

# Somerset Progressive School

Bath House Farm, West Hatch, Taunton, Somerset TA3 5RH

**Inspection date**

28 September 2022

**Overall outcome**

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

## Main inspection findings

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

#### *Paragraph 7*

- The school has a clear and appropriate safeguarding policy, published on its website. This policy is implemented effectively. The policy reflects the latest government guidance.
- Leaders give the highest priority to safeguarding and child protection issues. They ensure that the local authority children's services follow up on matters of concern in a timely manner. Meticulous records are kept where there are concerns about individual pupils.
- The school has developed a culture where safeguarding is everyone's business. Staff receive regular safeguarding training.

#### *Paragraphs 11, 12, 16*

- Health and safety checks are carried out regularly. For example, records show that checks on playground equipment and hot water are undertaken at least monthly. Similar checks are to be carried out in the refurbished building.
- An independent fire audit for fire safety took place in July 2022 at the new site. A small number of shortcomings were identified; all have now been rectified. Throughout both sites, different types of fire extinguishers are to hand. On the current operational site, fire doors are checked weekly and fire escape routes daily. The most recent fire drill was held two weeks before this inspection.
- Leaders maintain a set of general risk assessments with the intention of ensuring that pupils do not come to harm. These consider, for example, slips and trips, hazardous substances, food preparation, risk of scalding and pupils accessing the main road. A similarly comprehensive set of assessments is ready for use at the new site.
- The school is likely to meet the independent school standards in this part if it receives approval for the implementation of the material change.

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

### *Paragraph 18*

- Leaders have rigorous systems to ensure that they make all required checks on those who are appointed to work at the school. They go above and beyond to check the identity and character of prospective staff, to ensure their medical fitness and to ensure that they are qualified, academically and temperamentally, to work at the school.

### *Paragraph 19*

- It is rare for the school to use supply staff. Where they do, leaders satisfy themselves that the agency member of staff has been thoroughly checked to ensure they are suitable to work with children.

### *Paragraph 20*

- All required checks have been carried out in relation to the proprietor body.

### *Paragraph 21*

- The school maintains an up-to-date single central record which includes all those who work at the school, as well as governors, managers and directors. The record indicates that checks have been made to cover earlier periods of time when members of staff have worked abroad.
- The school is likely to meet the independent school standards in this part if it receives approval for the implementation of the material change.

## Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

### *Paragraph 22*

- The new site has been extensively and thoughtfully refurbished in a project that has lasted over two years. The result is a stunning site which has the potential to make pupils feel special.

### *Paragraphs 23, 24, 28*

- There are ample toilet facilities and hand basins in the refurbished building. The school intends to designate one set of toilets for girls' use only. There is an accessible toilet and shower room. All sanitaryware is new.
- A well-equipped, dedicated medical room is in place, with a handbasin and situated close to a toilet.
- Drinking water facilities are available on every floor of the building

### *Paragraphs 25–27, 29*

- The refurbished building has been beautifully and tastefully decorated. It is very well-lit internally, and its acoustics are good.
- Outside, careful thought has been given to providing lighting which is attractive and complements the professionally landscaped garden. Two new teaching pods have been purchased and placed within the outdoor area. These augment the extensive teaching space within the refurbished building.

- There is ample outdoor space for breaks, physical education lessons and organised games. Outdoor facilities are excellent, with a story-telling seat and benches, brand-new sturdy play equipment and picnic tables.
- The school is likely to meet the independent school standards in this part if it receives approval for the implementation of the material change.

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

### *Paragraph 34*

- Leaders have created a new site which has the potential to provide a magical environment for the pupils who will be educated there. They have given careful thought to the increased pupil numbers and the part the new premises will play in providing high-quality education for each pupil. Leaders plan to increase the number of pupils on roll gradually and in a way that does not undermine the offer that current pupils receive.
- Leaders have planned carefully for the expansion of the school. They intend that some staff who work on the current operational site will work across both sites so that the same ethos is embedded at the new site.
- Leaders have a secure understanding of their responsibilities. Records are detailed and kept meticulously. These records demonstrate leaders' consistent efforts to ensure that the school is a safe and nurturing environment for every pupil.
- The chair of governors, in her capacity as the group's representative, ensures that she brings an objective eye to the school's operation. She commissions staff from other parts of the group to test out issues in school. She has ensured that complaints have been comprehensively and properly investigated.
- At the standard inspection in June 2021, and this material change inspection, the independent school standards have been met consistently.
- The school is likely to meet the independent school standards in this part if it receives approval for the implementation of this material change.

## **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 that are relevant to the material change.

## School details

Unique reference number	133527
DfE registration number	933/6203
Inspection number	10251993

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 special school
School status	Independent special school
Proprietor	Keys Group Progressive Care and Education
Chair	Nicola Kelly
Headteacher	Karl Templeman
Annual fees (day pupils)	£61,499–£100,000
Telephone number	01823 481902
Website	<a href="https://education.keys-group.co.uk/school/somerset-school/">https://education.keys-group.co.uk/school/somerset-school/</a>
Email address	admin.somersetschool@keys-group.co.uk
Date of previous standard inspection	29 June to 1 July 2021

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	7 to 19	7 to 19	7 to 19
Number of pupils on the school roll	33	65	65

*Reason for inspector's recommendations:* The group has planned over a long period to create further capacity by purchasing and adapting an existing building. It has commissioned the refurbishment of a property to a very high standard, considering each of the relevant independent school standards from the beginning through to completion. The result is that the school now has a second site which provides appropriate space and very good facilities for the extra number on roll requested in this material change.

## Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	33	65
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	33	65
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	33	65
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	33	65

## Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	15	30
Number of part-time teaching staff	1	2
Number of staff in the welfare provision	10	20

## Information about this school

- Somerset Progressive School is situated in West Hatch, Somerset. Its new site is based in the village of Hambridge, about ten miles distant.
- The proprietor body, the Keys Group, operates a number of independent special schools across the country. The chair of governors is an employee of the group and chairs the local governing bodies of all schools in the group.

- The school provides education for pupils with an education, health and care plan, specifically for those with autism spectrum disorder, specific learning difficulties and behavioural, emotional and social development needs.

## Information about this inspection

- The Department for Education commissioned this material change in response to the school's request to increase the number of approved pupil places to 65. The school's request also includes the approval of a new site to accommodate the additional number of pupils.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, who is the designated safeguarding lead, the regional manager and the employed chair of governors, who in her role is also the proprietor body's representative. The inspector also held an online meeting with the group's director of premises.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents provided by the school, including policies related to safeguarding and health and safety, and the single central record. The inspector met with leaders to discuss the material change request and had a tour of both school sites.

## Inspection team

Bradley Simmons, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector



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