

Bridgeway School

Church Road, Bamber Bridge, Preston, Lancashire PR5 6EP

Inspection dates

25 June 2019

Overall outcome

The school is likely to meet all the independent school standards when it opens

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2), 2(2)(a), 2(2)(b), 2(2)(c), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(e), 2(2)(e)(i), 2(2)(e)(ii), 2(2)(e)(iii), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i)

- The school's curriculum policy reflects leaders' aspirations and clear intent to teach an appropriate range of subjects from key stage 2 to key stage 5. These subjects include linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical education and aesthetic and creative education.
- Detailed schemes of work contain sufficient content and sequencing of learning. They take account of pupils' ages, aptitudes and needs, socially, emotionally and academically. This will allow pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding at an appropriate level.
- In key stages 4 and 5, pupils will work towards a range of externally accredited qualifications in literacy and numeracy. Other subjects linked to pupils' interests and abilities will also be studied, for example animal welfare, engineering and catering. Although a proportion of qualifications are at a low level, more advanced courses will provide appropriate opportunities for pupils, particularly those who are most able to attain higher qualifications. For example, pupils will study GCSE courses in English language, English literature, mathematics and science.
- Leaders have already begun to engage with a number of organisations that will provide pupils with effective impartial advice and guidance about careers and enable pupils to make informed choices. Structured careers advice will be provided by external impartial advisers from local colleges for higher education and through a nationally recognised online site.

Paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g), 3(h), 3(i), 3(j), 4

- Pupils who will attend the school will be supported by education, health and care (EHC) plans. The school's schemes of work include clear planning of lessons which systematically develop pupils' knowledge and skills according to their ability.
- Curriculum plans have been carefully considered and are ambitious for pupils to achieve the potential of which they are capable. Pupils' learning needs, including their

mental health and well-being, have been taken into account by leaders when designing the range of activities available, particularly for older pupils. As a result, good-quality resources are easily accessible and support pupils' learning and development. For example, the provision of facilities for cooking will contribute to the provision, which will allow pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of vocational subjects.

- Carefully planned activities have been designed to promote independence. For example, the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme provides opportunities for pupils to participate in activities to foster self-motivation, resilience and independence.
- The school's written assessment policy is detailed and aligns with the schemes of work for different subjects, as well as the priorities identified in pupils' EHC plans. Proposed assessment procedures are appropriate and will allow teachers and leaders to monitor pupils' attainment and progress effectively, in order to identify the next steps in pupils' learning. Plans are in place to share this information with parents and carers to inform pupils' annual reviews.
- Leaders intend to use staff who are currently employed by the Witherslack Group in the proposed school. Appropriate arrangements are in place to recruit new staff with specific areas of responsibility, for example for outdoor education and family liaison. New staff must have appropriate qualifications and/or experience in order to maintain the high expectations of leaders.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Paragraph 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(i), 5(b)(ii), 5(b)(iii), 5(b)(iv), 5(b)(v), 5(b)(vi), 5(b)(vii), 5(c), 5(d), 5(d)(i), 5(d)(ii), 5(d)(iii)

- Detailed curriculum plans show how the school will actively promote pupils' mutual respect and tolerance of those with protected characteristics, including those relating to gender, sexuality and different faiths and beliefs. This includes training for staff on how to support pupils appropriately.
- As part of the curriculum for pupils' personal, social, health and emotional development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, plans highlight how the school proposes to promote fundamental British values, including the understanding of right from wrong and the rule of law. This will prepare pupils to be responsible citizens and for life in modern Britain. All pupils will be able to gain a qualification with the Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme, and thus pupils will develop practical skills and knowledge, for example communication skills, independent living and an understanding of their role in the wider community.
- In line with other schools in the Witherslack Group, during their induction, all staff will be trained in strategies to identify and act effectively on any concerns relating to extremism.
- The standards relating in this part are likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

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

- The school's safeguarding policy and procedures comply with the latest statutory

guidance and reflect the high importance the school places on the welfare, health and safety of pupils. It identifies all aspects related to statutory guidance, including the name and contact details of persons responsible for safeguarding in the local authority, within the school and within the Witherslack Group.

