

# Compass Community School

## Vicarage Park

The Old Vicarage, Bull Ring, Stottesdon, Kidderminster DY14 8UH

**Inspection date**

31 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(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2), 2(2)(a), 2(2)(b), 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)(g), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i), 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g), 3(h), 3(i), 3(j), 4*

- The proposed school aims to 'motivate children and young people to engage with education and overcome barriers to learning'. It intends to do this by providing a highly personalised curriculum for each pupil that is based on their needs, interests and abilities. The curriculum places a strong emphasis on developing pupils' communication skills and independence, which prepares them for adult life. Academic studies are to be supplemented with a range of therapeutic support for each pupil.
- Leaders have in place a wide range of detailed curriculum plans and schemes of work on which teachers will draw when planning each pupil's curriculum. These plans start with a 'semi-formal' curriculum which focuses on developing pupils' functional skills, communication, emotional well-being, confidence and independence. They progress to a 'formal' curriculum based around a broad range of traditional subjects. Finally, a '14+' curriculum provides a set of differentiated pathways that build on previous learning. The school intends to offer GCSE courses for pupils when appropriate.
- It is proposed that elements of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education will be woven throughout the curriculum as well as being taught in specific PSHE education lessons. Topics include healthy lifestyles, body awareness, relationships, finance and mental health.
- The school's feedback, marking and assessment policy is appropriate and clearly sets out the school's proposed approach to assessment. It recognises the importance of immediate formative feedback. It focuses on helping pupils to make small steps in what they understand, know and can do. Summative assessment similarly focuses on identifying the small steps of progress that the school's pupils are likely to make.
- The school has successfully recruited suitably qualified teachers and teaching assistants. They are soon to commence a two-week induction programme that will

include a broad range of topics, including safeguarding procedures, teaching approaches and the curriculum. Leaders have in place clear procedures for checking on the quality of education in the school. This will include specific support from central and regional staff if the school opens and becomes established.

- It is proposed that each pupil's curriculum will contain units focusing on careers education. Detailed plans for these are in place. For example, a vocational studies element of the curriculum includes work on transition and post-school planning. Potential activities include mock interviews conducted by governors and work experience for some pupils.
- The school's proposed curriculum, assessment and teaching arrangements are all likely to meet the needs of the pupils the school expects to admit. The standards in this part are therefore likely to be met.

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

*Paragraphs 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)*

- The proposed school has a spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) policy. It sets out the definition of SMSC development and how it is to be promoted in the school. It includes many examples of how pupils' SMSC development is to be promoted. Spiritual development is likely to be promoted through opportunities to reflect on the meaning of spiritual experiences, including prayer and worship. Moral development is likely to be promoted through learning about moral codes and pupils developing their own values. Social development is to be promoted by pupils working as part of a team and learning to respect people, living things, property and the environment. Finally, cultural development is to be promoted by celebrating special events and through off-site visits, for example to museums and art galleries.
- The school has a suitable policy for promoting fundamental British values. It sets out the school's approach to promoting pupils' understanding of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance. Pupils' understanding is to be developed through a broad range of activities, including assemblies, PSHE education lessons, visiting speakers, group projects and off-site visits. Pupils will be encouraged to reflect on, and learn to respect, the differences that exist in society, including those due to ethnicity, gender, faith, disability, sexuality and family situations.
- The school's equality policy and plan describe how the school will promote equality, including paying particular attention to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

*Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b), 9, 9(a), 9(b), 9(c), 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 16(a), 16(b)*

- The school's safeguarding, child protection policy and procedure document adheres to the guidance contained in 'Keeping children safe in education', January 2021. It is detailed and comprehensive, providing clear guidance for staff on how to recognise the signs that a pupil might need extra help and how to pass on any concerns. It is tailored particularly to the potential safeguarding risks for pupils with special

educational needs and/or disabilities. The policy will be provided to parents on request.

- The counter-bullying policy clearly sets out the school's approach to preventing bullying and dealing with any that does occur.
- The school's behaviour for learning policy describes the school's approach to managing pupils' behaviour, including keeping records of sanctions. The policy focuses strongly on promoting positive behaviour and providing effective support for pupils. It emphasises the importance of building and maintaining strong relationships with pupils. It has been drawn up with the specific needs of the school's likely pupils in mind. Its approach encourages pupils to choose to behave appropriately, with good behaviour being rewarded. The school does not intend to use exclusion as a sanction.
- The school has a 'physical contact with children' policy. It states that all staff will initially receive two days of training, followed by refresher training each year. It provides helpful guidance which focuses on de-escalation and, when necessary, using minimal force for the minimum time. It includes procedures for recording incidents, contacting home, debriefing pupils and drawing up risk assessment plans when necessary.
- The school's first-aid policy clearly sets out roles and responsibilities for administering first aid to pupils. It names trained first aiders, identifies required training, describes procedures for record-keeping and reporting and identifies links to other relevant school policies.
- The proprietor body ensures compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. For example, a fire risk assessment was carried out in March 2021 and all its recommendations have been implemented. Leaders have set up a schedule of regular checks of equipment to be carried out. Escape routes are clearly signposted around the school.
- The school's admissions policy clearly states the information to be kept on the admissions register and the procedures to be followed when a pupil joins the school's roll. The sample admissions register contains all the required information.
- The school has an appropriate risk management and assessment policy. It contains clear instructions about the types of risk to be assessed and the process for carrying out risk assessments. It includes, for example, risks associated with premises, off-site visits and managing risks associated with children. It contains helpful templates on which to record risk assessments. Existing risk assessments confirm that the policy is already being implemented effectively.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

