

Pollyteach Limited

First Floor Unit, Rear of 18–20 Diamond Avenue, Kirkby in Ashfield NG17 7GR

Inspection date

21 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

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

- Leaders have created a culture of vigilance among the staff. All staff know to be aware of any signs that may identify possible concerns about pupils' welfare, no matter how small.
- Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They know to report any concerns immediately to safeguarding leaders. Staff are aware that they can make referrals to outside agencies themselves, as well.
- Leaders act swiftly and effectively in response to any safeguarding concerns. They work with a range of external agencies to support pupils. Safeguarding leaders meet regularly to discuss their response to safeguarding concerns across all of the school's sites.
- Staff know pupils well. By welcoming pupils to school each morning, staff can quickly establish whether pupils have any worries or concerns. Staff respond quickly when pupils express any concerns.
- Leaders are sensitive to any issues that may affect pupils' welfare. Daily 'talking wall' sessions allow staff and pupils to discuss pertinent issues. Leaders adapt the personal, social, health and economic education curriculum to cover any topics that leaders feel pupils need to learn about, or study in greater depth, to help keep pupils safe. Suggestion boxes enable pupils to communicate any concerns they may have.
- Leaders monitor behaviour to spot any patterns or trends that may indicate welfare concerns. While incidents of bullying are rare, leaders help pupils to restore their relationships, should fallouts occur.
- Leaders keep detailed records of their actions to keep pupils safe. As reflective leaders, they look to improve these systems when and where they can.

- Leaders closely monitor attendance. They phone parents and carers immediately they are aware that a pupil has failed to turn up to school. If they get no answer, staff visit the pupil's home to check on their well-being.
- Pupils say that they feel safe at the school and that they have staff to whom they can talk if they are worried. They are confident that staff will listen to and help them.
- The school's safeguarding policy is available on the school's website.

Paragraphs 11, 12

- There are appropriate health and safety and fire safety policies in place.
- Leaders undertake regular health and safety checks. They regularly check that fire alarms and fire extinguishers are in working order.
- Annual fire risk assessments take place. Leaders act swiftly to resolve any issues that these assessments may identify.

Paragraph 14

- There are sufficient numbers of staff to ensure effective supervision of pupils, both in lessons and during learning time.
- The current number of staff is sufficient to cater for the proposed increase in the number of pupils on roll. Leaders are committed to further recruitment when the need arises.

Paragraphs 16, 16(a), 16(b)

- A comprehensive risk assessment policy is in place. The policy defines what is meant by risk and by control measures to reduce risk. The policy provides guidance on how to calculate the level of risk, as well as the likelihood of harm from any risk.
- Leaders undertake detailed risk assessments of each pupil. These identify any concerning behaviours that pupils may demonstrate. For each known risk, leaders identify appropriate control measures. Leaders regularly review these risk assessments so that these reflect the latest information about each pupil. This includes when a pupil demonstrates a new risky behaviour.
- Leaders combine any risk assessments for off-site visits with the individual risk assessments of those pupils who are attending the trip. By doing this, leaders consider the risk related to the place that the pupils are visiting, as well as any risks the individual pupils themselves may pose in going on the trip.
- The school is likely to continue to meet the independent school standards (the standards) in this part if the material change is implemented.

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 are appropriately trained in safer recruitment.
- Leaders undertake all appropriate checks to assure themselves of the suitability of any adults who work with the pupils. This includes any supply staff.
- All checks are completed before new staff start working at the school.
- All checks are recorded on the school's single central record.
- The school is likely to continue to meet the standards in this part if the school receives approval for the implementation of the material change.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraphs 23(1), 23(1)(a), 23(1)(b), 23(1)(c), 28(1), 28(1)(b), 28(1)(d)

- There are appropriate toilets and washing facilities across all three school sites.
- On two of the sites, there are appropriate shower facilities for pupils. While there are no showers at The Loft, pupils may use the shower at The Hub, located next door.
- The water supply to the shower and toilet facilities is suitable. The hot water does not pose a scalding risk to pupils.

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

- There is a suitable medical room available at two of the sites. Leaders are updating the facilities at The Hub, so that the medical room is fully suitable.

Paragraphs 25, 26, 27, 27(a), 27(b)

- The classrooms are suitable for teaching groups of four or five pupils.
- The acoustics in each room are suitable.
- The premises are in an appropriate state of repair.

Paragraph 28(1), 28(1)(a), 28(1)(c), 28(2), 28(2)(a), 28(2)(b)

- Pupils can access drinking water from each site's kitchen. Staff fetch water for pupils on request at The Loft, as pupils are not allowed in that site's kitchen at any time.