- The policy identifies the different forms bullying can take, and what to look out for in signs of neglect and abuse. Clear guidance for staff is included within the policy. The school's procedures for the recording of any concerns relating to safeguarding are detailed and appropriate. The school proposes that safeguarding training will be undertaken by all staff annually, with timely updates given by the designated safeguarding lead, when required. This will include up-to-date safeguarding and 'Prevent' duty training related to the prevention of extremism and radicalisation. This applies to all staff currently employed by the Witherslack group. Training will also form part of the induction for new staff who intend to take up employment in the school. Records of staff training are in place.

Paragraph 9, 9(a), 9(b), 9(c), 10

- The school's behaviour policy clearly identifies roles and responsibilities. The policy sets out appropriate strategies to encourage pupils to act responsibly. It explains clearly the appropriate rewards and sanctions which will be in place. The procedures for recording any incidents of poor behaviour are detailed. Leaders propose to use the information gathered to evaluate any emerging trends in behaviour. This will enable them to provide the right provision and support swiftly for pupils and staff.
- The school's anti-bullying policy takes account of the ages and needs of pupils in school. It clearly identifies the different types of bullying which may occur and includes guidance for staff on how to identify signs of bullying. It also contains appropriate strategies that are to be implemented to prevent bullying.

Paragraphs 11, 13, 14, 15

- All of the school's health and safety policies are in place and appropriate records will be maintained. They include procedures to ensure that frequent checks on the operation of the fire alarm, emergency lighting and firefighting equipment are in place.
- The school has an appropriate first-aid policy in place. Several staff already have the appropriate first-aid qualification. The need for a first-aid qualification has been included as a requirement for staff due to be appointed at the school. The dedicated room for the care of pupils who are injured or unwell is appropriately resourced.
- Leaders have designed an effective record-keeping system to record and evaluate any incidents relating to health and safety, accidents or behaviour.
- Most staff for the proposed school are already employed by the Witherslack Group. Consequently, they have a good understanding of the needs of the pupils who will be attending the school. It is highly likely that the appropriate deployment of staff will ensure that pupils will be properly supervised at all times.
- Leaders have established appropriate processes for pupils' admission to the school. All pupils who attend the school will be supported by an EHC plan. Admission to the school will be through the relevant local authority procedures. It is anticipated that a proportion of pupils will join the school throughout the academic year. Transition

arrangements will be designed carefully to meet the needs of pupils and their families.

- Good attendance will be given a high priority. A new member of staff will be appointed with the responsibility of ensuring that pupils attend school regularly and on time. Any absences from school will be followed up swiftly.

Paragraph 12

- The school meets all of the relevant fire-safety regulations. The fire risk assessment is in place. Annual maintenance of fire-fighting equipment, such as fire extinguishers and the fire alarm system, ensures that they are in good condition. Checks on the emergency lighting are complete. All fire exits are clearly marked. All records are detailed and up to date.

Paragraph 16(a), 16(b)

- The school has a written policy on risk assessment and risk management. Detailed risk assessments will be completed online for educational off-site visits and extra-curricular activities. These are in line with the procedures in place for other schools within the Witherslack Group.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

Paragraph 18, 18(2), 18(2)(b), 20(6), 20(6)(a), 20(6)(a)(ii)

- The required checks to ensure that persons who hold leadership roles have not been prohibited from the leadership and management of a school have been carried out.

Paragraph 17, 18, 18(1), 18(2), 18(2)(a), 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)

- Leaders have ensured that all the necessary checks on the suitability of staff to work with children have been carried out. The majority of staff to be employed at the new Bridgeway School are already employed within the Witherslack Group. Appropriate procedures are in place to recruit additional staff and detailed checks are in place. Robust procedures ensure that members of staff who are appointed will not be allowed to take up their posts of employment until all required checks are completed. Leaders demonstrate a good awareness of the appropriate checks which need to be made for any staff who have lived or worked abroad.

