

# Gillingham FC Community Trust School

Mems Priestfield Stadium, Redfern Avenue, Gillingham, Kent ME7 4DD

## Inspection dates

29 March 2017

### Overall outcome

**The school is likely 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) and 7(b)*

- Thorough procedures are in place to ensure that safeguarding is effective. The school has a compliant safeguarding policy which is available to parents and takes account of the most recent national guidance and legislation.
- School leaders have ensured that staff are highly trained to make certain that they are equipped to work with pupils in their care, and protect them. For instance, staff have undertaken training related to child sexual exploitation and radicalisation.
- The school works closely with other professionals to secure the best outcomes for pupils. Records are meticulously kept and the single central record is well maintained. Leaders are highly focused on their responsibility to safeguard pupils. Nearly all pupils stated that they felt safe and well cared for in a recent survey undertaken by the school to gather pupils' views.
- Leaders have fostered an open culture of vigilance to safeguarding practice. Staff understand their responsibility to keep children safe from harm. They know in detail what to do if a child makes a safeguarding disclosure to them. Staff say that they feel comfortable and confident to share concerns relating to pupils and colleagues.
- Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils are taught how to keep themselves protected from harm when they are using the internet. Outside speakers talk to pupils about drugs awareness, fire safety and the consequences of criminal behaviour. Pupils are prepared well to face life's challenges beyond school because responsible citizenship is encouraged.
- The school monitors pupils when they are online and leaders have installed an appropriate filter to minimise the risk of unwanted material being accessible to pupils.
- Safeguarding practice is buttressed by strong relationships and acute knowledge of each pupil.
- The admission and attendance registers are completed in the required manner. Pupils' attendance is monitored closely. The school contacts parents immediately if pupils fail

to attend school when no prior notification has been received. As a result, unauthorised absence is low.

### *Paragraph 11*

- The health and safety of pupils and staff is of paramount importance to school leaders and the trust. Leaders have an appropriate health and safety policy in place which is implemented and consistently applied by staff. This is essential due to the extreme vulnerability of the pupils.
- The stadium manager, overseen by trustees, ensures that policies relating to health and safety are effectively implemented. For example, damage to property is promptly reported and rapidly repaired, and dangerous chemicals are locked away to prevent them from harming pupils and staff.
- Nearly all staff have completed first aid training. School leaders have made sure that the first aid policy and administration of medication policy are competently followed by staff.

### *Paragraph 12*

- School leaders ensure that the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 is adhered to. As required, an appropriate proportion of staff are trained as fire marshals. Fire routes are highly visible and emergency lighting is in place. Fire doors, which automatically release when the fire alarm sounds, are interspersed throughout the school. Fire exits are clear from clutter and fire extinguishers are labelled clearly to ensure that they are used correctly.
- The fire risk assessment is undertaken by the stadium manager in conjunction with a local, approved independent company. This risk assessment is thorough and required minimal action to be taken by the school.

### *Paragraph 14*

- The number of staff employed by the school is very high in comparison to the number of pupils currently attending the school. At the moment, there is in excess of one member of staff to each pupil.
- Given this high ratio of staff to pupils, leaders are currently recruiting only one additional member of support staff to further complement the staff team in preparation for the increase in pupil numbers, should the material change be implemented.
- Pupils are supervised carefully throughout the school day, while they are in the school building and when they are off-site. As a result, there are relatively few serious behaviour incidents, and minimal instances of bullying and use of derogatory language.
- Leaders have recently issued staff with walkie-talkies to make certain that they can seek additional support if required. Staff are positive about the difference they are making. All staff have been trained to use physical restraint safely and when appropriate. However, because staff are skilled in managing pupils' behaviour, the use of physical restraint is exceptionally rare. When it is used, it is reported and recorded appropriately.
- The school employs a behaviour mentor to encourage pupils to return to class when

they are struggling to manage their emotions.

- Staff form a united team who reflect upon their own performance, and support of one another, to help pupils to be more responsible for their own behaviour.

*Paragraph 16, 16(a) and 16(b)*

- Risk assessments associated with the premises are carried out frequently and in depth. Staff also know that they are responsible for carrying out dynamic risk assessments. All checks on emergency lighting, portable appliances, fire extinguishers and premises are checked at appropriate intervals by the stadium manager. This ensures that risks associated with the school environment are minimised.
- Staff diligently record information about pupils' behaviour and attitudes on a daily basis to enable them to write and review effective risk assessments relating to each pupil. Leaders track incidents and are able to demonstrate a reduction in occurrences as a result of reducing antecedents and minimising risk.
- Risk assessments for trips and visits are detailed and systematic. Staff carefully consider hazards and the risks they present, and identify control measures that reduce the potential severity of risks. Risk assessments are closely monitored and signed off by senior leaders.
- All standards that were checked as part of this material change inspection are met.

**Part 4. Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors**

*Paragraphs 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21*

- The school has comprehensive appointment procedures in place which meet the requirements, with all staff and adults associated with the school checked for their suitability to work with children.
- All of the necessary information is recorded correctly in a suitable single central record of staff checks, including for the proprietor.
- The requirements of this part of the independent school standards are met.

**Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools**

*Paragraphs 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31*

- The school meets the independent school standards in Part 5 and will continue to do so if the material change is implemented.
- The increase in pupil numbers requested by school leaders can adequately be accommodated at the current site because there are sufficient classrooms available for pupils. In addition, much of the curriculum is reinforced through off-site activities.
- The school is secure. The school's reception area is supervised at all times so that visitors and pupils are closely monitored. The school is completely contained within the football stadium.
- There is suitable accommodation for medical examination and treatment, including temporary care of medical and therapy needs of pupils. There is a portable basin

within the room and a toilet is located near to the medical room. The medical room contains a lockable cabinet for controlled medication. This facility is also used for small group work, but is vacated when used for providing medical care.

