

Ness Point School

32-34 Gordon Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR32 1NL

Inspection dates

10–11 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

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)(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)

- Pupils likely to attend the proposed school will have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Typically, they will also have an associated education, health and care plan (EHC plan) for social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs.
- Many pupils will have experienced periods of disruption to their educational experience prior to joining the school. Pupils are likely to arrive at different stages in their educational experience and at different points during the academic year.
- Leaders have created a curriculum policy that is closely linked to the subject-based schemes of work. The curriculum is designed to be adapted to meet individual learning needs when the proposed school opens. Teachers' planning will be supported by detailed checks on pupils' starting points prior to entry and during the induction phase once they join the school.
- Working with school staff and parents, each pupil will develop their own 'living and learning plan', which will identify the different stages in their educational progress and their social and emotional development. Leaders aim for this record to provide the baseline for ongoing checks on pupils' learning and progression as they move through the school.
- Pupils will have opportunities to study English language, mathematics, geography, history, science, technology and music. Art will be taught through project-based work and enrichment activities. The wider curriculum will include access to the school's forest school setting, as well as activities linked to life and employability skills development.
- Leaders aim to include a wide range of planned visits to places of interest, once current restrictions are lifted. Pupils will have the opportunity to gain a range of accredited qualifications, including at GCSE level where appropriate.
- Learning plans will include specialist support and interventions for pupils who are unable to access the curriculum because of acute SEMH needs. Curriculum plans

reflect leaders' intent to provide a balance of academic study, personal development, intervention and therapeutic support. The school's enrichment team is set up to work closely with pupils and families to achieve this when the proposed school opens.

- Leaders' vision and values statement places a strong focus on pupils' personal development and well-being. The personal, social, health and education (PSHE) curriculum is central to pupils' personal development. Plans cover, for example, healthy relationships, respecting the views of others and exploring the potential risks for pupils online and in using social media.
- The PSHE programme includes careers education and preparation for making choices post-16, including appropriate links with local further education colleges and training providers.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is likely to be met.

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

- Teachers' planning for learning aims to deploy a wide range of information to meet individual pupils' learning needs. Plans will be based on a thorough understanding of starting points when pupils join the school. Procedures to undertake regular progress reviews, involving pupils, teachers, support staff and families, are well documented.
- Leaders have considered carefully how they will use the expertise available in the school to support pupils' SEMH needs and to help them to settle into their academic studies quickly.
- An appropriate range of resources, including fit for purpose classrooms and suitable staffing arrangements, are in place to welcome pupils when the proposed school opens.
- The school's behaviour management policy sets out guidance and good practice principles for effective working with pupils whose behaviour may be challenging. Expectations of pupils' positive behaviour, tolerance and respect are high.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is likely to be met.

Paragraph 4

- Detailed arrangements set out how pupils' starting points will be assessed before they join the school and during induction to identify the support needed to meet individual learning needs. Suitable systems are in place to check and report on prospective pupils' progress and achievement over time.
- There are appropriate procedures planned for reporting to parents about pupils' educational performance and any improvements seen in behaviour over time.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is 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)

- The proposed school's values and ethos statement sets out a whole-school code of conduct which gives high priority to the promotion of respect for self, others, the school and the environment. Coupled with a suitable PSHE curriculum, alongside a

strong culture of safeguarding, leaders' intentions for the proposed school are likely to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils effectively.

- The PSHE curriculum reflects how fundamental British values will be considered when the school opens. Pupils will have opportunities to debate different viewpoints and learn about the rule of law, alongside the promotion of respect and tolerance for individual differences, in a range of different settings.
- Leaders are ambitious in their aim to prepare pupils for their next steps in education and/or training. The curriculum is designed to enable pupils to make positive choices and an effective contribution to the community.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is likely to be met.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

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

- The school's safeguarding and child protection policy is published on the PCT Education website. The policy is up to date with the latest statutory guidance. Information is available to parents in paper form on request.
- Leaders have ensured that safeguarding is a high priority in their arrangements for setting up the proposed new school. Roles and responsibilities are set out clearly. Regular staff training is in place. The training takes appropriate account of safeguarding the interests of pupils with SEMH needs.
- Links with external agencies offering support are well established through existing systems. Procedures are in place to ensure prompt referrals when pupils are identified as at risk of harm.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is likely to be met.

