inspection about many of the standards checked indicates that these are unlikely to be met by the school if the DfE decides to approve the implementation of the proposed changes of premises. Some of these standards relate to the well-being of pupils.
- The standards in this part are unlikely to be met by the school if the DfE decides to approve the implementation of the proposed change of premises.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school is unlikely to meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that are relevant to the material change.

The school is unlikely to meet the following independent school standards

- The proprietor must ensure that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy (paragraph 11).
- The proprietor must ensure compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005¹ (paragraph 12).
- The proprietor must ensure that the welfare of pupils at the school is safeguarded and promoted by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written risk assessment policy; and appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified (paragraph 16, 16(a) and 16(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that suitable toilet and washing facilities are provided for the sole use of pupils; separate toilet facilities for boys and girls aged 8 years or over are provided except where the toilet facility is provided in a room that can be secured from the inside and that is intended for use by one pupil at a time; and suitable changing accommodation and showers are provided for pupils aged 11 years or over at the start of the school year who receive physical education (paragraph 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b) and 23(1)(c)).
- The proprietor must ensure that suitable accommodation is provided in order to cater for the medical and therapy needs of pupils, including accommodation for the medical examination and treatment of pupils; and accommodation for the short-term care of sick and injured pupils, which includes a washing facility and is near to a toilet facility (paragraph 24(1), 24(1)(a) and 24(1)(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that external lighting is provided in order to ensure that people can safely enter and leave the school premises (paragraph 27 and 27(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that cold water supplies that are suitable for drinking are clearly marked as such; and the temperature of hot water at the point of use does not pose a scalding risk to users (paragraph 28(1), 28(1)(c) and 28(1)(d)).
- The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that suitable outdoor space is provided in order to enable physical education to be provided to pupils in accordance with the school curriculum; and enable pupils to play outside (paragraph 29(1), 29(1)(a) and 29(1)(b)).
- The proprietor must ensure that persons with leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role so that the independent school standards are met consistently and fulfil their responsibilities effectively so that the independent school standards are met consistently; and actively promote the well-being of pupils (paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)).

¹ S.I. 2005/1541, to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations.

School details

Unique reference number	135526
DfE registration number	356/6031
Inspection number	10025653

This inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards relevant to the material change that the school has applied to make.

Type of school	Other
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	Mrs Patricia Swallow
Chair	Mrs Patricia Swallow
Headteacher	Mr Stephen Watson
Annual fees (day pupils)	£40,700
Telephone number	0161 483 1212
Website	www.penarthgroup.co.uk
Email address	headteacher@penarthgroup.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	8–9 June 2016

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	8–17	Not applicable	Not applicable
Number of pupils on the school roll	5	Not applicable	Not applicable

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Not applicable
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	4	Not applicable
Number of part-time pupils	0	Not applicable

Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	5	Not applicable
Of which, number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan	5	Not applicable
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan	5	Not applicable

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	2	Not applicable
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	Not applicable
Number of staff in the welfare provision	4	Not applicable

Information about this school

- The Penarth Group School opened in March 2008.
- The school is currently located in the Hazel Grove area of Stockport, about three miles south-east of Stockport town centre. The school has applied for a material change to permit it to move premises to a new location in Marple, roughly three miles away from its current site. The proprietor is not yet in a position to confirm whether this move will be necessary.
- The school is mixed. It is registered with the Department for Education (DfE), to meet the needs of up to 15 pupils between the ages of eight and 16 years. The school has had a material change authorised by the DfE to allow it to admit one pupil aged up to 17 years old for the 2016/17 academic year.
- Most pupils speak English as their first language.
- All pupils on roll have an education, health and care plan for emotional and behavioural and other difficulties.
- The school's long-term aim is to nurture confident individuals and responsible citizens, who can lead safe and happy lives and who will make a positive contribution to society.
- The headteacher joined the staff at the start of the 2015/16 academic year. The governing body has been in place since the start of January 2016.
- No alternative provision is used by the school.

- The school is part of the Penarth Group and the headteacher is responsible to the group's proprietor.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the DfE to determine the suitability of new premises potentially required for the school.
- The DfE requested that the inspector reported on the standards relating to health and safety, fire safety, risk assessment, the premises, and leadership and management. In addition, the inspector checked the school's safeguarding policy and whether this is published on the school's website.
- The inspector toured the premises being considered for the school, accompanied by the proprietor and another director of the Penarth Group.
- He visited the premises currently being used and scrutinised documents relating to health and safety, fire safety and risk assessment, and the school's safeguarding policy.
- He had a discussion with the headteacher. This discussion also included the designated safeguarding lead when talking about some aspects of safeguarding.

Inspection team

David Selby, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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