- Drinking water is available throughout the day for pupils and is clearly marked as such.
- Physical education is mainly taught off-site at local sports centres where pupils access a range of sports. The sports centres have adequate shower and changing facilities for male and female pupils. Risk assessments by school leaders have been undertaken. In addition, pupils have access to the football stadium and training centre when not in use by the professional football players. Leaders have ensured that there are showers available for pupils at the school and also at the training ground.
- Classrooms have poor natural light due to being located beneath the football stadium. However, artificial lighting is not too bright and reflects daylight tones. Ceilings are low and absorb sound. Neutral decoration ensures that each area feels open and bright. The school is in very good decorative order.
- Few areas in the school have windows, and therefore, natural ventilation is limited. The school has effective air conditioning and also central heating to compensate for poor natural ventilation and warmth.
- The stadium has excellent external lighting. The stadium is located in a residential area of Gillingham and therefore benefits from street lighting. This allows staff, pupils and visitors to access the school safely before or after daylight hours.
- The quality of acoustics and sound insulation are good despite the fact that the school is beneath the football stadium.
- There are adequate toilet and washing facilities for the proposed increase in numbers. Pupils have access to toilet facilities which are for their sole use. Staff toilets are clearly labelled and separated from teaching areas. The toilets have hot and cold running water of an appropriate temperature.

## Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

### *Paragraph 34, 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b), 34(1)(c) and 24(2)*

- The school's leadership and management are effective in making certain that the welfare, health and safety of pupils is prioritised. There is a tangible focus on safeguarding that has cascaded throughout the school.
- Leaders and those responsible for governance demonstrate the knowledge and skills to help them fulfil their roles. They know and have implemented the requirements of the independent school standards in detail. They are aware of changes to legislation and policy and ensure that new expectations are met.
- The head of school is realistic about the strengths of the school, and where more needs to be done to ensure that standards continue to rise. The trustees hold leaders to account and have high aspirations for pupils.
- School leaders focus on the individual needs of pupils and this has been clearly instrumental in shaping the rationale behind the material change request. This would enable leaders to increase their capacity to support pupils with complex emotional and

mental health needs. Staff share the vision of school leaders for the school and are centred on the education, pastoral care and protection of pupils.

- All of the preceding independent school standards checked in this inspection were met, the standards in Part 8 are also met.

#### Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school has regard to paragraph 3 of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and has an accessibility plan in place for the school site.

## **Compliance with regulatory requirements**

The school meets 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.

## School Details

Unique reference number	142568
DfE registration number	887/6010
Inspection number	10033318

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 compliance with the independent school standards relevant to the material change that the school has applied to make.

Type of school	Other independent school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	Mr David Brenton (Gillingham FC Community Trust)
Chair	Mr John Sands
Head of school	Miss Lisa Scott
Annual fees (day pupils)	£10,000–£41,800
Telephone number	01634 623420
Website	The school does not have a website.
Email address	<a href="mailto:gfcctschool@priestfield.com">gfcctschool@priestfield.com</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	9–11 November 2016

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16	11 to 16	11 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	15	30	30

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	15	30
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	15	30
Of which, number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan	11	30
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	11	30

## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	11	11
Number of part-time teaching staff	1	1
Number of staff in the welfare provision	NA	NA

## Information about this school

- Gillingham FC Community Trust School is a small independent school for boys and girls between 11 and 16 years of age. It opened in December 2015.
- The school is situated within the stadium of Gillingham Football Club. There are five classrooms, a chill-out room and a small outside area.



- The school is currently registered for 15 pupils and at the moment there are 15 male pupils on roll. Most pupils join the school with low attainment due to their disrupted previous educational experiences. Pupils have either been at significant risk of exclusion or have been excluded from their previous school. Frequently, pupils join part-way through the year. Nearly all pupils have an education, health and care plan related to social, emotional or mental health difficulties.
- The large majority of places are funded by the local authority. The school does not receive any additional funding for pupil premium or Year 7 catch-up funding.
- The school aims to 'provide every pupil with the knowledge, skills, self-belief and motivation to be successful in their learning and lives'.
- School governance is provided by a board of trustees of Gillingham Football Club Community Trust, and, in addition, by a subcommittee that includes members with expertise in education. Additionally, the trust's chief executive officer provides day-to-day oversight of the school and works closely with the head of school.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The school offers a tutoring service to pupils in local schools.
- The school was previously inspected in November 2016 when the overall effectiveness of the school was judged to require improvement.

## Information about this inspection

- This inspection was conducted by Ofsted at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) who is the registration authority for independent schools. School leaders have applied to increase the number of pupils who attend the school from the current number of 15, to a proposed number of 30.
- The inspector held meetings with the head of school and staff members. The inspector also spoke to the chief executive of the Gillingham FC Community Trust.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents and pupils by reviewing the school's analysis of recent surveys. There were no pupils on site at the time of this inspection. All of the pupils were engaged with curriculum activities, either in London or within the local community.
- The inspector toured the school site to check the premises and examined a range of documents before and during the inspection, including policies, risk assessments and child protection arrangements and procedures.
- The single central record was also examined, alongside samples of staff files.

## Inspection team

Abigail Birch, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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