

Castle Futures

17 Ravendale Drive, Lincoln LN2 2JN

Inspection date

4 June 2019

Overall outcome

The school is likely to meet all the independent school standards. It is currently operating without registration.

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraphs 2(1) to 2(2)(i)

- The school's curriculum policy places an emphasis on the need to tailor provision to the needs of individual pupils. It recognises that pupils will enter the school at various points during key stage 4, with gaps in their previous learning and with individual emotional, social and mental-health difficulties. The school aims to provide an aspirational curriculum in which pupils will have access to GCSE accreditation in English, mathematics and sciences.
- The stated intention for the curriculum is to equip pupils with knowledge and skills to make informed choices and to participate fully as citizens. Sample timetables demonstrate that pupils will have access to learning in each area required by the independent school standards. Pupils will have access to vocational options, such as food studies, physical education (PE), health and social care, hair and beauty, and mechanics or construction. The breadth of the curriculum will be ensured by the inclusion of units of study in computing, humanities, citizenship, art and PE.
- The proposed curriculum includes independent careers advice and guidance. Pupils will access individual work-experience placements linked to their chosen vocational options. All pupils will take part in a certificated programme of personal and health education, which will support their preparation for the transition to further education, employment and independent living.
- Senior leaders have prepared suitable schemes of work for each curriculum area. These will form the basis for individual lesson planning by teaching staff.
- Pupils will be taught in small groups, typically no more than six pupils. The school's policy for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) states that additional one-to-one support will be provided where a pupil's identified needs require. Senior leaders have extensive experience of devising education, health and care plans in consultation with placing authorities. Each pupil will have an individual education plan, which ensures that the curriculum is appropriately matched to individual learning needs. The school's experienced coordinator of the provision for

pupils with SEND will monitor, evaluate and amend individual plans as required.

- The school's curriculum policy promotes fundamental British values throughout the curriculum.

Paragraph 3, including all related sub-paragraphs and paragraph 4

- The school's teaching and learning policy refers to the national teachers' standards as the benchmark for the quality of teaching. The policy sets out clear expectations related to the quality of teaching, including continuous engagement of pupils, strong verbal and written feedback to pupils, high-quality questioning and the development of pupils' autonomy.
- The assessment policy sets out the requirement for schemes of work to incorporate assessment criteria based on learning objectives. Initial starting points will be determined through baseline assessment, taking account of transition information provided by placing schools and local authorities. The policy emphasises the importance of closing the gap between present performance and desired target outcomes.
- All pupils will have access to national accreditations, including GCSE, functional skills, vocational qualifications and the assessment of personal development. The school will aim to raise pupils' expectations of what they can achieve and to provide them with challenging, meaningful qualifications.
- The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

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

Paragraph 5 and all related sub-paragraphs

- Senior leaders describe personal development, community involvement and promotion of British values as a wrap-around of the whole curriculum. The curriculum policy includes aspirations related to confident and resilient learners, and the development of self-esteem and self-respect. Equality and inclusion for all pupils are emphasised in school policies.
- Schemes of work include core provision for personal and social development through a programme of study on beliefs and values. Careers development and work experience will focus on pupils' self-development, decision-making about future pathways and preparing for the workplace.
- The beliefs and values programme includes several planned themes and activities which relate to the requirements of paragraphs in Part 2 of the independent school standards. Learning challenges and activities require pupils to consider how personal values influence daily life, good and bad moral decisions and freedom of thought and conscience.
- The beliefs and values programme requires pupils to research an individual belief system and to consider religious perspectives on life and death. Pupils will study racism and the morality of individual actions. British values are also promoted through the study of crime, justice and legal and penal systems.
- Pupils will be involved in consideration of environmental issues and the opportunity to take part in local community projects. Planned units of study also require pupils to

consider personal responses to natural beauty and universal human experiences.

- Policies for the curriculum and for equalities and diversity identify the protected characteristics in British law. Plans for staff training include awareness of discrimination and the requirement for a balanced approach in all discussions of values and beliefs, within the context of British values.
- The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 7(a) and 7(b)

- The school's safeguarding policy has regard to the latest government guidance. The policy requires all members of staff to read appropriate sections of this guidance. Safeguarding training is included in the planned induction programme for all staff. Senior leaders will provide additional update training for all staff at appropriate intervals. The designated safeguarding lead has completed appropriate training for the role, as has the responsible governor.
- The school's policy sets out the safeguarding roles and responsibilities of the designated person and all staff. The policy provides clear information and advice to staff about managing and recording safeguarding concerns and disclosures. The policy summarises essential information about types of abuse, including peer abuse, child sexual exploitation, online grooming and radicalisation.
- The policy provides essential information about named persons with safeguarding responsibilities within the school and external agencies, including statutory agencies of the local authority. Senior leaders have established suitable arrangements for recording concerns and maintaining confidential records of any cases.