Paragraphs 9, 9(a), 9(b), 9(c)

- Leaders' expectations of pupils' positive behaviour and how it will be promoted are set out for pupils, parents and staff in a detailed behaviour policy. The expectations of tolerance and respect for self, individuals and the environment are closely matched to the proposed school's ethos and values.
- An electronic system is in place to record incidents of poor behaviour, to identify triggers and further actions needed to prevent and de-escalate unacceptable patterns of behaviour. As well as the electronic system, pupils will be expected to maintain their own record of behaviour, reflecting on progress and improvements over time.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is likely to be met.

Paragraph 10

- The proposed school's anti-bullying policy covers different types of bullying, including issues related to people with protected characteristics.
- Leaders aim to use the electronic recording system in place to monitor any bullying incidents. The information recorded will be used to review actions taken and make recommendations for further improvements.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is likely to be met.

Paragraph 11

- All the required health and safety, including fire safety, policies are in place. Policies are detailed with roles and responsibilities clearly set out.
- Leaders have made suitable arrangements for the necessary annual, daily and weekly premises and services checks to be made. Appropriate provision for recording these checks is in place.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is likely to be met.

Paragraph 12

- The fire risk assessment is appropriately detailed and meets requirements. Actions taken to reduce hazards are identified. Evacuation procedures are clear, with suitable fire exits, escape routes, signage and plans for fire drills in place.
- Arrangements for fire training for staff prior to the proposed school opening have been agreed.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is likely to be met.

Paragraph 13

- The proposed school's first-aid policy is published on the PCT Education website. Current staff have had the required first-aid training. Further training is planned as new staff are appointed.
- A suitable range of first-aid equipment is available. A recording system is in place to track incidents as they arise.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is likely to be met.

Paragraph 14

- Staff know what is expected of them in different situations when supervising and working with individuals and groups of pupils. Individual risk assessments for pupils aim to support effective supervision when the proposed school opens.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is likely to be met.

Paragraph 15

- There are appropriate systems for recording pupils' admissions and attendance. The associated policies set out procedures clearly.
- Leaders know the information they need to record and retain in registers as pupils join and leave the school.
- Arrangements for registering each pupil's attendance on a day-to-day basis are clear. There is a procedure to follow if a pupil does not attend and staff have not been notified of the absence promptly.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is likely to be met.

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

- A comprehensive risk assessment policy is published on the PCT Education Services website.

- Premises, activity and individual risk assessments contain the necessary detail setting out how risks will be mitigated, including for outdoor activities such as the forest school and external visits.
- The risk assessment process for the running of the school during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic has been appropriately considered.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is 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)(c), 21(6)

- Leaders have acted to ensure that the necessary recruitment checks on staff are completed prior to new appointments.
- Statutory checks have been completed on the headteacher. The single central register of pre-employment checks on staff is already in place and meets requirements.
- Medical fitness checks have been completed.
- Leaders do not plan to use agency staff when the proposed school opens. However, they are aware of the necessary safeguarding checks needed if agency staff are deployed in the future.
- School leaders have ensured that these standards 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), 23(2)

- The proposed school is located in recently refurbished premises. Classrooms and social areas are suitably decorated.
- There are separate toilets for male and female pupils and for staff. The supply of hot and cold running water is maintained at an appropriate temperature.
- Showers with changing facilities are available as needed.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is likely to be met

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

- The medical room has two sinks, with hot and cold running water, and is located next to a toilet. A lockable cupboard is available in the medical room for the storage of first-aid equipment.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is likely to be met.

Paragraph 25.

- The arrangements for entry and exit to the school site for pupils, parents and staff are now clear.

- The provider has taken appropriate steps to ensure that the premises are of a suitable quality to meet the educational, health, safety and welfare needs for the school's proposed registration.
- The required policies and arrangements for the cleaning of the premises are in place.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is likely to be met.

Paragraphs 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)

- Classrooms and corridors are appropriately lit. Leaders have acted to ensure that the acoustics in classrooms are adequate. External lighting meets requirements.
- Drinking water is accessible to pupils from the kitchens onsite.
- The water available in washing facilities is maintained at a temperature that does not pose a scalding risk to users.
- There is a small outdoor area for pupils' recreation. Leaders have taken steps to ensure that pupils have wider access to outdoor facilities close by such as the 'wild project' which provides opportunities for experiences of forest school.
- Leaders have ensured that these standards are likely to be met.

