

Fountain Head House School – Saltash

The Saltash Campus, Church Road, Saltash, Cornwall, PL12 4AE

Inspection dates

9–10 March 2021

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

Paragraphs 2(1)–2(2)(i), 3–3(j) and 4

- The proprietor has ensured that there is a written policy on the curriculum supported by appropriate schemes of work. Leaders have a clear rationale that underpins their intended curriculum. There are three central 'pillars' to the curriculum design. The first pillar is the national curriculum. The second pillar involves the promotion of pupils' personal development and well-being through outdoor learning and pathways into employment. The third focuses on pupils' health needs, such as speech and language and sensory processing difficulties.
- Leaders' curriculum planning is well considered. Leaders have utilised planning developed within the sister school, Highgate Hill House, set up by one of the directors and the interim headteacher of the proposed school. The curriculum is likely to meet the independent school standards, in breadth, depth and intended learning. Reading is at the centre of the school's curriculum. Leaders have sensible and well sequenced plans to teach reading. They have contracted an external provider to ensure that careers education is suitably current and impartial.
- Leaders have a track record of appointing teachers who can meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. This has been demonstrated in the success of the sister school. Leaders plan to appoint their own therapists to allow a multi-disciplinary approach to provision. For example, on-site speech and language and occupational therapists will work next to their education colleagues to provide tailored programmes of study. The school is likely to be well resourced and staffed. Adults are likely to be appropriately deployed to meet pupils' needs.
- Leaders have adequate plans in place to assess pupils' understanding. Leaders have considered how they will use assessment to plan teaching and adapt learning to meet pupils' individual needs. They intend to utilise long-term outcomes within pupils' education, health and care plans to consider and assess pupils' needs on arrival.

Leaders sensibly expect to utilise these starting points to assess pupils' progress as their main framework for judging pupils' performance.

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

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

Paragraph 5(a)–5(d)(iii)

- Due to the needs of the pupils that the school is planning to serve, the curriculum is focused on giving pupils a range of useful experiences for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils will complete European studies, forest school and animal care.
- The school's curriculum plans, including for personal, social and health education (PSHE), assemblies and events, exemplify a commitment to promote British values and equality.
- The school will not have a religious ethos and will welcome pupils of all faiths. The planned PSHE programme ensures that pupils will learn about a range of religions, beliefs and cultures.
- Leaders have ensured that the appropriate policies actively promote values in line with British tradition. There is also strong reference to The Equality Act 2010. Schemes of work demonstrate regular and timely opportunities for pupils to study multiculturalism and fundamental British values. Leaders intend for pupils to have regular visits to Plymouth to build their experience of a dynamic and modern city.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraph 7, 9 and 16(b)

- Leaders are aware of their responsibilities and understand the importance of creating and maintaining a strong safeguarding culture. Relevant leaders, including the chair of the proprietorial board, have completed the appropriate level of safeguarding training. The interim headteacher will act as the designated safeguarding lead. Leaders intend that all staff will complete safeguarding training before they begin working with pupils in September 2021.
- The school's safeguarding policy reflects the most recent statutory guidance, 'Keeping children safe in education' (September 2020).
- The school's behaviour policy is likely to meet requirements. All incidents of misbehaviour and bullying, and any sanctions imposed as a result, will be logged and reviewed.
- The school's anti-bullying policy is sound. It covers all types of bullying, including cyber, homophobic and racially motivated bullying. It gives appropriate guidance to staff on how to respond to concerns and disclosures, as well as the expectations around working with children and their families.
- The arrangements for the provision of first aid are likely to meet requirements. There will be at least two full-time first aiders with the appropriate training. Processes for managing and recording accidents and the provision of first aid are likely to be fit for purpose.

- The school is likely to be compliant with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. All aspects of fire safety (including, emergency lighting, fire extinguishers, smoke detection and fire alarms) are already in place. Regular checks will be logged. Fire alarm tests will be completed weekly and emergency evacuation practices will be completed termly with pupils.
- The school's health and safety and risk assessment policies are likely to meet the required aspects of health and safety in reducing identified risks.
- Admission and attendance registers will be kept and are likely to meet requirements.
- The proposed school site is a former school, in use until October 2020. As such, the buildings and site are in good repair. As a former school campus, the site is already meeting statutory fire regulations. Safety management of the site is likely to be strong.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

Paragraph 18(2)–18(3), 19(2)–19(3), 20(6)–20(6)(c) and 21(1)–21(7)(b)

- The proprietor has an appropriately designed single central register. The systems for leaders' monitoring of the single central register are all sensibly thought out. Appropriate checks are made and recorded diligently. All standards relating to how leaders will check the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors are likely to be met.
- Members of the proprietorial board, and the interim headteacher, are trained in safer recruitment. Leaders are clear about safer recruitment processes and have appropriate procedures to follow in the recruitment of staff, including requests for references from previous employers.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 25, 26, 27–27(b) and 29(1)–29(1)(b)