*Paragraphs 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), 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), 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), 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), 21(7), 21(7)(a), 21(7)(b)*

- The proprietary board has ensured that all pre-employment checks have been completed in line with statutory guidance. All checks are recorded on the school's single central register.
- The school is unlikely to use supply staff. However, leaders are aware of the checks that should be made if they do make use of supply staff.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

*Paragraphs 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 23(1)(c), 24(1), 24(1)(a), 24(1)(b), 24(2), 25, 26, 27, 27(a), 27(b), 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(c), 28(1)(d), 28(2), 28(2)(a), 28(2)(b), 29(1), 29(1)(a), 29(1)(b)*

- The proposed school is based in a newly refurbished house and annex. It has been refurbished to a high standard. It is light and airy throughout. All rooms provide suitable acoustic conditions and are adequately sized for their proposed purposes. There is suitable external lighting.
- The school has a good-sized medical room. It has its own washing facilities and is close to toilets. The room provides ample lockable storage for medicines. The medical room will not be used for any other purpose.
- The site provides ample toilets. They all have washing facilities, including hot and cold water. There are separate boys' and girls' toilets and several single-use toilets in addition. Several single-use toilets provide facilities for disabled pupils, including showers. The school has additional facilities for staff.
- Drinking water is available in the school's family room. Additionally, leaders intend to make drinking water available throughout the day via a water fountain in the main reception area.
- The school is set in attractive landscaped grounds, surrounded by a secure fence. Outdoor space includes a tarmacked area, grassed lawns and an outdoor eating area. Leaders intend to add play equipment and a garden area. Together, they provide ample outdoor space for physical education and outdoor play.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

#### Part 6. Provision of information

*Paragraphs 32(1), 32(1)(a), 32(1)(b), 32(1)(c), 32(1)(d), 32(1)(e), 32(1)(f), 32(1)(g), 32(1)(h), 32(1)(i), 32(1)(j), 32(1)(k), 32(2), 32(2)(a), 32(2)(b), 32(2)(b)(ii), 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), 32(3)(g)*

- The school does not currently have a website. Leaders intend that it will have a website if it is registered. Its format is likely to be very similar to the other Compass schools. Leaders were able to provide all information specified in the above standards. They propose that all this information will be available on the school's website if the school is registered by the Department for Education (DfE).
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

## Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

*Paragraphs 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 school has a written complaints policy statement. It complies with government guidance. For example, it includes informal and formal procedures and timescales in which complaints should be resolved.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

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

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

- The proprietor and the proposed school's leaders have a strong understanding of the independent school standards. They have used their experience of running several other successful independent schools, catering for pupils with similar needs, to ensure that these standards are likely to be met. Their actions in setting up the school demonstrate that they have the skills and knowledge to ensure that the independent school standards are likely to be met consistently.
- Leaders and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to actively promoting pupils' well-being. This is evident in the school's ethos and its curriculum.
- The standards in this part are likely to be met.

## Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The school has an appropriate accessibility plan that meets the requirements of paragraph 3 of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. The plan is detailed and sets out plans to improve physical access, access to the curriculum and the availability of information.

## **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	148587
DfE registration number	885/6079
Inspection number	10183620

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	Compass Community Limited
Chair	Bernadine Gibson
Headteacher	Kit Hobbs, Regional Executive Headteacher
Annual fees (day pupils)	£78,000
Telephone number	07720 428 952
Website	The school does not have a website
Email address	kit.hobbs@compasscommunity.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

## Pupils

	<b>School's current position</b>	<b>School's proposal</b>	<b>Inspector's recommendation</b>
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	8 to 19	8 to 19
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	14	14

## Pupils

	<b>School's current position</b>	<b>School's proposal</b>
Gender of pupils	Not applicable	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	Not applicable	14
Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	14
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	14
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	14



## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	3	3
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0

## Information about this proposed school

- Compass Community School Vicarage Park is part of the Compass Community Limited group, which currently operates 13 independent special schools. The school intends to open on 1 May 2021. It is located in the village of Stottesdon, Shropshire.
- The school intends to cater for up to 14 pupils with mild to severe learning disabilities. All pupils will be referred by local authorities.
- Pupils will be supported with therapeutic provision as they access a broad and balanced curriculum.

## Information about this inspection

- This pre-registration inspection was commissioned by the DfE, to determine whether the proposed school is likely to meet the independent school standards if it is given permission to open.
- This is the proposed school's first pre-registration inspection.
- I met with the director of education services for Compass Community Limited, the regional executive headteacher and the head of school, who is also the designated safeguarding lead. Together, we had a tour of the school premises.
- I held an online discussion with the chair of the proprietary board.
- I reviewed a wide range of documents and policies. I discussed safeguarding and welfare arrangements and scrutinised the school's single central register.

## Inspection team

Alun Williams, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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