Paragraph 19(2), 19(2)(a)(i), 19(2)(a)(i)(aa), 19(2)(a)(i)(bb), 19(2)(a)(i)(cc), 19(2)(a)(ii), 19(2)(b), 19(2)(c), 19(2)(d)(i), 19(2)(d)(ii), 19(3), 19(4)

- Leaders do not intend to use any supply staff in the school because of the nature of the special educational needs of the pupils. However, they do demonstrate a secure understanding of the need to ensure that suitable checks are completed before any person does undertake any supply or contract work in school. Leaders have appropriate procedures in place to ensure that this happens

Paragraph 20(1), 20(2), 20(3), 20(3)(a), 20(3)(a)(i), 20(3)(a)(ii), 20(5), 20(5)(a), 20(5)(a)(i), 20(5)(a)(ii), 20(5)(b), 20(5)(b)(i), 20(5)(b)(ii), 20(5)(b)(iii), 20(6), 20(6)(a), 20(6)(a)(i), 20(6)(b), 20(6)(b)(i), 20(6)(b)(ii), 20(6)(b)(iii), 20(6)(c)

- The required identity and suitability checks on the directors of the proprietary company, Witherslack Group, have been completed, including checks relating to

prohibition from leadership and management of a school.

- The inclusion of two new directors on the register of the Witherslack Group at Companies House are being processed. These two directors are included in the application for the school's registration with the DfE. The appropriate checks relating to prohibition from leadership and management of a school have been completed for these two new directors and are included in the single central record for the proposed school.

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)

- The school's single central record contains all the required information, including information relating to the completion of identity, health, qualifications, right to work in the United Kingdom, prohibition from teaching and the requirement for references. All relevant information is securely kept. Checks are recorded in one document, which is password protected. Checks on leaders and proprietors relating to prohibition from leadership and management of a school are also included.

The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 23(1)(c), 25

- Toilet facilities are provided for the sole use of pupils, with separate facilities for boys and girls. Toilets are accessible to pupils, including for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Toilets are equipped with suitable signs and are well maintained to a high standard. Separate toilet facilities are available for adults.
- The school has appropriate changing and showering facilities for pupils to use following physical education or outdoor education activities when required.

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

- The school has a room designated for the purpose of medical care. The facility for medical examinations or short-term care of sick or injured pupils includes a washing facility and is near to the toilet facilities. The room is appropriately furnished and provides a calm and safe place for pupils.

Paragraph 26

- The acoustic conditions of the classrooms ensure that they are suited to the activities which take place within them.

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

- The lighting in all rooms is suited to the activities which will take place in them. External lighting is appropriately located to aid safe entry and exit from the building and in the staff car park. Emergency lighting is in place and is well maintained through a service agreement with an external contractor.

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

- Pupils will have access to drinking water from clearly marked taps supplied by mains water. Pupils will also have access to water from water coolers. This will be kept

chilled in the room dedicated to pastoral care, and in the school's dining hall.

- Washing facilities are suitably provided for pupils, including in all toilet areas. The temperature of the hot water does not pose a scalding risk to users.

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

- Pupils will have access to a secure area to enable them to play and socialise. Appropriate surface markings in the playground have been added. These will facilitate small games and activities for pupils to play together, and an area to play football.
- Pupils will also have access to a sports field, which has been marked out with a running track. Plans are in place to develop an area of the field to be used as a dedicated outdoor learning area.
- These standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1), a), 32(1)(b), 32(1)(c), 32(1)(d), 32(1)(f), (32(1)(h), 32(1)(i), 32(1)(j), Paragraph 32(2), 32(2)(a), 32(2)(b)(i), 32(2)(c), 32(2)(d), 32(3), 32(3)(a), 32(3)(b), 32(3)(c), 32(3)(d), 32(3)(e), 32(3)(f),

- The school does not currently have a website. However, plans are in place for a website to be uploaded by the end of the current academic year. Leaders have a secure understanding of what is required to be published on the school's website, including its safeguarding policy.
- Leaders have ensured that copies of all the school's policies will be available to prospective parents and placing authorities on request.
- Procedures are in place to report on pupils' progress and attainment to parents. These include informal daily contact, as well as termly written reports. Leaders also have procedures in place to be able to provide information to support the annual reviews of pupils' EHC plans.
- Leaders have a comprehensive understanding of their obligation to report to the individual local authorities that place pupils in the school. They demonstrate a good understanding of their duty to report annually on the income and expenditure of funds for pupils placed in the school by a local authority.
- The school has not been subject to any previous inspection.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33, 33(a), 33(b), 33(c), 33(d), 33(e), 33(f), 33(g), 33(h), 33(i), 33(i)(i), 33(i)(ii), 33(j), 33(j)(i), 33(j)(ii), 33(k)

- The complaints policy is comprehensive and available for parents or others on request. It will be accessible via the school's own website in line with other schools within the Witherslack Group.
- Steps for each stage of the process are clearly set out, including the actions to be taken by the school. The policy identifies appropriate timescales for each stage of a complaint and the rights of parents to be accompanied to meetings. The procedures outline the rights of appeal if a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcomes of each

stage of a complaint. The outcome of each stage will be reported to the complainant in writing and all information relating to the complaint will be stored securely. The policy is clear that the panel that hears a complaint will have members who are independent of the management or responsible for the day-to-day running of the school.

