

Begdale House School

Begdale Road, Elm, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire PE14 0AZ

Inspection dates

19–20 August 2020

Overall outcome

The school is likely to meet the relevant independent school standards if the material changes relating to the school provision is implemented

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

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

Paragraph 11

Paragraph 12

Paragraph 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- Leaders understand how to keep pupils safe. They have suitable contingency plans to enhance the arrangements and leadership of safeguarding during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. Leaders make sure staff are trained in how to keep pupils safe, prior to beginning work at the school. Staff have regular refresher training. Leaders have considered the specific risks faced by pupils in this setting.
- The school's safeguarding policy is available on the website of the proprietorial body. The policy is generally fit for purpose but some aspects are difficult to follow. This does not undermine the ability of staff and leaders to keep pupils safe. Leaders of the school and of the proprietorial body adopt practices which complement the safeguarding policy to keep pupils safe. For example, safeguarding concerns are recorded in a central system and monitored by the regional manager. Leaders intend to review and update the safeguarding policy imminently.
- The health and safety policy statement is supported by a range of associated policies to ensure requirements are met. The headteacher and proprietorial body have rectified issues where surveys showed action was required, such as with the electrical installations of the school. Suitable checks on, for instance, portable appliances and boilers, are made to ensure the site is kept safe.
- The proprietorial body has a generic risk assessment policy which is applied to the school. It does not reflect the totality of what is considered and acted on. Risk assessment in the school is bespoke to the setting and the pupils it caters for.
- A fire risk assessment from January 2020 identified that several improvements should be made. Work on these has subsequently been undertaken by a commercial

company. One action remains to be completed. This is scheduled to occur during or before the week beginning 31 August 2020.

- Inspectors raised, with leaders, one concern regarding pupils' possible access to an area of the site which contains potential hazards. The area is out of bounds to pupils. Leaders know and accept the potential risks, and formally assessed the risks posed in writing prior to the end of the inspection. The area will be secured with additional fencing prior to pupils returning to school in September.
- Leaders have taken appropriate steps to improve pupils' behaviour since the previous inspection. Changes to the curriculum and behaviour management have led to a reduction in the number and range of inappropriate behaviours.
- The proprietorial body provides effective oversight and support for health and safety matters.

Paragraph 14

- The current staff-to-pupil ratio is appropriate. Leaders plan to maintain broadly the same ratio as the school population grows.
- The site allows for suitable supervision of pupils around the site and in lessons. There are deterrents to prevent pupils from going into areas which they should not access.
- School leaders have ensured that the independent school standards for the welfare, health and safety of pupils are likely to be met if the Department for Education (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), 19(3)

Paragraph 20(6), 20(6)(a), 20(6)(a)(i), 20(6)(a)(ii), 20(6)(b), 20(6)(b)(i), 20(6)(b)(ii), 20(6)(b)(iii), 20(6)(c)

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(5), 21(5)(a), 21(5)(a)(i), 21(5)(a)(ii), 21(5)(b), 21(5)(c), 21(6)

- Required recruitment and vetting checks are carried out prior to staff starting work at the school. The checks are recorded on a single central register maintained by the proprietorial body.
- The single central register includes the necessary checks on governors and directors.
- The school does not currently employ supply staff but has done so in the past. The single central register allows for checks on these staff to be recorded if and when they are employed.
- Leaders apply safer recruitment practices when appointing staff. They ensure new staff have training appropriate to the setting.

- School leaders have ensured that the independent school standards for the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors are 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 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(c), 28(1)(d), 28(2), 28(2)(a), 28(2)(b)

- Suitable and sufficient toilet facilities are already in place for the proposed material change. They are maintained well and have hot and cold running water.
- Leaders' routine health and safety checks ensure water remains at an appropriate temperature.
- Drinking water is suitably labelled and is readily available to pupils.
- There are no changing or shower facilities available to pupils on the school premises. Provision is made for these requirements, alongside the teaching of physical education, in an off-site sports centre.

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

- Since the previous inspection, leaders have developed new accommodation for the provision of first aid. The first-aid room is close to toilet facilities and incorporates washing facilities.
- The room is of a suitable size and appropriately equipped to cater for the short-term care, medical examination and treatment of pupils.

