

# Holme Court School

Abington Woods, Church Lane, Little Abington, Cambridgeshire CB21 6BQ

## Inspection dates

14 November 2018

## Overall outcome

**The school is unlikely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material changes relating to the school provision are implemented**

## Main inspection findings

### Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

#### *Paragraph 7, 7(a), 7(b)*

- The current proprietor and headteacher have clear procedures and detailed policies to safeguard pupils and to promote all aspects of their welfare, health and safety on the existing site with the current pupils. This includes a suitable policy that is available on the school's website.
- However, there are no plans, policies or procedures in place yet about how the same level of safeguarding will be assured on the new premises with a much larger cohort of pupils and the co-existence of two separate and very different schools on the same site.
- Leaders have not ensured that this standard is likely to be met if the Department for Education (DfE) decides to approve implementation of the material change.

#### *Paragraph 11*

#### *Paragraph 12*

#### *Paragraph 14*

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

- The headteacher has ensured that all appropriate checks and policies are in place to cover the required aspects of health and safety and fire safety on the current premises. There is also an array of detailed written risk assessments and checks that are carried out to ensure that any potential hazards identified are addressed.
- The proposed proprietor has not secured detailed information about the potential new premises. Leaders did not know at the time of the inspection whether the new premises were compliant with all health and safety and fire safety regulations. The proposed proprietor provided some assurances of compliance towards the end of the inspection. However, there was no detail about which checks had been undertaken, and no information as to whether this was in line with the requirements of the independent school standards.

- There is a lack of coordinated planning for the material changes requested between the proposed proprietor and the headteacher. The headteacher has a clear plan for a small increase to 50 pupils on larger premises. The proposed proprietor has no clear rationale for the much larger increase of 75 pupils that has been requested.
- There are no risk assessments, policies or procedures for how an increased number of pupils, on a new, much larger, more open site, will be cared for. There has been no detailed planning about how these pupils will be supported to co-exist and share facilities alongside the other school on the same site.
- The request to increase admissions has not been well thought out by the proposed proprietor and does not take account of the specific and specialist needs of pupils in the school.
- Leaders have not ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the DfE decides to approve implementation of the material change.

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

*Paragraph 18(2), 18(2)(a), 18(2)(b), 18(2)(c), 18(2)(c)(i), 18(2)(c)(ii), 18(2)(c)(iii), 18(2)(c)(iv), 18(2)(d), 18(2)(e), 18(3)*

*Paragraph 19(2), 19(2)(a), 19(2)(a)(i), 19(2)(a)(i)(aa), 19(2)(a)(i)(bb), 19(2)(a)(i)(cc), 19(2)(a)(i)(dd), 19(2)(a)(ii), 19(2)(b), 19(2)(c), 19(2)(d), 19(2)(d)(i), 19(2)(d)(ii)*

- The required pre-employment checks, related to the suitability of current staff to work with children, have been carried out and meet statutory requirements.
- The headteacher undertakes the required checks before any person undertakes supply work on the existing premises.
- There is no strategic plan or process about what checks will be undertaken on the staff from both schools who are going to be on one site from January 2019.
- There is no material change request for a change in proprietor. The current proprietor is a body of persons, named as International School Partnership. The proposed proprietor confirmed that she will be the sole proprietor. It is not clear whether the DfE has carried out suitability checks for a change in proprietor.
- Leaders have not ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the DfE decides to approve implementation of the material change.

*Paragraph 21(1), 21(2), 21(3), 21(3)(a), 21(3)(a)(i), 21(3)(a)(ii), 21(3)(a)(iii), 21(3)(a)(iv), 21(3)(a)(v), 21(3)(a)(vi), 21(3)(a)(vii), 21(3)(a)(viii), 21(3)(b), 21(4), 21(5), 21(5)(a), 21(5)(a)(i), 21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(b), 21(5)(c), 21(6), 21(7), 21(7)(a), 21(7)(b)*

- All appropriate checks on the suitability of current staff and the proprietors are recorded on the school's single central record for current staffing. This meets statutory requirements.
- There is no single central record that has been created or yet planned for regarding the new premises where there will be another school and staff existing on the same site, sharing and accessing the same facilities at the same time.
- Leaders have not ensured that this standard is likely to be met if the DfE decides to

approve implementation of the material change.

## Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

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

*Paragraph 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(1)(c), 24(2)*

*Paragraph 25*

*Paragraph 26*

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

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

- The current premises adhere to all the current requirements under the independent school standards. The headteacher has maintained these standards well since the previous inspection in November 2017.
- The headteacher has only had limited access to the new premises (The Temple, Bourn Bridge Road), in which time she has raised a significant number of concerns about the suitability of the premises and whether they comply with the independent school standards. She has questioned whether they are likely to meet the specific needs of pupils in her school.
- Upon visiting the premises at The Temple, Bourn Bridge Road with the headteacher, the inspector was unable to access the medical room as it was being used for a meeting.
- A tour of the site at The Temple, Bourn Bridge Road highlighted that while some of the requirements contained in the relevant paragraphs of the independent school standards were likely to be met, the site was far from ready to support the specific needs of pupils, both indoors and outdoors. Aspects for further consideration included the lighting and acoustic facilities, and meeting pupils' sensory needs.
- At the time of the inspection, the proposed proprietor had not been able to access the new premises at The Temple, Bourn Bridge Road since 2016.
- At the time of the inspection, there were no action plans in place about how these concerns were going to be addressed to make the premises suitable for the needs of the pupils and to ensure compliance with the independent school standards.
- The proposed proprietor provided an action plan at 3.30pm towards the end of the inspection day via email at the school. This plan lacked rigour, detail, specific costings, and timings of the move to the new premises. The plan in its entirety coherence about how the school would be ready within the short timeframe required.
- Leaders have not ensured that these standards are likely to be met if the DfE decides to approve implementation of the material change.

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

- The proposed premises have ample outdoor space for physical education and play.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is likely to be met if the DfE decides to approve implementation of the material change.

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

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

- The application to the DfE for the material changes to the premises and the number of pupils to admit was incomplete. There was no request for a change of proprietor.
- The application to the DfE by the proposed proprietor has not been well thought through. Despite significant and longstanding concerns by the headteacher about the potential new premises, there has been no thorough support provided by the proposed proprietor to address these concerns meaningfully.
- Despite this urgency to move premises, there has been no thorough or detailed planning, risk assessment, checks or considerations made about how the material change requests will ensure that the high standards identified in November 2017 in the previous inspection will be maintained for current pupils, or to ensure that the independent school standards will be met.
- Leaders have not ensured that this standard is likely to be met if the DfE decides to approve implementation of the material change.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The headteacher has an accessibility plan for the current premises and pupils.
- There is no accessibility plan for the new premises or for the proposed increase in pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- The school is unlikely to meet the requirements of the Act.

## **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, as set out in the annex of this report.

## School details

Unique reference number	108886
DfE registration number	873/6051
Inspection number	10081645

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	Independent school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	International School Partnership
Headteacher	Anita Laws
Annual fees (day pupils)	£14,190
Telephone number	01223 778030
Website	<a href="http://www.holmecourt.com">www.holmecourt.com</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin@holmecourt.com">admin@holmecourt.com</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	21–23 November 2017

## Pupils

	<b>School's current position</b>	<b>School's proposal</b>	<b>Inspector's recommendation</b>
Age range of pupils	7–16	7–16	7–16
Number of pupils on the school roll	30	75	32

### *Reason for inspector's recommendations*

The school is not likely to meet the standards if it changes premises. Therefore, the school does not have the capacity to increase the number of admissions if it does not move to larger premises.

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	30	75
Number of part-time pupils	N/A	N/A
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	30	75
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	14	Not yet determined
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	14	Not yet determined

## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	2	Not yet determined
Number of part-time teaching staff	2	Not yet determined
Number of staff in the welfare provision	N/A	N/A

## Information about this school

- Holme Court School is registered to admit up to 32 pupils between the ages of seven to 16 years old.
- All pupils have SEND. Most pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- Most pupils have dyslexia. Many pupils have significant social, emotional and mental

health needs.

- The previous standard inspection was conducted by Ofsted in November 2017. The school's overall effectiveness was judged to be outstanding. All of the independent school standards were met at the time of the inspection.
- A few pupils access provision off site, such as through college days or specialist lessons in other schools. They are accompanied at all times by staff from Holme Court.
- The current proprietor of the school is International School Partnership. The proposed proprietor, Dr Harriet Sturdy, has applied to the DfE to seek two material changes for the school: a change of premises and an increase in the number of admissions to the school to 75 pupils.
- The new premises are proposed to be The Temple, Bourne Bridge Road, Cambridge, CB21 6AN. These were not the premises listed on the application to the DfE, but were confirmed by the headteacher, current proprietor and proposed proprietor as the proposed premises.
- If the school moves to these premises, it will share them with Cambridge International School (CIS), which is an independent day school inspected by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI). Initial plans indicate that pupils will be accessing the same site, facilities and outdoor space together. There would be separate start and finish times, as well as different breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- There was no request to the DfE for a change of proprietor. However, both the headteacher and the proposed proprietor agreed that the proprietorship would be moving from International School Partnership to a sole proprietor (Dr Harriet Sturdy). The inspector spoke with a representative of the current proprietor and confirmed the request for the material changes to the premises and the proprietorship.
- The proposed proprietor was a founder of the school and is a director within the current proprietorial body (International School Partnership).