Paragraph 29(1), 29(1)(a), 29(1)(b)

- There are suitable outdoor facilities at The Elms site. Pupils who attend The Loft and The Hub can go to the local park, accompanied by staff, should they wish to spend social time outdoors.
- The school is likely to continue to meet the standards in this part if the school receives approval for the implementation of the material change.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

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

- The proprietor has made sure that leaders understand the independent school standards. Leaders have ensured that those standards checked during this inspection are likely to continue to be met if the material change is approved.
- The proprietor understands their statutory duties in relation to keeping pupils safe. The proprietor has ensured that leaders' procedures for safeguarding pupils' welfare are effective. The proprietor has employed a senior leader to oversee safeguarding across all three sites. This senior leader reports directly to the proprietor. The proprietor also engages with professionals external to the school to provide further assurance of the rigour of the school's safeguarding procedures.
- The school is likely to continue to meet the standards in this part if the school receives approval for the implementation of the 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	145546
DfE registration number	891/6038
Inspection number	10252660

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 school
Proprietor	Pollyteach Limited
Chair	Mark Dale
Headteacher	Catherine Brown
Annual fees (day pupils)	£37,500
Telephone number	07383 204964
Website	www.pollyteach.com
Email address	office@pollyteach.com
Date of previous standard inspection	4 to 6 December 2018

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal	Inspector's recommendation
Age range of pupils	8 to 18	8 to 18	8 to 18
Number of pupils on the school roll	32	60	75

Reason for inspector's recommendations

The three sites combined have capacity to cater for more than 60 pupils. The school also runs an alternative provision across the school sites. Leaders regularly review whether pupils who attend this provision should be admitted to the school if they are not receiving education elsewhere when they are not present at the alternative provision. This is to ensure that the alternative provision does not operate in such a way that would require it to be registered. The increased number in the inspector's recommendation

caters for the necessary flexibility to enable school leaders to add to the school roll any pupils who are attending the alternative provision full time.

Pupils

	School's current position	School's proposal
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Mixed
Number of full-time pupils of compulsory school age	32	60
Number of part-time pupils	0	0
Number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities	32	60
Of which, number of pupils with an education, health and care plan	15	Up to 60
Of which, number of pupils paid for by a local authority with an education, health and care plan	13	Up to 60

Staff

	School's current position	School's proposal
Number of full-time equivalent teaching staff	33	34
Number of part-time teaching staff	0	0
Number of staff in the welfare provision	0	0

Information about this school

- The school aims to be a 'specialist provider for students with difficulty engaging in mainstream education'.
- The school is currently registered to admit up to 35 pupils in the age range of eight to 18 years. All pupils who attend the school are pupils with special educational needs

and/or disabilities. Many have education, health and care plans. Many pupils suffer from social, emotional and mental health difficulties.

- The school currently operates from three sites. These are: The Loft, 18–20 Diamond Avenue NG17 7GR; The Hub, Forest Street NG17 7DT; and The Elms, Portland College NG18 4TJ.
- The proprietor of the school is Pollyteach Ltd. Pollyteach Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary of Portland College.
- The Elms is located at Portland College, and pupils have access to facilities that the college provides, including outdoor facilities.
- At the time of the inspection, the school had discontinued using the premises at The Clubhouse, Sutton Road NG17 8GS. The proprietor is currently looking to open another premises in its place.
- The proprietor also runs an unregistered alternative provision across the three sites. School leaders regularly check that the pupils who attend the alternative provision receive other education elsewhere when they are not at the alternative provision. When leaders establish that pupils do not attend any other educational provision, or that their full-time provision is solely that which the alternative provision provides, the pupils in question are admitted to the school and so placed on the school's roll.
- The school does not itself make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out under section 162(4) of the Education Act 2002, to check the school's likely compliance with the independent school standards relevant to the proposed change to increase to 60 the maximum number of pupils that the school is permitted to have on roll.
- This was the school's first material change inspection for this proposed change to the provision.
- The Department for Education commissioned the inspector to inspect the suitability of the school's provision in relation to: policies and procedures relating to safeguarding, health and safety, fire safety and risk assessment; supervision of pupils; recruitment of staff; the suitability of the premises and accommodation; and the quality of leadership and management.
- The inspector met with the chair of the proprietor, the headteacher, centre leaders and some staff.
- The inspector met with some pupils.
- The inspector undertook a tour of the school's three sites.
- The inspector visited a fourth site that the school used until recently, to confirm that the school is no longer using this site.
- The inspector considered school documentation in relation to safeguarding, health and safety, fire safety and risk assessment.
- The inspector looked at the school's single central record and the system for undertaking checks on new staff.

Inspection team

Simon Hollingsworth, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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