- The proposed site for the school was, until very recently, a school campus for up to 350 pupils. There are extensive grounds, including a large playing field and abundant multi-functional classrooms. Leaders sensibly intend to use spaces closer to the main reception in the initial opening of the school. They then intend to reopen the wider campus as the school grows.
- Leaders' plans demonstrate that pupils will benefit from exceptionally well-resourced learning spaces, including purpose-built classrooms for science, technology, catering, art and drama. A large space with an adjacent kitchen is being adapted into a school canteen.
- There are several office spaces. The main reception is beside the secure entrance to the proposed school. There are plentiful toilets distributed around the site, as well as washing facilities, in which water temperature is safely regulated. Once additional washing facilities have been installed, a suitable medical room has been identified. There are several appropriate outdoor spaces for physical education and play.

- The acoustic features, sound insulation and internal and external lighting are all likely to be suitable. Drinking water will be made available to pupils in social spaces, the proposed canteen and in some corridors and will be appropriately labelled. The premises are fully accessible to users with disabilities.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1)–32(1)(c) and 32(1)(f)–32(3)(f)

- A website for the school is currently being constructed. Plans for this website demonstrate that leaders intend to run the school openly and transparently. For example, an 'about us' section of the website will include all school policies, including safeguarding, admissions, positive behaviour and the complaints policy.
- The standard in this part is likely to be met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33

- The complaints policy has clear and appropriate information for parents. Appropriate timescales and information about how the complaints process will be handled are included. The policy details how complaints can be escalated and recorded at each stage.
- The standard in this part is likely to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1)(a)–(c)

- Directors and the incoming interim headteacher have a strong understanding of the regulatory requirements needed to set up an independent special school. Their strong vision and moral compass mean they are ensuring that their plans for the school put pupils and their needs as the main priority.
- The proposed leadership structure of the school is well considered. Directors intend to set up a local advisory governing board. The advisory board is intended to have clear terms of reference. For example, board members will have delegated authority to hold school leaders to account for the quality of the curriculum, safeguarding arrangements and the financial running of the school. The advisory board and headteacher will report to the proprietorial board. The chair of the proprietorial board will line-manage the headteacher. Consequently, it is likely that there will be strong accountability and overview of leaders' work at the proposed school.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- All proposed school plans, policies and procedures reflect leaders' commitment to meet the duties under The Equality Act 2010. The school has an acceptable accessibility plan.

Statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage

- Leaders are well trained to ensure that safeguarding is effective. Their plans for admitting children in the early years are cautious. Leaders have sensibly utilised their experience of running similar provision to that of the proposed school. For example, they have appropriate curriculum planning to ensure that provision is likely to meet the requirements of the early years foundation stage should it be needed. Plans for children's welfare are appropriate and the proposed level of supervision meets statutory expectations.
- The statutory requirements for the early years 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	148497
DfE registration number	908/6012
Inspection number	10180099

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	All through day school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Fountain Head House School Ltd
Chair	Dr Julie Smith
Headteacher	Ms Vicky Percival
Annual fees (day pupils)	From £37,000
Telephone number	07713 255531
Website	In development
Email address	juliecsmith6@hotmail.com
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

Pupils

	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	5–16	5–16
Number of pupils on the school roll	50	50

Pupils

	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	50
Number of part-time pupils	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	50
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	50
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	50

Staff

	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	46
Number of part-time teaching staff	8
Number of staff in the welfare provision	4

Information about this proposed school

- Fountain Head House School intends to register as an independent special day school within the Cornwall County Council local authority area. The site is near the centre of Saltash, close to the borders of Plymouth and Devon local authorities. Leaders intend to admit pupils from all three local areas.
- The school will cater predominantly for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties or autism spectrum disorder.
- The chair of the proprietorial board is also the chair at Highgate Hill House School, which is also an independent special day school. Highgate Hill House School provides for pupils with similar needs.
- The proposed site of the school was formerly the Saltash campus of Cornwall College.

Information about this inspection

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- This inspection took place over two days, on 9 and 10 March 2021, due to restrictions caused by COVID-19 (coronavirus). The first day was conducted remotely. This consisted of documentation checks and discussions with leaders, via video conference. The inspection was completed on-site the next day. This involved further discussions with leaders, and a review of health and safety policies (Paragraphs 11, 12 and 16). A check of the school's premises and accommodation (Part 5) was also undertaken.
- This is the school's first pre-registration inspection.

Inspection team

Matthew Barnes, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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