

Inspection of Compass Community School Hereford

Fromes Hill, Ledbury, Hereford HR8 1HT

Inspection dates: 6 to 8 July 2021

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Not previously inspected

Does the school meet the independent
school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils get a fresh start at Compass Community School Hereford. Leaders know that pupils' education has been difficult in the past, so they do all they can to create a safe and welcoming environment. Adults take time to get to know pupils really well. They listen to pupils' wishes and feelings. This means staff understand the things that are important to pupils. Pupils told inspectors that this is helping them to learn. They said that the staff are 'amazing', and they enjoy coming to school.

Leaders expect pupils to be respectful and positive. Pupils live up to these expectations. They are polite, kind and well mannered. They behave exceptionally well around school and in class. Everyone agrees that bullying doesn't happen. If pupils fall out, adults help them to resolve any disagreements quickly. Should bullying arise, leaders have effective procedures in place to deal with it.

The school goes beyond the expected in order to give pupils a wide range of experiences. These experiences include boxing, chess club, looking after the school chickens and volunteering in the local community. Pupils make the most of these opportunities. They said that they 'make a big difference' to their lives.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Pupils often have negative attitudes towards learning when they join this school. Leaders recognise this, but they do not use it as an excuse to lower their expectations of pupils. They ensure that pupils study a curriculum that prepares them well for their next steps. As part of this curriculum, pupils learn a broad range of subjects in depth. Leaders plan these subjects logically so that they build pupils' knowledge step by step. For instance, in science, pupils' learn about acids and alkalis before they learn about neutralisation.

Leaders and teachers make checks on what pupils know and can do when they join the school. Leaders use this information to produce individual learning plans (ILPs). These ILPs describe how to best support pupils. Adults use these plans well. For example, they adapt their lessons so that the work pupils do builds on what they already know. This is helping pupils to know and remember more in a wide range of subjects.

Leaders promote reading well. The school library is bright and vibrant. It includes a variety of high-quality materials for different reading abilities. Pupils spoke enthusiastically to inspectors about the books they are currently reading. In lessons, teachers regularly ask pupils to read out aloud. Pupils do this without hesitation. They are happy to read because their fluency and confidence in reading is improving.

Leaders train teachers in how to deliver the curriculum. This is helping to develop teachers' subject knowledge. However, there is further work to do to improve

teachers' expertise in a few subjects. This lack of expertise means that in some subjects, pupils do not always get the help they need quickly enough.

Leaders work closely with parents and carers. They form a strong team. Information between school and home, such as how pupils are feeling, is shared every day. This means pupils are very well supported because adults can help pupils as soon as any worries arise.

Pupils demonstrate high levels of self-control and consistently positive attitudes to their education. They enjoy coming to school, are punctual and are rarely absent. When pupils first start at the school, they often struggle to manage their behaviour. Staff persevere with pupils. They lead by example, behaving in a tolerant and respectful way. In addition, staff apply the school's behaviour policy consistently and fairly. This consistent approach helps pupils to understand the consequences of their actions. As a result, pupils' behaviour, over time, dramatically improves.

The school's work to promote pupils' personal development is exceptional. Staff know pupils very well. This means that they provide opportunities to pupils that not only match their interests and talents but also develop their social skills. Where possible, leaders link these opportunities to accredited courses, such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Pupils spoke to inspectors with great enthusiasm about their experiences. They described, for instance, how work experience helps them to develop their confidence and respect for others. These opportunities are preparing pupils well for life in modern Britain.

The proprietor has a clear vision for the school. They want pupils to be well prepared for their next steps. They challenge school leaders to think about how the curriculum can become more ambitious. This is helping to ensure that pupils receive a good quality of education and that this continues to improve.

Governors regularly gather the views of parents, pupils, carers and staff. They also receive helpful information about the school from the headteacher. Consequently, governors have an accurate picture of the school. They use this information to check that the independent school standards are consistently met and to hold leaders to account. They fulfil their statutory duties well. For example, the safeguarding policy, that has regard to the latest government guidance, is published on the school's website. Leaders have ensured that the school complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders keep accurate and thorough safeguarding records. Staff have a strong understanding of the school's safeguarding procedures. They are knowledgeable about the signs of abuse. Leaders ensure that staff pass on any concerns about a pupil quickly. As a result, leaders have a detailed understanding of each pupil. They use this information well to give pupils the help and support they need.

As part of the school's personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe. They learn, for instance, how to protect themselves from potential harm when using the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve? (Information for the school and proprietor)

- In a few subjects, teachers do not have expert subject knowledge. This means teachers do not consistently focus on the most important knowledge and concepts pupils need to know. Leaders should ensure that teachers are provided with suitable subject-specific training so that they can identify and provide the right support to pupils in lessons.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the provider and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

School details

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| Unique reference number | 147220 |
| DfE registration number | 884/6018 |
| Local authority | Herefordshire |
| Inspection number | 10193312 |
| Type of school | Independent school |
| School category | Independent special school |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 17 |
| Gender of pupils | Boys |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 5 |
| Number of part-time pupils | 0 |
| Proprietor | Compass Community Ltd |
| Chair | Kate East |
| Headteacher | Andrew Cooper |
| Annual fees (day pupils) | £44,200 |
| Telephone number | 07584 574 102 |
| Website | www.compass-schools.org |
| Email address | andrew.cooper@compass-school.org |

Information about this school

- Compass Community School Hereford is an independent special school that caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. It is one of 14 schools in the Compass Community Ltd. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- During the inspection, school leaders advised the Department for Education (DfE) that the school's name had changed from Pear Tree School to Compass Community School Hereford.
- This was the school's first standard inspection since the school was registered by the DfE in August 2019.
- The school makes use of one unregistered alternative provision provider.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The school is registered to admit pupils up to the age of 17. There were no pupils above the age of 16 attending at the time of this inspection.
- Inspectors met with the head of school, regional head executive headteacher and the curriculum lead for Compass Community schools. The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body, the proprietor and the school's careers adviser. Inspectors met with staff and all pupils at the school. An inspector visited an alternative provider and spoke with the regional special education needs coordinator on the telephone.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents. These included school policies, safeguarding records, curriculum documents, the single central register, pupils' attendance and behaviour records, health and safety records and information about leaders' monitoring and evaluation of the quality of education.
- The lead inspector carried out a tour of the premises to check compliance with the independent school standards.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in a range of different classes and at different times of the day. They talked to all pupils informally about bullying, behaviour and welfare.

- Inspectors focused on the following subjects during the inspection: English, mathematics, science and PSHE education. As part of this focus, they met with curriculum leaders, class teachers and talked to pupils. Inspectors visited lessons accompanied by leaders. They also looked at pupils' work.
- Inspectors considered one response to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupils' survey or to Ofsted's online survey for staff.

Inspection team

Christopher Stevens, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Deb Jenkins

Her Majesty's Inspector

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