Part 6. Provision of information

Paragraph 32(1), 32(1)(a), 32(1)(b), 32(1)(c), 32(1)(f), 32(1)(g), 32(1)(h), 32(1)(i), 32(1)(j), 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 proprietor body uses the PCT Education Services website to provide the required information to parents and other stakeholders. The information will be available from the proposed school in different formats on request.
- Routine checks on pupils' progress and achievement will form the basis of reporting to parents and local authorities.
- Pupils who attend the school when it opens will be funded by a local authority. Leaders are aware of their responsibility to provide a statement of income and expenditure linked to the funding that they receive.
- Leaders know what they need to do to implement regular checks on EHC plans and to undertake the required annual reviews.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is 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 available to parents on the PCT Education Services website and on request from the proposed school.
- The policy sets out the detail of the procedures to be followed in the event of both informal and formal complaints. The timescales for dealing with each stage of the complaint are explained.

- Standardised procedures for maintaining written records of all complaints have been agreed. The information recorded will include details of the follow-up actions taken.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is 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)

- The proprietor and other leaders, including the chair of governors, have an appropriate understanding of the independent school standards. They have used this effectively to ensure that all the independent school standards are likely to be met when the proposed school opens.
- Curriculum planning is designed to meet individual pupils' learning needs. Arrangements for keeping pupils safe are well considered. The welfare of pupils and staff is a high priority.
- The headteacher and other leaders are appropriately qualified. Collectively, they have an appropriate range of experience in working with vulnerable pupils, including those with SEMH needs.
- Proposed lines of accountability through the governing body are clear. Governors have a suitably broad range of expertise, including in the leadership of schools for pupils with SEND.
- Leaders have ensured that this standard is likely to be met.

Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010

- The proposed school's accessibility plan provides details of how pupils will access the premises and the curriculum.
- Leaders aim to review the plan annually, or more frequently as necessary, to ensure that suitable arrangements are in place to meet the needs of pupils on the school's roll. Regular reviews will take account of pupils' access to the curriculum, the physical environment and to information normally provided in written form.
- All requirements 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	148425
DfE registration number	935/6029
Inspection number	10179574

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	PCT Education Services Ltd.
Chair	Michael Millage
Headteacher	Sally Alden
Annual fees (day pupils)	£42,066
Telephone number	01493 886332
Website	www.pct.education
Email address	sally@pctcare.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	Not previously inspected

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	Not applicable	11 to 16	11 to 16
Number of pupils on the school roll	Not applicable	20	20

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Not applicable	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	Not applicable	20

Number of part-time pupils	Not applicable	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	Not applicable	20
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	20
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	Not applicable	20

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	Not applicable	12
Number of part-time teaching staff	Not applicable	4

Information about this proposed school

- The proprietor seeks registration with the Department for Education (DfE) as an independent special school to admit up to 20 pupils with SEND, between the ages of 11 and 16.
- Leaders propose to admit pupils with SEMH needs. All pupils likely to attend the proposed school will have an EHC plan.
- Pupils who will attend the school will often have been permanently excluded from mainstream education and the local authority's SEMH provisions.
- Pupils are likely to arrive at the school with significant gaps in their knowledge and skills after periods of time without formal education.
- The proprietor does not intend to use supply staff.
- The proposed school is located in a refurbished, three-storey Victorian property in Lowestoft, Suffolk. The proprietor has a separate school, Novaturient School in Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, currently operating similar provision to the proposed new school.

Information about this inspection

- This pre-registration inspection was carried out to establish whether the school was likely to meet all the independent school standards and other statutory requirements.
- The inspection was commissioned by the DfE during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of the inspection was conducted remotely.
- An inspector visited the site of the proposed school on the first day of the inspection. The inspector met with the director and the headteacher of the proposed school, reviewed the single central register of pre-employment checks and conducted a tour of the premises.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of risk assessments. They looked at premises safety checks and school policies relating to the independent school standards. They also considered documents related to child protection, safeguarding, curriculum planning, checks on pupils' learning and reporting to parents and local authorities
- Over both days of the inspection, inspectors held online meetings with proposed school staff, including the chair of governors, the proprietor, senior leaders, subject leads and teachers.
- The lead inspector also spoke on the telephone with representatives from the school commissioning teams at Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils.

Inspection team

Christine Dick, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Tessa Holledge

Her Majesty's Inspector

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