Paragraph 9 and all related sub-paragraphs, and paragraph 10.

- The school's policies for managing behaviour and the prevention of bullying have regard to government guidance. These policies are clear about expectations in key aspects of behaviour management and the prevention of bullying.
- The school's approach to managing behaviour is rooted in the values of the school. Senior leaders understand the importance of maintaining effective relationships and expectations with pupils' families and with placing schools. Behaviour is seen as a joint responsibility and, for example, any consideration of a permanent exclusion requires consultation with the pupil's placing school.
- The school's policies include suitable rewards and sanctions, appropriately sequenced to ensure consistency of decision-making.

Paragraphs 11 to 15

- The school's health and safety policy includes comprehensive procedures for managing all aspects of the school's responsibilities. Appropriate procedures have been set up for regular checks and effective actions to ensure that any safety concerns are addressed appropriately.
- The proprietor has ensured that a premises fire risk assessment has been completed. Appropriate arrangements are in place for regular monitoring of all aspects of health

and safety, including fire safety. In addition, external contractors are employed to complete regular servicing and maintenance of fire-safety equipment and systems.

- Senior leaders are appropriately trained in all relevant aspects of health and safety, including first aid. Suitable arrangements are in place to complete health and safety training for all staff on appointment.
- Additional procedures have been produced for first aid, together with arrangements to ensure that all staff are suitably trained. Registers are in place to record pupils' admissions and attendance. The school's arrangements for the management of attendance are thorough and recognise the safeguarding risks associated with poor attendance.

Paragraphs 16, 16(a) and 16(b)

- The school's policy for risk assessment includes suitable responses to a variety of potential risks associated with the premises and equipment, classroom activities and off-site activities. Plans are in place to produce individual pupils' risk assessments as part of their individual education plans.
- The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

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

Paragraphs 18(1) to 18(3)

- Senior leaders are trained in safer recruitment. They ensure that all required checks are completed for all staff on appointment. Recruitment procedures include enhanced checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service, checks on identity, medical fitness, right to work in the United Kingdom, overseas checks, and qualifications where required.
- Additional checks are completed to ensure that no member of staff is barred from working with children or subject to a prohibition order. Two written references are taken up for every member of staff, and a medical check is included in any offer of employment.

Paragraphs 19(1) to 19(3)

- The proprietor has established comprehensive arrangements for all aspects of staff recruitment. The school does not intend to appoint supply staff through an agency.

Paragraphs 20(6) to 20(6)(c)

- The proprietor has individual responsibility for all aspects of the proprietorial role. There is no proprietorial body. Section 128 checks on disqualification from management have been completed for staff appointed to leadership roles.

Paragraphs 21(1) to 21(7)(b)

- The proprietor has created a suitable template to record details of all required recruitment checks for staff. Details of staff appointed to date have been entered on this single central register.
- The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1) to 24(2)

- The premises and accommodation have been refurbished to a high standard. The school has sole access to the facilities on the upper floor, which provides secure accommodation for teaching and learning, administration and implementation of the curriculum.
- Facilities on the ground floor provide high-quality facilities for physical education, including access to extensive playing fields. The school also has sole use of these ground-floor changing rooms and showers, together with the playing field, on three days of the week. Lincoln College has access, through a separate entrance, to the changing rooms and sports fields on two days a week.
- The school meets all requirements related to the provision of toilet and washing facilities, showers and the provision of suitable medical facilities, including accommodation for the short-term care of any sick or injured pupils.
- There are sufficient classrooms, of suitable size, to provide effective learning. Additional spaces include a kitchen and dining room of adequate size to cater for the number of pupils on roll. These facilities are available for teaching of food and catering courses. A large internal area is available for flexible use for recreation, leisure activities and, if required, for teaching of larger groups.

Paragraphs 25 to 28(2)(b)

- Good attention has been given to health and safety requirements throughout the premises, including in teaching rooms and play spaces. The internal acoustics and lighting are suitable to enable effective learning.
- External lighting has been provided to ensure safe access to and from the premises. Appropriate emergency lighting is in place.
- Water supplies meet requirements for temperature control of hot water, and labelled drinking water is available for all pupils in the kitchen.

