

# Castle Futures

Sports Pavillion, Ravendale Drive, Lincoln LN2 2JN

**Inspection date**

11 November 2021

**Overall outcome**

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

## 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)(g), 2(2)(h), 2(2)(i), 2A(1), 2A(1)(a), 2A(1)(b), 2A(1)(d), 2A(1)(e), 2A(1)(f), 2A(1)(g), 2A(2)*

- Leaders have developed a curriculum policy that sets out an overview of learning at each key stage. This policy includes the proposed curriculum intent and overview for key stage 2 and post-16 provisions.
- Leaders have prepared a curriculum that sets out the learning for key stage 2 pupils. The proposed curriculum matches the school's aims and ethos and the content of the national curriculum. Leaders have considered pupils' communication, literacy and numeracy skills. They have structured schemes of work for mathematics. They plan to provide systematic phonics teaching for pupils who are at an early stage of reading.
- The school intends to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for pupils aged eight to 11 that prepares them for key stage 3. The curriculum provides pupils with personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. This gives pupils the opportunities to learn about diversity, equality, fundamental British values and relationships and sex education that is age appropriate.
- Leaders have developed a curriculum overview for students aged 16 to 19. The curriculum aims to build on prior learning and prepare students for their next steps in employment, education and training.
- Leaders will provide students with opportunities to extend and deepen their English and mathematics learning. They intend to provide opportunities for work-related and vocational learning. The post-16 curriculum also includes a structured PSHE curriculum that is adapted to meet students' ages and maturities. This includes appropriate careers guidance and relationships and sex education.

*Paragraphs 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f), 3(g), 3(h), 3(i), 3(j), 4*

- Leaders have considered the staffing that they need if the proposed age range change is approved. The school employs several staff with the relevant qualifications and

experiences to teach key stage 2 pupils and post-16 students. By amalgamating two schools, the school has the capacity to teach pupils aged seven to 19. Leaders have plans to appoint additional staff as the number of pupils on roll increases.

- Leaders have secure subject knowledge and pedagogical understanding. They currently identify and assess pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities well. Leaders know how to adapt curriculum plans to meet pupils' specific needs. The school has the capacity to teach and meet pupils' needs across the proposed age range.
- There is an established assessment framework in place to assess, monitor and track pupils' learning and progress. Leaders have plans to extend this to include key stage 2 and post-16 pupils.
- The school is likely to meet the independent school standards in this part if the school receives approval for the implementation of the material changes.

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

*Paragraph 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 school plans to provide rich opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. These will include, for example, a planned tutor-time programme of activities and discussions and a structured PSHE curriculum. Precise opportunities will be provided for key stage 2 and post-16 pupils.
- Opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of British values are planned across the proposed curriculum. These will include opportunities to learn about diversity and equality, the rule of law, individual liberty, tolerance and respect. Staff will teach pupils to value and respect the opinions of others. Pupils will have the opportunity to appreciate different faiths and cultures. This will prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- The school is likely to meet the independent school standards in this part if the school receives approval for the implementation of the material changes.

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

*Paragraphs 7, 7(a), 7(b), 32(1), 32(1)(c)*

- There is a strong culture of safeguarding at the school.
- The school has a safeguarding policy that reflects the latest guidance provided by the Secretary of State. The policy is published on the school's website. The policy is implemented effectively and promotes the welfare of pupils.
- Safeguarding leaders are trained well. Staff receive regular safeguarding training and updates. Safeguarding leads know pupils very well. They take appropriate action to support pupils' welfare. Leaders work with and challenge external agencies to support pupils when needed.

*Paragraphs 11, 12, 14, 16, 16(a), 16(b)*

- The school has an appropriate health and safety policy. This is published on the school's website. Leaders ensure that regular audits are undertaken by external

agencies. They respond quickly to any identified issues that need addressing. Leaders undertake their own safety checks. For example, managers undertake premises and water safety checks regularly. Such measures ensure pupils' safety and welfare. Leaders have commissioned a health and safety audit for the additional accommodation that is subject to this material change.

- The school complies with the relevant fire safety regulations. Leaders ensure that fire safety checks, such as on fire doors and firefighting equipment, take place regularly. Fire drills happen regularly.
- External fire audits have been undertaken for the school's current premises. Leaders respond promptly to the audit recommendations. They have commissioned a fire audit for the additional premises that is subject to the material change request. The additional accommodation has appropriate firefighting equipment, emergency lighting and fire signage.
- There is adequate supervision of pupils on the school's current site. Leaders have plans to redeploy and increase staffing to ensure adequate supervision of pupils, if the material change related to increased numbers and age range changes are approved.
- The school has an appropriate risk assessment policy. Leaders ensure that there are appropriate written risk assessments. Each risk assessment includes an evaluation of potential risks with control measures needed to reduce risks. For example, each pupil has a risk assessment. Risk assessments are regularly reviewed.
- Risk assessments are written for a range of situations, including educational visits and trips. Leaders make sure that staff read and understand risk assessments that are relevant to their work.
- The school is likely to meet the independent school standards in this part if the school receives approval for the implementation of the material changes.

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

*Paragraphs 18(1), 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), 19(4), 19(4)(a), 19(4)(b), 19(4)(c), 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)(c), 21(6)*

- Leaders have a strong understanding of safer recruitment processes. They are appropriately trained in recruiting adults who work with pupils. They are thorough in their pre-employment checks. They complete all necessary checks before adults start working with pupils. Checks are undertaken for all directors, governors, staff, supply staff, contractors and volunteers.
- Leaders record all pre-employment checks on the school's single central record. This is checked and monitored. Leaders intend to meet statutory guidance by continuing to complete all checks on future appointments.