Paragraph 25

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

- The headteacher is supported in his responsibility to maintain a safe and healthy site by the proprietorial body. School buildings are well maintained, clean and tidy. Suitable risk assessments and checks are in place. The proprietorial body's maintenance teams promptly repair or refurbish items in need of attention. The proprietor engages commercial companies to undertake improvements when appropriate.
- Since the previous inspection, the school's internal accommodation has doubled in size.
- The outdoor space is of sufficient size to accommodate the proposed increase in the number of pupils admitted to the school. Two separate play areas are available, each easy to supervise. These comprise of a hard play area and a grassed area.
- Physical education is delivered off site at a sports centre.

Paragraph 26

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

- All rooms have acoustics which are conducive to teaching.

- The interiors of the school buildings are bright and airy with adequate natural light. All doors, other than to toilets and the exam room, provide visibility and light through reinforced glass panels. Windows are modern, double-glazed units.
- External lighting allows for the safe exit from the buildings.
- School leaders have ensured that the independent school standards for the premises of and accommodation at schools are 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)

- Since the previous inspection, the school has been acquired by a different proprietorial body. The proprietorial body has the expertise to provide challenge and support to school leaders. The school benefits from the proprietor's compliance and maintenance arrangements, leadership support and procedures to oversee the running of the school.
- The proprietorial body and headteacher have worked together to secure improvements to the provision. Since the previous inspection, the curriculum offer has been broadened, behaviour improved and physical accommodation enhanced.
- Leaders have a clear rationale for the proposed increase in capacity. They have considered carefully how to achieve the increase without causing detriment to the quality of provision.
- School leaders have ensured that the independent school standard for the quality of leadership in and management of schools is likely to be met if the DfE decides to approve implementation of the material change.

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 that are relevant to the material change.

School details

Unique reference number	136236
DfE registration number	873/6028
Inspection number	10154789

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 independent school
School status	Independent school
Proprietor	Keys Group
Chair	Mrs Nicola Kelly
Headteacher	Mr Christopher Henton
Annual fees (day pupils)	£40,950
Telephone number	01945 860055
Website	www.keys-group.co.uk
Email address	head.begdaleschool@keys-group.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	26–28 September 2017

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	10 to 16	10 to 16	10 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	5	16	16

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed

Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	5	16
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	5	16
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	3	16
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	3	16

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	2	4
Number of part-time teaching staff	1	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	2	4

Information about this school

- Begdale House School is a small day school. It caters for up to eight pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Each pupil is funded by their local authority.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision for its pupils.
- The school does not run any off-site units.
- At its previous inspection, in September 2017, the school was judged to require improvement. Two of the independent school standards were not met. A new headteacher was appointed in 2017.

- In January 2018, Ofsted evaluated the school's action plan to remedy the aspects of provision which did not meet the independent school standards in the previous inspection. The plan was judged to be acceptable.
- At the time of the previous inspection, the school operated from one building. It now operates from the same building and an additional building on the same site.
- In October 2018, Keys Group acquired the school.
- Keys Group intends to increase capacity to 16 pupils in order to cater for additional demand for places.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic of 2020. Some of the inspection was conducted remotely. This was due to restrictions placed on non-essential travel during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- The proprietorial body has applied to the DfE to increase the capacity from eight to 16 day pupils. No other material changes are proposed. This is the first inspection to consider this proposed material change.
- This material change inspection was commissioned by the DfE to look specifically at:
 - independent school standards 7, 11, 12, 14 and 16 in Part 3 Welfare, health and safety of pupils
 - all of the independent school standards in Part 4 Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors
 - all of the independent school standards in Part 5 Premises of and accommodation at schools
 - the independent school standard in Part 8 Quality of leadership and management of schools
 - whether the school’s safeguarding policy is published on the school’s website or made otherwise available, and to check the suitability of the policy.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including risk assessments, policies relating to health and safety, and policies relating to safeguarding pupils. We spoke with leaders, in person and remotely using video conferencing technology, about all the standards being considered. One inspector conducted a tour of the site, including checking on the actions taken in response to the school’s fire risk assessment.
- We reviewed responses to Ofsted’s electronic survey, Parent View. There were too few responses to evaluate. We also checked the website of the proprietorial body to establish that the safeguarding policy was available.

Inspection team

Andrew Hemmings, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Heather Yaxley

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Parent View

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2020