Paragraphs 29(1) and 29(1)(a) and (b)

- The external boundaries of the school are securely fenced. External gates are locked, with access provided from reception within the premises. There is extensive outdoor space available for play and recreation in addition to physical education and team games.
- The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraphs 32(1), 32(b) and all related sub-paragraphs

- The school has prepared a website which is ready to go live once the registration of the school has been approved. The website will provide parents and carers with access to all required school policies and information.
- The safeguarding policy will be available on the school's website before the school admits pupils, together with the school's prospectus and a range of additional school policies. Senior leaders have plans to ensure that details of pupils' academic performance, and the report of any Ofsted inspection of the school, are provided to

parents. They also have clear plans to provide an account of income and expenditure to placing authorities. A template has been constructed to provide termly progress reports to parents.

- The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraphs 33 to 33(k)

- The proprietors have created a complaints policy and procedures which take full account of the requirement for informal, formal and appeals stages to the investigation and resolution of any complaints. They have taken full account of the requirements of the independent school standards, including those for appropriate record-keeping, confidentiality and timelines.
- The school is likely to meet all the standards in this part.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraphs 34(1) and 34(1)(a) to 34(1)(c)

- The school's proprietor and senior leaders have a secure understanding of the requirements of the independent school standards. Senior leaders have applied their experience of working with pupils in the proposed client group to the production of policies and procedures suited to the needs of Castle Futures School.
- Senior leaders, including the headteacher, have appropriate experience of senior leadership in similar settings. They have worked closely with the proprietor to ensure that the refurbishment of the premises and accommodation meets the needs of the intended pupil intake.
- The prospective chair of the governing body has been appointed. He is a current headteacher and brings successful experience of leadership and governance roles to this position. The chair of the governing body and senior leaders have good experience and understanding of appropriate processes for self-evaluation, review and development of the school.
- The proprietor and senior leaders have ensured that all the independent school standards are likely to be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school has arrangements in place to produce an accessibility plan once pupils are admitted to the school. It is likely to fulfil its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

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	147170
DfE registration number	925/6018
Inspection number	10102780

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 special school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	Castle Special Projects Limited
Chair	Mark Midgely
Headteacher	Lee Wright
Annual fees (day pupils)	£75 to £200 per day
Telephone number	07917 352645
Website	Not yet live
Email address	nicktaylor@castleseducation.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

Provider already operating

Number of pupils of compulsory school age	17
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	0
Total hours operating as a school per week	20
Total hours of teaching provided per week	20

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	14–16	14–16	14–16
Number of pupils on the school roll	17	40	40

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	0	40
Number of part-time pupils	17	Up to 40 fte
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	17	40
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	0	Up to 40
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	0	Up to 40

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	4	12
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	5
Number of staff in the welfare provision	Not applicable	Not applicable

Information about this proposed school

- Castle Futures school is located in the city of Lincoln. The premises, owned by Lincoln College, are used as a sports centre and are set in extensive grounds with a number of sports pitches.
- Castle Futures school is seeking registration as an independent special school for pupils with social, emotional and mental-health difficulties. The proprietor is Castles Special Projects Ltd, a company with extensive experience of providing independent education services.
- This new school will occupy the upper floor of the sports centre. This has been reconfigured and refurbished to provide full-time education for up to 40 pupils in the age range 14 to 16 years. The proprietor currently provides part-time alternative education for pupils in this age range at these premises.
- The school is due to open in September 2019, once the registration is approved by the Department for Education.
- The school does not propose to use the services of any external providers.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education to assess whether the school is likely to meet all the independent school standards if registered as an independent school. This is the school's first pre-registration inspection.
- The school is currently operating as an alternative provision. It provides part-time education for pupils who are registered at maintained schools. It does not currently meet the definition of an independent school. There were no pupils on site during this inspection.
- The inspector met with the proprietor, the headteacher and the lead person for the school project. In addition, he met with a managing partner of the company and with the prospective chair of the governing body for the new school.
- The inspector toured the premises and accommodation. The premises are ready for occupation once registration with the Department for Education has been approved.
- The inspector scrutinised several school policies, procedures and records to check the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards. He discussed all aspects of policy implementation with the headteacher and the representatives of the company.

Inspection team

David Young, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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