- The school is likely to meet the independent school standards in this part if the school receives approval for the implementation of the material changes.

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

*Paragraphs 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 23(1)(c), 23(2), 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 additional accommodation is a purpose-built education building located in Gainsborough. It is currently being decommissioned by a further education provider. The site is well maintained. The accommodation is appropriate for the needs and age range of pupils proposed in the material change.
- Directors have a pre-lease agreement in place for the additional accommodation. Leaders have commissioned compliance checks for the additional accommodation. They have an achievable schedule of contracted work in place. This includes, for example, the erection of security fencing and the installation of showers, window restrictors and additional security doors.
- The proposed accommodation includes toilets, with washing facilities for pupils. There are separate facilities for boys and girls. Toilet facilities have a suitable supply of hot and cold water. Hot water does not pose a scalding risk. Suitable toilet and washing facilities are available for the use of disabled pupils. The accommodation has a lift.
- Appropriate changing accommodation is available. Directors have plans in place to install showers. They plan for these to be in place before pupils attend the site.
- The accommodation has a suitable medical room with appropriate facilities to care for pupils who are unwell or injured. First-aid equipment is stored safely and is easily accessible. The medical room has a bed, with toilet and washing facilities nearby.
- Classrooms and social spaces are spacious. They are well-lit. Internal lighting is suitable. The acoustics are suitable for effective teaching and learning. External lighting is in place.
- Suitable drinking-water facilities are provided. Cold water supplies suitable for drinking are marked as such.
- There is ample outdoor space available for play and physical activity. Leaders have plans to develop outside areas to support vocational learning, as well as a sensory garden and a wooded area.
- Premises are currently maintained to a standard such that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of pupils are ensured.
- The school is likely to meet the independent school standards in this part if the school receives approval for the implementation of the material changes.

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

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

- Leaders have given careful thought to the amalgamation of the two schools, the use of additional accommodation, the proposed increase in pupil numbers and the change in age range.

- Directors and the executive headteacher demonstrate commitment to the school's purpose and vision. They are committed to providing high-quality education for each pupil. They are mindful that any changes should not have an adverse impact on pupils currently at the school. They intend to implement these changes in a phased manner. For example, they will commence provision for post-16 students from September 2022 at the earliest.
- Directors and leaders have a secure understanding of their responsibilities. They fulfil their duties and ensure that the independent school standards, relevant to the proposed changes, are met consistently. They actively promote pupils' welfare and well-being.
- Leaders demonstrate strong capacity to implement the proposed material changes, meet independent school standards and maintain the current standard of provision for pupils. They have plans in place to further build leadership capacity by developing the role of the newly formed governing body to support and challenge leaders.
- The school is likely to meet the independent school standards in this part if the school receives approval for the implementation of the material changes.

## **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.

## School details

Unique reference number	147170
DfE registration number	925/6018
Inspection number	10212624

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	Castles Special Projects Limited
Chair	John Marsden
Headteacher	Lee Wright
Annual fees (day pupils)	£32,500 to £39,000
Telephone number	01522 255761
Website	<a href="http://www.castleseducation.co.uk">www.castleseducation.co.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:ravendale@castleseducation.co.uk">ravendale@castleseducation.co.uk</a>
Date of previous standard inspection	3 to 5 March 2020

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	11 to 16	7 to 19	7 to 19
Number of pupils on the school roll	25	140	110

Given the school's current provision, the additional accommodation and current site will not provide sufficient accommodation for 140 pupils. The combined accommodation at both sites is suitable for up to 110 pupils.

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
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Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	25	140
Number of part-time pupils	25	140
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	25	140
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	24	140
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	25	140

## Staff

	<b>School's current position</b>	<b>School's proposal</b>
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	7	30
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	9	40

## Information about this school

- The school is an independent school for pupils aged 11 to 16. The school opened as a new school in September 2019. The school had its pre-registration inspection in June 2019.
- The school's previous standard inspection was 3 to 5 March 2020.
- The school is registered to provide full-time education for 40 pupils. The number on roll currently is 25.
- The school offers specialist provision for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. Almost all pupils have an education, health and care plan.



- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider. The provider is The Cirque Foundation, Doncaster.
- The school currently occupies a site in Lincoln. The material change proposed includes the amalgamation of this school with Castle Futures Scunthorpe school. This involves the relocation of the Scunthorpe provision to the additional premise in Gainsborough. In due course, provision at the Lincoln site will also relocate to the Gainsborough site. Currently, leaders have plans to develop the Lincoln site as a post-16 provision from September 2022.
- Directors are securing the additional accommodation at Gainsborough. They expect to have possession of the premise by the end of November 2021. They have booked compliance checks for the additional accommodation. They have a schedule of work in place. This includes erection of security fencing, installation of showers and additional security doors.

## Information about this inspection

- The Department for Education (DfE) commissioned this material change inspection in response to the school's request to increase the number of approved pupils' places to 140. The school's request also includes the approval of additional premises and the extension of the school's age range from seven to 19 years. It also involves the amalgamation of Castle Futures Scunthorpe school with this school. This includes the transfer of Castle Futures Scunthorpe pupils to this school's roll. The proprietor body intends to close Castle Futures Scunthorpe.
- This is the school's first material change inspection. The material change has not been implemented. The DfE wrote to the school in July 2020 approving an age range change for pupils aged 11 to 16.
- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, safeguarding leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and directors who form the proprietor body.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents provide by the school, including curriculum plans for pupils aged seven to 11 and those aged 16 to 19. He scrutinised records and policies related to safeguarding, health and safety and the single central record.
- The inspector met with leaders to discuss the material change request and toured the additional premises in Gainsborough.

## Inspection team

Chris Davies, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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