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection took place with two working days' notice.
- The DfE commissioned Ofsted to consider the school's request for material changes to increase the number of pupils on roll from 32 to 75 and for a change of premises.
- The DfE asked Ofsted to report on whether the proprietor was likely to meet the independent school standards contained in the paragraphs commencing 7, 11, 12, 14, 16 and 34(1); and all relevant independent school standards in Part 4 (the suitability of staff) and Part 5 (the suitability of premises and accommodation).
- The inspector met with some pupils to discuss their experiences in school.
- A telephone meeting was held with the proposed proprietor.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and the bursar.
- The inspector spoke to a representative of the current proprietor.
- The inspector had a telephone conversation with local authority representatives from Suffolk local authority.
- The inspector scrutinised school policies and other documentation relating to the proposed material changes.
- The school's records of the recruitment checks on staff were scrutinised. Additional documents and records relating to safeguarding matters were reviewed.
- The inspector undertook a tour of the existing premises and the proposed new premises, with the headteacher.

## Inspection team

Kim Pigram, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

## **Annex. Compliance with regulatory requirements**

### **The school is unlikely to meet the following independent school standards**

#### **Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

- 7 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
  - 7(a) arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and
  - 7(b) such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 11 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that relevant health and safety laws are complied with by the drawing up and effective implementation of a written health and safety policy.
- 12 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005[12].
- 14 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that pupils are properly supervised through the appropriate deployment of school staff.
- 16 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
  - 16(a) 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
  - 16(b) appropriate action is taken to reduce risks that are identified.

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

- 18(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if–
  - 18(2)(a) no such person is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act where that person is or will be engaging in activity which is regulated activity within the meaning of Part 1 of Schedule 4 to that Act;
  - 18(2)(b) no such person carries out work, or intends to carry out work, at the school in contravention of a prohibition order, an interim prohibition order, or any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act, or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in either such direction;
  - 18(2)(c) the proprietor carries out appropriate checks to confirm in respect of each such person–

- 18(2)(c)(i) the person’s identity;
  - 18(2)(c)(ii) the person’s medical fitness;
  - 18(2)(c)(iii) the person’s right to work in the United Kingdom; and
  - 18(2)(c)(iv) where appropriate, the person’s qualifications;
  - 18(2)(d) the proprietor ensures that, where relevant to any such person, an enhanced criminal record check is made in respect of that person and an enhanced criminal record certificate is obtained before or as soon as practicable after that person’s appointment;
  - 18(2)(e) in the case of any person for whom, by reason of that person living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining such a certificate is not sufficient to establish the person’s suitability to work in a school, such further checks are made as the proprietor considers appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.
- 18(3) The checks referred to in sub-paragraphs (2)(c) and (except where sub-paragraph (4) applies) (2)(e) must be completed before a person’s appointment.
  - 19(2) The standard in this paragraph is met if–
    - 19(2)(a) a person offered for supply by an employment business to the school only begins to work at the school if the proprietor has received–
      - 19(2)(a)(i) written notification from the employment business in relation to that person–
        - 19(2)(a)(i)(aa) that the checks referred to in paragraphs 21(3)(a)(i) to (iv), (vii) and (b) have been made to the extent relevant to that person;
        - 19(2)(a)(i)(bb) that, where relevant to that person, an enhanced criminal record check has been made and that it or another employment business has obtained an enhanced criminal record certificate in response to such a check; and
        - 19(2)(a)(i)(cc) if the employment business has obtained such a certificate before the person is due to begin work at the school, whether it disclosed any matter or information; and
        - 19(2)(a)(i)(dd) that, where that person is one for whom, by reason of that person living or having lived outside the United Kingdom, obtaining such a certificate is not sufficient to establish the person’s suitability to work in a school, it or another employment business has obtained such further checks as appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State; and
      - 19(2)(a)(ii) a copy of any enhanced criminal record certificate obtained by an

employment business before the person is due to begin work at the school;