- These standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- Leaders have ensured that all standards are likely to be met.
- Leaders have planned an appropriate curriculum to ensure that pupils make academic progress and develop effectively their social and independent skills. This will ensure that pupils are likely to be well prepared for their next stages in education, employment or training. Leaders demonstrate a secure understanding of the anticipated needs of those pupils expected to attend the school.
- Leaders demonstrate a commitment to ensuring that the health and safety of pupils is a priority. The school building is in a good state of repair and is maintained to a high standard. All required tests and checks have been carried out, including fire-safety checks, electrical wiring checks and electrical equipment checks. All resources are appropriately stored and maintained, including equipment in the art and design rooms, science rooms and the kitchen area used by pupils.
- Leaders demonstrate a good understanding of the independent school standards. They have been rigorous in checking that the details of school policies reflect the school and appropriate national legislation. As a result, policies are bespoke to the individual school within the Witherslack Group and meet the requirements for the information they contain.
- Senior leaders, including directors, demonstrate a clear vision for the school. They have high expectations for the quality of education, support and opportunities they will provide for pupils and their families. Leaders are experienced in providing appropriate provision for pupils with SEND and have a secure understanding of the anticipated needs of the pupils who they expect to attend the school.
- The standards relating this part are likely to be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The promotion of equality is embedded in the school's personal, social, health and cultural education curriculum. This is likely to ensure that pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain. Pupils are likely to develop a secure and appropriate understanding of fundamental British values.
- Leaders have ensured that the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and associated independent school standards are likely to be met.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school is likely to meet the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Proposed school details

Unique reference number	147206
DfE registration number	888/6118
Inspection number	10104010

This inspection was carried out under section 99 of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards that are required for registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Independent school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Witherslack Group Limited
Chair	Michael Barrow
Headteacher	Susan Gill
Annual fees (day pupils)	£54,743 – £85,266
Telephone number	01539 566 081
Website	None at this time
Email address	susan.gill@witherslackgroup.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

Provider already operating

Number of pupils of compulsory school age	Not yet open
Number of pupils of compulsory school age for whom a statement is maintained under section 324, or who is looked after by a local authority	Not yet open
Total hours operating as a school per week	Not yet open
Total hours of teaching provided per week	Not yet open

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	N/A	9 – 18	9 – 18
Number of pupils on the school roll	0	56	56

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	0	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	0	56
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	0	56
Of which, number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan	0	56
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	0	56

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	0	14
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	0	17

Information about this proposed school

- The proposed school will be owned by the Witherslack Group, a national organisation, which owns and runs a number of schools and children's homes.
- The proposed school will cater for pupils who have autism spectrum disorder and associated complex needs.
- All pupils will have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- The school will cater for pupils from approximately 23 local authorities.
- The day-to-day running of the school will be the responsibility of the headteacher, with support from the regional director for the Witherslack Group.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first pre-registration inspection of Bridgeway School.
- The inspector checked on the proprietor's compliance with all parts of the independent school standards.
- During the inspection, meetings were held with two directors of the Witherslack Group, in their capacity as regional director and chair of the governing body.
- The inspector also met with the headteacher and members of staff already in post for Bridgeway School.
- The inspector checked documentation relating to the curriculum, including schemes of work and the curriculum policy.
- The inspector reviewed the proprietor's policies in relation to welfare, health and safety. A scrutiny of the proprietor's safeguarding procedures, including recruitment processes and checks was undertaken. A tour of the school premises was undertaken jointly with the headteacher and site manager.
- In carrying out this type of inspection, inspectors assess the extent to which the school is likely to meet 'The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014' when it opens.

Inspection team

Amanda Stringer, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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