- 19(2)(b) a person offered for supply by an employment business only begins work at the school if the proprietor considers that the person is suitable for the work for which the person is supplied;
  - 19(2)(c) before a person offered for supply by an employment business begins work at the school, the person’s identity is checked by the proprietor of the school (irrespective of any such check carried out by the employment business before the person was offered for supply);
  - 19(2)(d) the proprietor, in the contract or other arrangements which the proprietor makes with any employment business, requires the employment business to provide–
  - 19(2)(d)(i) the notification referred to in paragraph (a)(i); and
  - 19(2)(d)(ii) a copy of any enhanced criminal record certificate which the employment business obtains.
- 21(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor keeps a register which shows such of the information referred to in sub-paragraphs (3) to (7) as is applicable to the school in question.
  - 21(2) The register referred to in sub-paragraph (1) may be kept in electronic form, provided that the information so recorded is capable of being reproduced in legible form.
  - 21(3) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is–
  - 21(3)(a) in relation to each member of staff (“S”) appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether–
  - 21(3)(a)(i) S’s identity was checked;
  - 21(3)(a)(ii) a check was made to establish whether S is barred from regulated activity relating to children in accordance with section 3(2) of the 2006 Act;
  - 21(3)(a)(iii) a check was made to establish whether S is subject to any direction made under section 128 of the 2008 Act or section 142 of the 2002 Act or any disqualification, prohibition or restriction which takes effect as if contained in such a direction;
  - 21(3)(a)(iv) checks were made to ensure, where appropriate, that S had the relevant qualifications;
  - 21(3)(a)(v) an enhanced criminal record certificate was obtained in respect of S;
  - 21(3)(a)(vi) checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(d);

- 21(3)(a)(vii) a check of S’s right to work in the United Kingdom was made; and
- 21(3)(a)(viii) checks were made pursuant to paragraph 18(2)(e),
- 21(3)(b) in relation to each member of staff (“S”), whether a check was made to establish whether S is subject to a prohibition order or an interim prohibition order, including the date on which such check was completed.
- 21(4) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is, in relation to each member of staff in post on 1st August 2007 who was appointed at any time before 1st May 2007, whether each check referred to in sub-paragraph (3) was made and whether an enhanced criminal record certificate was obtained, together with the date on which any check was completed or certificate obtained.
- 21(5) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is, in relation to supply staff–
  - 21(5)(a) whether written notification has been received from the employment business that–
    - 21(5)(a)(i) checks corresponding to those referred to in sub-paragraphs (3)(a)(i) to (iv), (vi) and (vii) have been made to the extent relevant to any such person; and
    - 21(5)(a)(ii) an enhanced criminal record check has been made and that it or another employment business has obtained an enhanced criminal record certificate in response to such a check;
  - 21(5)(b) whether a check has been made in accordance with paragraph 19(2)(e) together with the date the check was completed; and
  - 21(5)(c) where written notification has been received from the employment business in accordance with a contract or other arrangements referred to in paragraph 19(2)(d) that it has obtained an enhanced criminal record certificate, whether the employment business supplied a copy of the certificate to the school.
- 21(6) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is, in relation each member (“MB”) of a body of persons named as the proprietor appointed on or after 1st May 2007, whether the checks referred to in paragraph 20(6)(b) were made, the date they were made and the date on which the resulting certificate was obtained.
- 21(7) The information referred to in this sub-paragraph is, in relation to each member of a body of persons named as the proprietor in post on 1st August 2007 who was appointed at any time before 1st May 2007–
  - 21(7)(a) whether each check referred to in sub-paragraph (6) was made; and
  - 21(7)(b) whether an enhanced criminal record certificate was obtained, together with the date on which any check was completed or certificate obtained.

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

- 23(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), the standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
  - 23(1)(c) 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.
- 24(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that suitable accommodation is provided in order to cater for the medical and therapy needs of pupils, including–
  - 24(1)(a) accommodation for the medical examination and treatment of pupils;
  - 24(1)(b) accommodation for the short-term care of sick and injured pupils, which includes a washing facility and is near to a toilet facility.
- 24(2) The accommodation provided under sub-paragraphs (1)(a) and (b) may be used for other purposes (apart from teaching) provided it is always readily available to be used for the purposes set out in sub-paragraphs (1)(a) and (b).
- 25 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the school premises and the accommodation and facilities provided therein are maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured.
- 26 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the acoustic conditions and sound insulation of each room or other space are suitable, having regard to the nature of the activities which normally take place therein.
- 27 The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
  - 27(a) the lighting in each room or other internal space is suitable, having regard to the nature of the activities which normally take place therein; and
  - 27(b) external lighting is provided in order to ensure that people can safely enter and leave the school premises.
- 28(1) The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that–
  - 28(1)(c) cold water supplies that are suitable for drinking are clearly marked as such.

## **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; and
  - 34(1)(c) actively promote the well-being of pupils.

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